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Cloister and King Martin's Palace, Poblet.

THE 349
QUEENS OF ARAGON:

THEIR LIVES AND TIMES

BY E. L. MIRON

AUTHOR OF "DUCHESS DERELICT: THE WIFE OF CESARE BORGIA"

WITH A PHOTOGRAVURE FRONTISPIECE AND TWENTY-ONE
ILLUSTRATIONS IN HALF-TONE

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WHERE is the King Don Juan ? Where
Each royal prince and noble heir
Of Aragon ?
Where are the courtly gallantries ?
Their deeds of love and high emprise,
In battle done ?

Tourney and joust, that charmed the eye,
And scarf, and gorgeous panoply,
And nodding plume,—
What were they but a pageant scene ?
What but the garlands, gay and green,
That deck the tomb ?

Where are the high-born dames, and where
Their gay attire, and jewelled hair,
And odours sweet ?
Where are the gentle knights that came
To kneel and breathe love's ardent flame,
Low at their feet ?

Where is the song of Troubadour ?
Where are the lute and gay tambour
They loved of yore ?
Where is the mazy dance of old,
The flowing robes, inwrought with gold,
The dancers wore ?

COPLAS DE MANRIQUE
(*Trans.* Longfellow).

THE QUEENS OF ARAGON

- GISBERGA, or ERMESINDA, Queen of Ramiro I,
1035-1049.
- FELICIA, Queen of Sancho Ramirez,
1070-c. 1094
- DOÑA PHILIPPA.
— —
- BERTA, Queen of Pedro I.
— —
- URRACA (Queen also of Castile and Leon in her own right),
1109-1126.
- IÑEZ, or AGNES OF AQUITAINE, Queen of Ramiro II (The Monk-
King),
1134-
- PETRONILLA (in her own right), Consort of Ramon Berenger IV,
Count of Barcelona,
1137-1163.
- SANCHA, Queen of Alfonso II,
1174-1189.
- MARIE DE MONTPELLIER, Queen of Pedro II,
1204-1213.
- LEONOR OF CASTILE,
1221-1229;
- VIOLANTE OF HUNGARY, } Queens of James I.
1236-1251.
- CONSTANCE OF SICILY, Queen of Pedro III,
1260-1302.
- BLANCHE OF ANJOU,
1295-1310;
- MARIE DE LUSIGNAN, } Queens of James II.
1314-1321;
- ELISENDA DE MONCADA,
1322-1327.
- LEONOR OF CASTILE, Queen of Alfonso IV,
1329-1336.

- MARIA OF NAVARRE,
1338-1347 ;
- LEONOR OF PORTUGAL,
1348 ;
- LEONOR OF SICILY,
1349-1374 ;
- SIBILIA DE FORCIA,
1375-1387. } Queens of Pedro IV.
- VIOLANTE OF BAR, Queen of Juan I,
1387-1396.
- MARIA DE LUNA,
1396-1407 ;
- MARGARITA DE PRADES,
1409-1410. } Queens of Martin the Humane.
- LEONOR D'ALBURQUERQUE, Queen of Ferdinand the Just,
1412-1416.
- MARIA OF CASTILE, Queen of Alfonso V,
1416-1457.
- JUANA DE ENRIQUEZ, Queen of Juan II,
1447-1468.

THE QUEENS OF ARAGON

THEIR LIVES AND TIMES

INTRODUCTION

THE mediaeval Kingdom of Aragon, which is represented on the map of Spain at the present day by the provinces of Huesca, Zaragoza, and Teruel, came into existence in 1035, as the very slender portion of a younger son bequeathed by Sancho the Great, King of Navarre and suzerain of Aragon, to his son Ramiro, first King of Aragon. The still smaller lordship of Sobrarbe, held by early historians to be the actual cradle of the Aragonese dynasty, was at once absorbed, on his accession to the throne, into the kingdom which took its name from the river which flows, with a tortuous and rock-bound course, past the ancient walls of Jaca, famous in the early annals of this region of Spain. Bounded on the north by the Pyrenees, on the east by Catalonia and Valencia, on the south by Valencia, on the west by Castile and Navarre, Aragon presents the form of a central plain fringed by mountains. This natural and formidable barrier against foreign incursion, the chain of the Pyrenees attaining its greatest elevation to the north of Aragon in the peaks of Aneto, Monte Perdido, or Las Tres Sorores, has been at once its buckler and its bane. If the bristling lines of its mountain fastnesses enabled its people to withstand the

Moorish invaders, who were only too willing to leave so forbidding a territory to the undisturbed possession of the Christian population, yet it is, at the same time, to those towering, though protective heights, that Aragon is indebted for that lack of moisture which is her great misfortune. She is compensated, however, for her preponderance of wild and arid countryside, by the picturesque and fertile oases which blossom along the banks of her rivers, of which the Ebro is the chief. Flowing in a south-easterly direction through the province, it receives, from the north, the tributary waters of the Arba, Gallego, and Cinca, near whose head waters is the district of Sobrarbe. The other rivers of Aragon are the Esera, which forms the boundary between Aragon and Catalonia, the Noguera Ribagorzana, the Noguera Pallares, and the Segre. From the south, the Jalon and Jiloca flow to mingle their waters with those of the Ebro, the former flowing by Calatayud, famous in antiquity for its swords, whilst its richly wooded banks are alternately fringed with orchards and olive groves. The Imperial Canal, cut in 1529, and the Royal Canal of Tauste, serve to still further redeem the arid soil from the brand of sterility. So that, here and there, the traveller in Aragon, now, as in the infancy of the kingdom of Ramiro I, comes with delight and refreshment upon such smiling valleys as those of Almunia, where Nature, as one such traveller has said, seems to have displayed, upon a carpet of the finest verdure, all the treasures of foliage, fruit, and flowers, oak, beech, pine, chestnut, juniper, cherry, nut, peach, and almond; or the chain of orchards of Borja, Balaguer, and Teruel. In the teeth of discouragement of drought and extremes of climate, Aragon yields rich crops of wheat, saffron, maize, madder, rice, liquorice, flax, sumach, oil, and hemp, while the merino wool of its pastures still preserves its ancient reputation. The mineral wealth of the province includes lead, zinc, calamine, lignite, jet, and salt.

Much of the economic future of his little kingdom,

however, as well as its future political greatness, was certainly hidden from the eyes of its first King, whose restless ambition, nevertheless, speedily embarked upon that policy of expansion, the romance of which may be briefly traced, by way of prelude to the introduction on that gradually widening stage whereon the Queens of Aragon played their parts. Ribagorza, left to Gonzalo, brother of King Ramiro I, was promptly annexed to Aragon, while only the alliance of his more fortunate brothers, Ferdinand of Castile and Garcia of Navarre, saved their kingdoms from the like fate. To the master of that little strip of wilderness which was infant Aragon, the call of the South must have come with peculiar and alluring insistence. It was to come, with the final emphasis of fulfilment, many years later, to a boy-king whose "long, long thoughts" must often have turned, whilst he impatiently awaited his manhood, to Valencia, "the Garden of Spain," of which he was to be the conqueror. But for Ramiro I, ever with sword in hand, the path to the far-off South must be hewn through infidel hordes. Death overtook him in the midst of his reign-long campaign; when it came to the turn of his son and successor, Sancho Ramirez, to lay down the sword which he had wielded no less valiantly, the banner of Aragon was planted on the banks of the Ebro. The Moors were driven from Huesca in the otherwise uneventful reign of Pedro I, which came to an end in 1104, when the most brilliant epoch of early Aragonese history was inaugurated by the accession of Alfonso I, surnamed, for his military prowess, El Batallador, or the Warrior. His victorious arms swept the Moors for ever from Northern Spain; his conquests led him to those cities of Valencia and Lerida, afterwards to be so closely identified with the national life of Aragon; whilst he won from its long empire of the Moor the city in which the Kings and Queens of Aragon were to be crowned for more than 300 years, the most august, noble, and loyal city of Zaragoza, which became the capital of Aragon in 1118.

The vastness of his ambitions, however, defeated their own ends. By some strange irony, which was certainly not cowardice, the victor failed to follow up his conquests, withdrawing his troops from the walls of city after city which were well within his grasp. His marriage with Urraca, the heiress of Castile and Leon, was the crowning irony of all, for it postponed for nearly 400 years, when to all outward appearance actually accomplished, the union of Aragon and Castile, which was to be so gloriously accomplished under Ferdinand and Isabella, the former the son of the last Queen of separated Aragon. The year 1134 saw the Kingdom of Navarre, which had been ruled by the Kings of Aragon since 1076, pass from their suzerainty, but the loss was more than compensated by that notable accession of the dynasty of the Counts of Barcelona which was inaugurated by the fortunate marriage of Doña Petronilla, only daughter of the Monk-King, Ramiro II, and Ramon Berenger IV, an alliance which gave to the Kingdom of Aragon a seaboard and an expansion of its commerce which was to forge mighty links between that country and the distant marts of the East. Alfonso II, the son of Doña Petronilla, was Duke of Provence in 1160; in 1172 the Countship of Roussillon was added to the Aragonese dominions; in 1187 Béarn and Bigorre were its vassals. Pedro II won to his crown the Lordship of Montpellier, for which he so basely requited the wife who had brought it as her dower. Valencia and the Balearic Islands were reserved for the trophies of Don Jaime the Conqueror, who laid the foundation also of that costly warfare which gave Sicily to the crown of Aragon by the marriage of his son and successor, Pedro III, to Doña Constanza, through whom he was to inherit her rights to that island-throne. Don Jaime II secured the Countship of Urgel to the Kings of Aragon by the union of his heir, afterwards Alfonso IV, with Doña Teresa de Entenza, its heiress. Thus the territories and the importance of Aragon grew with the passing of the centuries, until

the proud kingdom saw its existence transformed into that of a province, by the marriage, in 1465, of the Catholic sovereigns.

Nor were the people over whom the Kings of Aragon were called to rule less diversified in character than the regions over which that sway extended. There was little else in common between the proud, suspicious, reserved Aragonese, and the ardent, impulsive, turbulent, adventurous, seafaring Catalans than their sturdy independence and their passionate love of liberty. It was a quality characteristic, in Aragon, at least, not only of the people, but of the aristocracy, that aristocracy which, as Señor Castelar has said, "fought at all times not for power, but for popular liberty." With their neighbours of Castile, who, as another authority has said, "rarely meddled with Aragon, though Aragon frequently carried their arms into the heart of Castile," the sister-kingdom had scarcely a closer relation. "The constitution of Aragon was less popular and more liberal" than that of Castile. The office of Justiciary in Aragon was the embodiment of that principle expressed in the terms of the election of a King of Aragon: "We, who are as good as you, choose you for our King and lord, provided that you observe our laws and privileges; and if not, not." The Justiciary, who was always a knight, and elected by his fellow-citizens, administered the coronation oath to the sovereign, who knelt bare-headed before him, while the Justiciary held the point of his sword against his heart, the King meanwhile swearing to respect the rights and liberties of the people. This important functionary, whose office was copied from the Spanish Mussulman institutions, stood more than once, not only between King and subjects, but between the King as father and his refractory or persecuted sons.

The Parliament of Aragon, representative of the Four Estates of the kingdom (the Ricos-Hombres, or grandees, who were the greater nobility, the Caballeros, including the Infanzones, or lesser knights, and the

Mesnaderos, descended from the grandees, the Clergy, and the Commons), was composed of these four Orders. In it, says Mr. Burke, in his *History of Spain*, "the Commons enjoyed higher consideration and greater civil privileges than in any other country of mediæval Europe. The veto of a single member, as in the Diet of Poland, sufficed to defeat or postpone any measure introduced and supported by the most powerful majority in the chamber." The most famous of the charters of this powerful assembly were the "General Privilege," granted by Pedro III in 1283 at Zaragoza, and that known as the "Privilege of Union," which was cut in pieces by the dagger of Pedro IV in 1348. Three Estates formed the Parliament of Catalonia, where serfdom held the people in the hardest bondage until the middle of the fifteenth century.

Side by side with the men who have preserved to the present day the national characteristics of stubborn and high-spirited conduct, the women of Aragon were accorded notable privileges by their lawgivers. Life for them, whether of high degree or lowly born, was for the most part spent in seclusion. The man was a soldier; or agriculture or commerce had need of him; the woman must be safely bestowed in his long and frequent absences; such was the ideal of woman's destiny in those distant days. Thus, Queen or subject, they were fitly environed by the well-nigh impregnable walls of such fortified cities as Jaca or Huesca, remote from fears and forays, training up their sons to bear arms, when their turn came, against the hated infidel. Woman, it is true, had always been treated with consideration, even with marked honour, by the Cantabrian as well as by the Visigothic laws, but her very privileges had been strictly safeguarded in the granting. In Cantabrian society, the mother was often regarded as the head of the family, her counsels being of grave moment in the domestic circle. Among the Visigoths, the wife was bought from her parents for the price of a dowry, generally fixed at ten men and ten women

slaves, twenty horses, and a great quantity of jewels and apparel, which returned to the husband if the wife died without sons or intestate. In Aragon, the woman possessed several very striking privileges.

All Spanish legislation, says a modern writer, except the *Partidas*, borrowed from the Germanic law the donation known as *arras*, the equivalent of the "morning-gift" of the Teutonic nations. In Aragon, the dowry was of two kinds, the *arras* and the *axovar* (of Roman origin) or personal property, the chain presented by the bridegroom to his bride being known as the "cadena exova." The husband's *arras*, which was fixed at the tenth part of his goods, was delivered at the bride's house, to her father, brother, or uncle. The dowry of an *infanzona*, or nobly-born woman, was fixed at not less than three hereditaments, the free woman's at five hundred sueldos, while the peasant woman's was a roofed house with twelve beams, a bed, wearing apparel, jewels, two fields, two beasts of burden, and implements, though some commentators maintain that this dowry was not obligatory. If the marriage were dissolved, the woman could claim her clothes, jewels, the best bed, a horse, two beasts of burden, with their harness, and the noble woman, in addition, a silver vessel and a female slave. In Catalonia, the obligatory wedding presents were a bed, clothes, and ordinary jewels, the wedding ring, and gold and silver ornaments. The woman in Aragon could fulfil almost any service, except military; she could administer property in the absence of her husband, her permission was indispensable to the legal sale of his property, and if a lady of rank married a man of lower degree, she raised him to her own. The law studiously protected her from insults. To roughly handle a woman, or to pluck her by her flowing hair, which was the mark of the unmarried woman throughout Christian Spain, was to incur the penalty of a heavy fine. If a man wounded another in the presence of a Queen, he was condemned to furnish an apartment for the latter. If a quarrel took place in

the presence of an *infanzona*, the offenders were compelled to kiss her feet and do homage before twelve of their own rank. Sovereign ladies, as we shall see, took their undisputed place at their royal husbands' sides, in the national, and even in the ecclesiastical councils, affixing their signatures to edicts and sentences as joint assessors with the King. During the minority of an heir, whether to kingdom or countship, his mother not only governed in his name, but frequently assumed the style and title of queen or countess regnant, as though in her own right, while more than one nobleman, in ancient documents, signs himself son of Constance, or Sancha, rather than by his father's name. But Spanish women, whether Aragonese or Castilian or Catalonian, were not encouraged, for all their apparent freedom, to emerge from the obscurity which was, in the opinion of their male relatives, their true sphere. Even if, venturing fearlessly, as many of them did, into the hazards of war, they won glory by imperishable deeds of daring, yet such glory was bestowed upon them grudgingly. They might indeed share in their lords' fortunes, whether good or ill; they must not claim a separate part. They had less actual liberty to fulfil their personal ambitions than their Moorish sisters. No Christian woman of mediaeval Spain might hope to be the rival of all those cultured ladies who, in the days of Hixem, King of Andalusia, studied poetry and the arts in their garden retreats; of Lobna, as learned as she was lovely, skilled in grammar, verse, arithmetic, and other sciences, who wrote, "with singular elegance, very fine letters," her accomplishments giving her, we are told, a high place in the royal household, the King setting great store by her, and entrusting her with all his private correspondence, whilst none in the palace was her equal for quickness of perception and sweetness of voice. No King of Aragon, it may safely be asserted, would have followed the example of that Moorish King who not only bestowed freedom upon the beautiful slave, Sadhia, or Happy Star, but married her to

his son, Alhakem ; this lady, we are told, being " the admiration of her times for her verses and histories." After her husband's death, Sadhia travelled to the east, where she was everywhere honoured for her learning. Nor in any royal household of Aragon should we have sought and found such a servant as Fatima, daughter of Zachary the Zableri, who " wrote to perfection, and copied many books for the King." We should have looked in vain in Aragon for such a one as that Ayxa, daughter of Ahmed ben Muhammad of Cordova, of whom it is recorded that " there was no damsel in Spain who surpassed her in beauty and in praiseworthy manners, nor in discretion and eloquence." She wrote eulogies of the Kings and Princes of her day, and was commended by all the wise men of her time not only for her compositions, but for the beauty of her character. Nor was there among the walled cities of the Christian Aragonese room for such a school as that kept in Seville by Maryem, who " taught letters to the young girls of the chief families in that city, her nobly born pupils going forth from her academy to be the ornaments and delight of the Moorish palaces."

Yet the ideal which has come down to us in that code which is known as the " Partidas " of Alfonso X of Castile, who devoted a chapter of his famous work to instructions for the governesses of the Infantas, is not an ignoble one. They were doubtless no less applicable to those who had the training of the Princesses of Aragon, one of whom became the consort of the learned monarch.

" They are to endeavour," says the royal lawgiver, " as much as may be, that the Kings' daughters be moderate and seemly in eating and drinking, and also in their carriage and dress, and of good manners in all things, and especially that they be not given to anger, for besides the wickedness that lieth in it, it is the thing in the world that most easily leadeth to women to do ill. And they ought to teach them to be handy in

performing those works that belong to noble ladies ; for this is a matter that becometh them much, since they obtain by it cheerfulness and a quiet spirit ; and besides, it taketh away bad thoughts, which it is not convenient they should have.”

CHAPTER I

THE Kingdom of Aragon existed independently for 444 years, from 1035 to 1479. Within that period twenty Kings wore the crown which Ramiro I had entwined before his death with fleuron after fleuron wrested from Christian kinsmen and Moorish foes. The ladies, almost all of noble, nearly all of royal birth, who bore the title of Queen of Aragon were twenty-six in number. It is from the densest mists of mediaeval history that we must summon these Queens of the past, and we shall often find ourselves baffled in our quest for the truth about them ; yet, for English readers, it may be that the merest outlines of the story of the Queens of that ancient kingdom which once gave a noble Consort to the English throne, will not prove altogether devoid of interest.

Doña Munia Mayor, Doña Nuna, or Elvira Mayor, as she is variously designated in history, Countess of Castile in her own right and Queen of Navarre by marriage, cannot, strictly speaking, be numbered amongst the illustrious ladies who give their name to this volume ; yet, as Countess of Aragon, and standing as she does midway between them and their oddly named predecessors the Visigothic Queens, Placidia, Theudicoda, Clodosinda, Labigotona, Cixilona, Hilduara, and Ingundis, she merits some allusion by way of prelude to their introduction. Eldest daughter of Sancho Garcia III of Navarre and of his Queen, Urraca, the premature death of her younger brother, Garcia Sanchez, left her sole heiress of Navarre, Castile, and Aragon, the latter not yet advanced to its eventual sovereign rank. Bestowed in marriage upon Sancho the Great, the first

King of Spain, says Lafuente, to style himself Emperor, bride and bridegroom were as nobly matched in character as in lineage. Sancho has been justly described as one of the most glorious and important persons of the drama of his native country, though a worthy history of his exploits, both as soldier and statesman, has yet to be written. Much uncertainty broods, in consequence, about his memory and his deeds, nor can we any more clearly discern the noble and queenly figure of his consort. The tradition has long since been disproved which traces the rise of Aragon from countship to kingdom to a romantic and nearly tragic episode in her life. Relegated in more sober times to the domain of mere legend, it leaves Doña Munia unsullied by the least stain upon her memory. That her honour was impugned by her own sons, during the temporary absence of her husband from his dominions, that her defence was thereupon chivalrously undertaken and her innocence triumphantly attested, by the illegitimate son of Sancho, afterwards the first King of Aragon, a title bestowed upon him by his father at Doña Munia's grateful request, has all been dismissed by serious modern historians as stupid fable.

Sancho the Great, according to the most trustworthy evidence, married, first, a lady named Caia, of the lordship of Ayvar, in Navarre, who was the mother of Ramiro. Doña Munia Mayor was a second wife, and the mother of Sancho's three other sons, Garcia, Fernandez, and Gonzalez, all of whom became kings. Stripped of that one disproven episode in her history, our knowledge of Doña Munia's life is of the most meagre quality. She is pictured for us by an old chronicler, at the passing of the great King, who died in 1034, "in the midst of his domains, supported by his wife and sons, and by his servants, a natural and a Christian end." The widowed Queen survived her husband for many years, retiring to her estates in Castile, of which she was the last Sovereign Countess, and over which she continued her suzerainty. Her place of

residence is generally supposed to have been Fromesta, whence, however, she appears to have emerged at intervals to be an honoured guest at the courts of her two sons, that of Garcia at Pampeluna, and of Fernandez, who adorned the throne of Castile with exceptional virtues. In 1046, she was certainly present at the granting, in the Navarrese capital, of royal benefactions to the Monastery of St. Coloma by King Garcia and his Queen, Estefania of Barcelona. The document in question concludes with the words, "Before the witnesses present and my mother, the Queen, Doña Mayor." Again, in a similar connection, she signs immediately after the King, styling herself "Mayor, surnamed Munia, mother of the King." In a donation to the shrine of St. Isidore of Leon, by Fernandez and his Queen, Sancha, the day following the translation of the body of the saint, in which was included the famous Crucifix, the most precious of all the treasures of that royal fane, Doña Munia signs as "I, Mayor, servant of Christ, daughter of Count Sancho." Her will, made when she was at an advanced age, bears her signature in the following form, "I, Mayor, slave of Christ, daughter of Count Sancho," the witnesses being the Bishops of Burgos and Palencia and the Abbot Miro, her chief benefactions were to the Monastery of St. Martin of Fromesta; her grave she chose to make with her ancestors, the Counts of Castile, in the Monastery of San Salvador at Oña. "So great a Queen, mother and grandmother of so many Kings," as she has been styled, is not unworthy, then, to usher in the long line of the Queens of Aragon.

About half of their number stand out with romantic emphasis from the rest, concerning whom contemporary history is for the most part silent. Their names (and even those, sometimes in doubt), their ancestry, a few meagre and unimpressive details of incidents in which they took no more important a part than that usually assigned to the "super," that, and scarcely more, is all which has come down to us.

They lived, it may be, in scenes too much astir with weightier matters to permit of the chronicler's diversion, even by the spell of beauty on a throne, from his supreme task of recording the exploits of brave men. That the place which the majority of them held in the esteem and affection of their royal lords was not an invariably exalted one, may be gathered from the fact that on four occasions only during four centuries is there mention and description of the coronation of a Queen of Aragon. Once or twice, indeed, as in the case of the luckless Urraca, who in the first place was Queen of Castile, their appearances upon the stage of their adopted nation's history inevitably suggest the leap of a sword from its scabbard. But for the most part, they move behind a veil, fragrant with the scent of flowers sequestered as themselves, antique harvests that blossomed for their pleasure in royal garden oases of a sterile soil—a veil that reminds us that if “the Christian Spain of seven centuries' Moorish domination had separated itself by an implacable hatred from their Moorish invaders,” yet the sinister shadow of the infidel attitude towards women had not failed insidiously to affect the fates of even crowned heads. It is not to be forgotten, it is true, that, on the one hand, “the Aragonese possessed a greater share of individual liberty than any people in the Peninsula,” and that, on the other, the Queens of Christian Spain “presided with their husbands in the Cortes, the councils, and the tribunals of justice, and that not as mere spectators, or auditors, but as judges, as exercising, on some occasions at least, a conjoint authority, and signing like their consorts the public instruments. Thus, Elvira presided with Alfonso V in the national Council of Leon, thus Sancho el Mayor, in the diploma by which he erected the Bishopric of Pampeluna, declares that he does so with the assistance and by the consent of his Queen, and thus Ramon Berenger of Barcelona issues a decree conjointly with his consort, Adelmodis.” Aragon, however, was from the first cast in sterner mould than those sister kingdoms with which

she was so often at war. The passion for liberty which was characteristic of her people in a peculiar degree made them suspicious of its extension, except stringently safeguarded, to their women. Once, and once only, in their strenuous history, they called a woman-child to rule over them, but they called her from a cradle, and they gave her, with her crown, a strong man, almost old enough to have been her father, to teach her queenship. If they could be loyal to the wives of their sovereigns' choosing, and even learn to love them well, yet no Moor of all their hated invaders ever watched over his harem with greater vigilance than the Aragonese over the very amusements of their Queens, as the French wife of Juan II was to learn to her cost. Thus, there is more in common than at first sight appears between these Queens of a bygone world and the land over which they reigned as consorts of its Kings. That towering Pyrenean guard and barrier which encompassed both kingdom and Queens, towards whose snow-clad peaks they gazed from the terraces of their palace without the gates of Zaragoza, or, in earlier days, from the frowning fortress of Jaca, was a symbol, surely, which has outlived them and their greatness, of that stern, repressive code which hedged their way, for all its splendour, with irksome thorns. Whilst they themselves, upon whom, as the borders of Aragon widened to the farthest shores of the Mediterranean, the marts of the East delighted to lavish all that inspired looms could fashion of fairy fabrics fit to clothe their state, stand as surely for those green oases and enchanted valleys of Avalon, which have evoked the rapturous and unstinted praise of successive travellers amongst the barren heights and frowning passes with which they alternate. Their lives hovered on, if they did not always overpass, the border-line of tragedy. Their days were vibrant with the clash of arms, or of family feuds; their nights too often dark with the doom of desertion. Their children were cradled, for the most part, in the lap of war, whilst to the cloister many of them turned from a throne with gladness, finding there,

in life as in death, their only abiding anchorage. Of the burdens laid upon them, and inevitable to their rank, they acquitted themselves now well, now ill. To their history we may turn for graphic illustrations of the wicked stepmother of immemorial tradition. But to that same source, also, we may look, and not in vain, for the ideal regent and stateswoman, and find her in Maria of Castile, the noble, grave, and self-effacing mother of her people, faithful wife of faithless husband, and no less faithful steward of careless sovereign. As mothers, the Queens of Aragon were for the most part worthy; it was a mother's dream fulfilled of the last of them all that gave peace and unity to Spain under the sway of Ferdinand of Aragon and Isabella of Castile. And if these crowned and anointed ladies of the olden time were kept as it were with mailed fist in the background of the age to which they belonged, an age in which the Court of Aragon shared with Italy and the southern kingdoms of Europe the high repute of centres of civilization and refinement, yet poetry at least blossomed round their path as it has never blossomed before or since. For that "brilliant existence of three centuries," which was the term of the glories of the troubadours, was contemporary with the lives of many of the Queens of Aragon. That tide of song which flowed from Arles to Barcelona in the wake of Dulce of Provence, and swept onward to the cultured Court of Aragon when it called Ramon Berenger to be the husband of the child-Queen, Petronilla, broke in sweetest surges at the feet of those who came after her. When the veil lifts upon these Queens, it is drawn aside more than once by grateful and adoring troubadours, who sing the praises of a beauty and a virtue to which their nearest and dearest were too often insensible.

Queenship of Aragon was no less queenship of the Courts of Love, which Barcelona framed on the model of Toulouse. One of the Queens of Aragon at least, Maria of Castile, had a famous troubadour, the cynical Jaime Roig, for her physician; Jorge de Manrique,

again, has set some of the joys and splendours of their Court to music in his *coplas*. Whether there were actually amongst their ranks royal rivals to Clara of Anduza, Tiborge de Montausier, or Gormonde de Montpellier, who sat in the Courts of Love, and were able themselves to reply to the verses of which they were the inspiration, is unknown, though the mother of Maria de Luna, Queen of Martin the Humane, Brianda d'Agouth, a noble Provençal lady, was a notable moving spirit in the romance movement of her day. If there had been Queens' *canzones*, we may well picture them falling from the lips of such as the Queen of Juan II, that Yolande of Bar who was Violante of Aragon, or from those of that Leonor of Castile to whom Armand Plaguès offered a *chanço*. Be that as it may, more than one of these Queens must have stood to many a wandering poet of their day for that "Rose fresh and fair" of which one of the troubadours sang. If the Queens of Aragon were often but slight things in the minds and memories of their lords, they were crowned with garlands woven of that "beautiful flower which sprang up on a sterile soil," that pallid star which set too soon in the sea of blood that bears the name of the Albigenian Crusade; the story of the Queens of Aragon and that of the troubadours are inseparably interwoven. While the infidel thundered at their palace gates, they listened, with the heroic composure bred of a long heredity of familiarity with war, while their poets "made brave songs wonderfully well." These Queens are the peers of Eléonore of Aquitaine, of Ermengarda of Narbonne, of Maria de Ventadorn, of Marie, Comtesse de Champagne, the Comtesse de Die, and a score of other fair "unknowns," whose fame was written, in such hieroglyphs as "Fair Hope" and "Better-than-Good," in the hearts of their songster-servants.

The nationalities of the Queens of Aragon were as diverse as their destinies. Portugal, Castile, Navarre, Anjou, Sicily, and Cyprus gave brides to the Kings of Aragon, while more than once the great houses of the

little kingdom which has long since merged its identity in that of united Spain were drawn more closely to the throne of which they were the masterful vassals by the elevation of a daughter or a sister to that perilous eminence.

Attended, then, by their minstrel train, set in the lonely or the lurid light that plays upon the page which bears their names, they move across the stage on which they played their parts. We know but little of most of them ; of some, we may desire, though in vain, to have "more knowledge" ; of the greater number, we may say, with apt and compassionate homage, "after life's fitful fever, she sleeps well."

Passing from themselves to their environment, it is in the ancient city of Jaca that we are to picture the earliest Queens of Aragon holding their court at their husbands' side, for here, until the extension of its borders, was the capital of Aragon.

The "most noble, most loyal and victorious city" of Jaca, with its memories of the womanly prowess that saved its fortunes and gave the heads of four Moorish kings as quarters to its shield at the battle of Las Tiendas, had twofold compensation for its perilous position as a frontier town and its frowning towers. It was within a day's journey of the famous Monastery of San Juan de la Peña, the hallowed Escorial of the Kings of Aragon, and it stood, as it does to-day, amid scenery unrivalled for majestic beauty. Close at hand are forests of pine and oak, alternating with barren peaks, verdant meadows, and leaping water, falling from immense heights, and beckoning to grim defiles, "all contributing," as one pilgrim has written, "to the impression which they make upon the traveller from central Spain, who finds himself here transplanted to a new and unknown world."

These walls, now blackened with age, and crumbling into ruins, these ancient houses that fling their shadow of the past on the quiet streets, these bal-

conies and gateways that seem to beckon the stranger on to antique adventure, still breathe the spirit of defiance and security which befitted the capital of a young kingdom that was to win its way to greatness by the sword. Here, Ramiro I brought his bride, Gisberga, or Ermesinda, or Gelberda, as her name is differently recorded, daughter of Bernard Roger, Count of Bigorre, "a lady of great beauty," as the chroniclers of her time unanimously declare. Jaca was the birthplace of her four children—Sancho Ramirez, his father's successor, in whose affections the hill-city of his birth held a place apart; Garcia, who became its Bishop; and two daughters, Teresa and Sancha, who became respectively Countesses of Provence and Toulouse. In these alliances, we may trace the beginnings of those ties which were to draw Aragon and the south of France very close together in after centuries, by a bond of which the links were at once social, literary, and romantic.

Some writers mention, without, however, giving any further details, the name of a third daughter, Urraca, stating that this Princess was consecrated, at a very early age, to the service of God, in the famous Convent of Santas Cruz de las Sorores, of the Benedictine rule, which had been founded in the tenth century near Jaca, and which was to prove, for more than six centuries, "a shelter of innocence and an ark of refuge wherein the widows of the Royal House were to find a safe retreat from their sorrows." Here, if the witness of their quaint and interesting tomb is to be believed, the child nun was eventually joined by her two elder sisters, Sancha, who married Guillaume III, surnamed Taillefer, of Toulouse, and was left a widow in 1045, and Teresa, who became the wife of Guillen Bertran of Provence, and was widowed in 1049, and who, in her father's will, was nominated his successor in the event of the failure of issue to his sons, Sancho and Gonzalo. On the tomb referred to, the three royal sisters are depicted, one as a mere child, in the simple fashion of the dress of their times, the flowing inner garment covered by the voluminous

mantle, bordered with precious stones, but above all, in point of interest, wearing the curious, mitre-shaped head-dress of the period, consisting of an under-coif with pleated edges, covered by a second, resembling a Phrygian or Catalan cap, the flat point falling over, like that of a nightcap. These mitres, which are said to have been introduced into Spain by Beatrice of Suabia, Queen of Ferdinand the Saint of Castile, though other authorities assign to them an Oriental origin, were made of an incredible amount—sometimes as much as fifty yards—of material, and were usually fastened under the chin of the wearer by a ribbon or band known as the *barbuquejo*, which was sometimes simply folded, sometimes pleated or fluted. It is interesting in this connection to recall the note, made during his travels in the East in the early part of the eighteenth century, of a distinguished etymologist, who speaks of “the brides of Bedouin princes” wearing silver, mitre-shaped head-dresses, with a black silk veil pendent from them, edged with pearls and precious stones.

Huesca, a rival in point of antiquity, massive walls, and picturesque surroundings, to Jaca, shared with the latter the residential favour of the Kings of Aragon before the recovery of Zaragoza from the Moors. A college now marks the site of the ancient palace occupied by the royal household on the occasions of their visits to Huesca. As Jaca was within easy distance of San Juan de la Peña, so was Huesca within even closer reach of another royal monastery, that of Monte-Aragon, which was the burial-place of Alfonso the Warrior. Within the former, Queen Gisberga, who died December 1, 1049, was laid to rest. A second Queen, whose name was Iñez, has been assigned by some early historians to Ramiro I, but her existence is almost certainly mythical. Ramiro survived his consort, Doña Gisberga, for many years, dying, as he had lived, sword in hand, May 8, 1063, whilst besieging Grao, a famous stronghold of the Moors, and at war, at the same time, with his kinsmen of Navarre and Castile.

The second Queen of Aragon was Felicia, whose father was Armengol of the illustrious House of Urgel, famous in battle against the Moors, and who laid down his life, in his son-in-law's wars, at Barbastro. The beauty and virtue of the young Queen, it is said, were regarded as of "happy augury," no less than her name, "for the kingdom and the royal house." Like the married life of her mother-in-law, Queen Gisberga, and many another who came after them, that of Queen Felicia was chequered by the ceaseless shock of battle in which her husband was engaged throughout his reign. Her name emerges but rarely from the claustral seclusion of silence. Her influence, however, we may gather, was invariably on the side of her people's good, whilst more than once her signature, appearing conjointly with her consort's, in documents confirming a royal benefaction to a monastery, proves that it was also on the side of the Church. From the marriage of the second King and Queen of Aragon sprang three sons, who became in succession Kings of Aragon also.

It is uncertain whether Queen Felicia lived to witness all the triumphs of her husband's arms, pushed forward against the Moors throughout his reign, or the winning of Barbastro, Monzon, and Alquezar from the infidel, and the laying under tribute of the Moorish King of Huesca, which were all notable events of his rule. The warlike sovereign married, as his second wife, Philippa, only daughter and heiress of Guillaume IV, Count of Toulouse, and his second wife, Emma de Mortain; but the life of this Queen of Aragon belongs essentially to the history of the famous Guillaume IX, Duke of Aquitaine, to whom she was united, it is said, within six months of the death of Sancho Ramirez, the marriage being in every way, as the old chroniclers assure us, more suitable than the preceding one, the King of Aragon having been her senior by many years, while the Troubadour Duke was but a few years older, a cultured gentleman as well as a gallant soldier.

Sancho Ramirez died June 4, 1094, whilst besieging Huesca, after extracting from his son and successor, Pedro I, a solemn promise not to quit the walls of the city until he had reduced it to submission, a promise which was faithfully kept until the fall of the city two years after.

Before passing on to the fuller details of the lives of the later Queens, it will be of interest briefly to pass in review "the habit as they lived" of Queens Gisberga and Felicia, to glean some outline of the simple, yet often sumptuous garments in which they looked well to the ways of their households, or rode abroad in days when no journey was without danger of capture by the ever-present Moorish invader. Nowhere else in history is it possible to turn more enchanting pages of fashion and domestic usages than in that of Spain, which owed, as few other nations have ever done, so much to the cosmopolitan incursions of royal brides and their attendant trains.

Linen was largely used at this date in Spain. From the invaluable researches of the Count of Clonard in ancient documents of the period, we learn that there were two qualities of this material in common use; one known as *byssine*, employed for veils, tunics, albs, chasubles, and frontals; whilst that of an inferior quality was used for sheets, tablecloths, cloaks, altar curtains, and garments in general. The latter were frequently adorned with gold fringes, and we may gather from ancient authorities on the subject that early Spanish linen was not only white, but of various colours. The industry was a natural one, says the Count of Clonard, in Spain, where mediaeval documents contain frequent mention of the cultivation of flax and hemp, and allusion to the measurement of linen by the yard. The underwear of Queen Gisberga and Queen Felicia would be of the finest quality. Silk, which was common in Spain from the ninth century, would be employed for their *sayas*, their tunics, with their linings of fur, known as *pellotes*, over which, on gala days, they

would wear mantles of *pall*, fastened with golden fermails. The floating veil, which was a distinctive mark of royal ladies in ancient Spain, would flow gracefully from beneath their crowns.

When they rode abroad, or were borne in their litters, they wore their sumptuous fur pelisses, a garment which had become a necessity for those who had been driven by the encroachments of the luxurious Moors to seek refuge in the mountain fastnesses of the inclement north of Spain.

A long list of skins of animals were at the disposal of gentle and simple alike in that wild and ideal hunting country. The *melote* or *zamarra* (sheepskin dress), first worn by the poorer classes, was probably the original form of the pelisse. From the ninth century, persons of higher rank wore this garment buttoned down the front, with tight sleeves, some however being open from waist to knee, made of more or less expensive furs, according to the means of the wearer. Squirrel, fox, deer, hare, coney, lynx, wild cat, otter, and goat were pressed into service, over and above the more regal ermine, minever, sable, while mantles of *alfaneque* (down from the breast of the Barbary falcon) are frequently mentioned. Furs are often alluded to in wills of the period. Guisla, Countess of Cerdeña, orders her two pelisses, one of sable, the other of ermine, to be sold on her death. "A certain woman named Sinner or Suner" bequeaths a pelisse to her servant. *Alfaneque*, which was probably used for trimming, as swansdown at a later date, figures in the dower of Munia Doña, wife of Assur Gomez, who, declaring that he takes her to wife "as much for the love he bears her as with the consent of her parents and kinsfolk," bestows upon her, amongst other bridal gifts, "a horse with silver harness and bit" and "a skin of alfaneque."

Passing from the personal to the household *mobilier*, it would be a mistake to suppose that, although the Christian population of Spain had been driven back by the wave of Moorish invasion upon the stern and circum-

scribed area of the territory left to them by their invaders, the former were therefore altogether strangers to the graces and comforts of life with which the alien peoples of Southern Spain surrounded themselves at this date. Kings and nobles, it is true, lived shut up in their fortress-castles, within fortified walls, where, sword in hand, they were ever on the alert for the call to arms. Bristling watch-towers took the place of watered gardens and secluded patios, whence the scent of lime and orange and oleander floated in to hall and alcove through lace-like lattices. But within the houses of the Aragonese there was beginning to be some show of that taste for the refinements of daily life which was to find its full expression, two centuries later, in a luxury unparalleled in Europe save in the Courts of mediaeval Italy and the East. Furniture, we are told, was heavy, sparingly decorated; chairs were of two kinds, some of "scissors" or folding shape, others with arms, reserved for the head of the family. State chairs or thrones, for kings and bishops, of this character, were usually placed on a dais, with a *dorsal* or curtains at the back. Stools and benches were provided for persons of less distinction, women generally sitting on cushions on the floor. Beds were only for the wealthy. These were well provided with mattresses, bolsters, pillows, sheets, and counterpanes, a curious adjunct to their furnishing being a ladder, usually of silver, for climbing up into the bed! This fashion of high bedsteads seems to have persisted to a later date in Spain, for Ford, writing in 1869, alludes to the loftiness of the Leonese beds. Silver ladders, however, were not restricted to use in the bedroom. That sprightly seventeenth-century voyager, the Comtesse d'Aulnoy, writes of forty silver ladders in the inventory of the then Duke of Albuquerque, "for climbing his sideboard, made in grades like an altar in a spacious hall."

As the mediaeval bedstead was the most imposing object in the room of the lord or lady in the Middle Ages, so was its furnishing manifold and sumptuous.

Over it stretched the canopy—*almocalla* or *almuzala*—poetically signifying, “haven of refuge from all winds”; behind it, the *parament* or *dorsal*. On it were placed mattress, pillows, bolster, for use at night, cushions being provided for the daytime, when the bed was utilized as a couch or state seat. The linen sheets were either plain, or exquisitely embroidered in silk or gold thread, while every possible product of the loom was pressed into service for the counterpane, leather lined with cloth being the favourite form of winter coverlets. The *alfajara* was the magnificent counterpane or bed-spread for great occasions; this was frequently made of *pall*, signifying in general any rich cloth, but, in the case of the mediaeval bed-covering, possibly further enriched with gold embroidery and fringes.

Tables were spread with linen tablecloths, some authorities maintaining that the finger-napkin was not unknown. Vessels of gold, silver, copper, wood, ivory, and marble, with handles and without, dishes called *greal*, *gradal*, or *garal*, crescent-shaped candelabra, horn goblets, silver and crystal lamps, wooden chests with ironwork locks, caskets of silver-gilt, set with precious stones, the ewer and basin, with its accompanying towels, the earthenware footbath, are all enumerated in early inventories of Christian Spain, together with such homelier items as pails, frying-pans, cauldrons, kneading-troughs, spits, braziers, mortar and pestles, pothooks and pitchers.

RÉSUMÉ OF CHAPTER I

Duration of the separate Kingdom of Aragon, 1035 to 1479.

Doña Munia Mayor and its origin, 1035 to 1056.

Moorish influence on position of women in Aragon.

Authority and influence of Queens in Cortes and Councils.

Their environment. Their connection with the troubadours.

Nationalities of the Queens of Aragon.

Their early Courts.

Marriage of Ramiro I and Gisberga or Ermesinda of Bigorre, 1036.

THE QUEENS OF ARAGON

Their daughters and their destinies.

Death of Doña Gisberga, 1049.

Death of Don Ramiro, 1063.

Doña Felicia, second Queen of Aragon.

Doña Philippa of Toulouse, third Queen of Aragon.

Death of her husband, Don Sancho Ramirez, 1094.

Dress, furniture, and domestic utensils of the period.

CHAPTER II

DOÑA URRACA OF CASTILE AND ARAGON

WHEN the crown of Aragon fell upon the brow of Pedro I at the death of his father, Sancho Ramirez, it was a call to arms. Zaragoza, in whose Christian cathedral the Kings and Queens of Aragon were yet to be crowned with a pomp that has rarely, if ever, been equalled in the history of royal ceremonial, still owned the sway of a Moorish emir, and thence, reinforced from all quarters, the invaders were gathering, as though with a last, united determination, to strike a final blow at the valiant little kingdom they were beginning to fear. In the midst of his ceaseless wars, it is said that there came a brief and brilliant truce, in which Pedro found time to celebrate his marriage with an Italian lady named Berta; of the fourth Queen of Aragon we know no more than this. Doubt is cast upon her very existence, moreover, by the fact that on several occasions the signature of the Countess Sancha, aunt of the King, appears, conjointly with her royal nephew, on documents of the period. This most shadowy Berta ushers in a more imposing and arresting figure, Queen of Castile as well as of Aragon, luckless alike in name and fortune, Urraca, the stormy petrel of mediaeval Spain.

Around few figures in history does the traditional light which beats upon a throne play more fiercely than around that of the fifth Queen of Aragon. The judicial and unprejudiced mind of Lafuente sees in that "turbulent, ill-omened, and calamitous, and mournfully celebrated reign," "a fatal episode which we should efface with good will from the historic pages of our

country." "We should dismiss such reigns," says another historian, "from the series which constitute our national history." All that have ever attempted to tell her story, range themselves into one or other of the two camps, hostile or friendly, into which their separate conclusions inevitably drive them. What was the truth of her? The voluptuous termagant? Or the wronged and religious Queen? Victim, or evil genius? Who shall decide?

The life of Urraca of Castile opened auspiciously enough, as the only issue of the second marriage of Alfonso VI, King of Leon and Castile, of Toledo and Galicia, Emperor of the Spains, surnamed the Brave and the Great (himself the second son of the noble sovereigns Fernando I and Sancha of Castile), with Constance of Burgundy, styled in Spanish history "the first Christian Queen of Toledo," a Princess of the blood-royal of France, daughter of Robert, Duke of Burgundy, and of the Duchess Élie, granddaughter of Robert the Pious, King of France, and his consort, Constance of Provence, whose name was borne by the Queen of Castile. Valiant as soldier and fortunate as statesman, Alfonso VI is further famous in history for his many marriages. Out of the clouds of confusion that obscure the names and identities of his six consorts the following may probably be accepted as the correct list: Iñez, daughter of Guillaume, Duke of Aquitaine and Count of Poitou, married in 1074 and repudiated in 1077; Ximena Munoz, whose marriage was annulled after the birth of her two daughters, Teresa and Elvira; Constance of Burgundy; Berta, the repudiated wife of Henry IV, Emperor of Germany; Zaida, a Moorish convert; and Isabel, or Elizabeth, a French Princess.

Separated by Papal decree from Ximena Munoz, to whom he was tenderly attached, Alfonso, who seems never to have left the throne of his Queen-consort long vacant, began, with his third marriage, the long series of royal international alliances of Spain with other countries, alliances which, as we shall see, were to have far-

reaching consequences in matters alike of faith and fashion. The reputation of Constance of Burgundy for beauty and devoutness had apparently preceded her to Spain. She was already a widow, after a very brief married life, her first husband having been Hugo II, Comte de Châlons, a Prince of the Sovereign House of the Counts Palatine of Burgundy, when the ambassador of Alfonso, Peter, Abbot of Tours, sought her hand on behalf of his royal master. Her portrait, painted by contemporary chroniclers, depicts her as "a Princess of singular accomplishments, much piety, beauty, and extraordinary prudence, greatly beloved by her consort, who styled her in national records Most noble Princess of the Royal House of France, Empress, and First Christian Queen of Toledo." Scarcely arrived in Burgos, whither she was conducted by Alfonso directly after the solemnization of their marriage, the new Queen expressed herself in terms of pious horror regarding the lax state of the Church in Spain. At her earnest entreaty, a Council was held in the city, presided over by Richard, Abbot of Marseilles, as Papal Legate, at which numerous ecclesiastical reforms were enacted, amongst them the discontinuance of the Mozarabic ritual, and the use of the Roman ritual. The episode in Spanish history with which the name of Constance is chiefly connected, however, is that which links her with the Cathedral of Toledo. Converted by the Moors into their great mosque, this edifice had been granted to the conquered invaders by Alfonso VI, with liberty to continue their worship therein; but, during the King's absence, Constance, incited by the Archbishop, Bernard of Cluny, whom she had brought in her train from France, seized the mosque and consecrated it anew to Christian worship. This violation of his oath to the Moors was regarded by the King as an offence which he was prepared to visit, both on his consort and the too zealous prelate, with extreme penalties, had not the Moors themselves interceded for both Queen and Archbishop.

About 1080, the birth took place of the only child of

the marriage of Alfonso VI and Constance of Burgundy. The King had ardently desired a son, having only two daughters by his previous union with Ximena Munoz. The name which was bestowed upon the new-born Princess, that of Urraca, had already been borne by several ladies of her House, in Leon, Castile, and Portugal, the most famous holder of it having been that Urraca, Lady of Zamora, whose desperate resistance of her brother Sancho's forces before the walls of her city domain created the national proverb, "Zamora was not taken in an hour." The name Urraca, of pure Arabic meaning, signifying "brilliant in colour," was a common one in Castile, and was applied, says Richard Ford quaintly, "equally to a delicious pear in Galicia and to a chattering pie!" Urraca of Castile was left motherless when she was probably a very few years old. Her mother's place was quickly filled by that beautiful Zaida, who became Isabel on her conversion from the faith of the Moors, and was the real romance of her much-married husband's life. She became the mother of his long-desired and idolized son, Sancho, in 1096. In accordance with mediaeval custom, the education of the Princess Urraca was confided to one of the greatest nobles of his time, Don Pedro Ansurez, Lord of Valladolid, who is by some authorities supposed to have been the second husband of her maternal grandmother, the Duchess Élie. Ansurez is said to have fulfilled his delicate charge with the utmost zeal and fidelity, bringing up the young Princess in "true Christian principles," his paternal affection for her being repaid, we are told, by her constant and filial love. Thus, both by heredity and by early training, Urraca of Castile was a true daughter of the Church which yielded her both detractors and defenders.

Although the sturdy and noble boyhood of the young Infante Sancho seemed for the moment to render the chances of his elder sister's succeeding to the throne of Castile remote indeed, yet the question of her marriage was by no means an unimportant one. By race, ex-

plots, and station, her bridegroom must be worthy of her. Her father's choice fell, happily for the youthful bride, upon one who was in all essentials suitable.

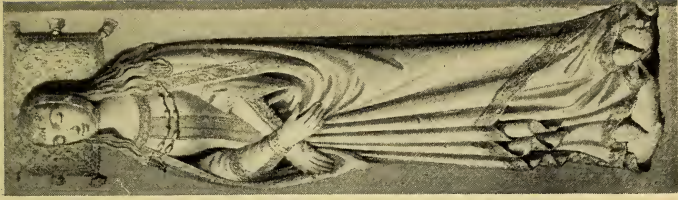
The military fame of Alfonso VI of Castile had attracted princes from every realm to fight for the Faith under his victorious banner. France, in particular, had sent the flower of her chivalry to aid the Castilian monarch in his almost lifelong struggle on behalf of Christianity in the Peninsula. Amongst their number, were two, specially distinguished, who had been drawn to the Castilian Court in the wake of the Burgundian Queen. In their adopted country, Raymond and Henri of Burgundy found not only the rewards of valour in the King's service, but royal brides. Upon the latter Alfonso bestowed the hand of his daughter Teresa, born of his uncanonical union with Ximena Munoz, a marriage which was to found the Lusitanian dynasty. At the age of thirteen, the Infanta Urraca was betrothed to his brother Raymond, with the Countship of Galicia as their marriage portion.

The young Count and the still more youthful Countess of Galicia were fortunate enough to win at the outset the rough and restless hearts of the Galicians. Laying aside the sword for that passion for town-planning which is by no means peculiar to our own day, Count Raymond reared for himself an imperishable monument in the rebuilding and re peopling of the cities of Salamanca, Segovia, and Avila. Upon the latter city, "Avila of the Knights," he is said to have employed eight hundred men under the direction of a Roman named Cassandro and Florian de Pituenga, a Frenchman. His pious benefactions, not only to the famous shrine of Santiago, but to less well-known churches and monasteries, were as numerous as the economic benefits which he bestowed upon his state. In the former, if not in the latter, the Countess Urraca was intimately associated; to the end of her life, she was no less generous a donor to religious houses and churches than her namesake kinswoman, Urraca Fernandez.

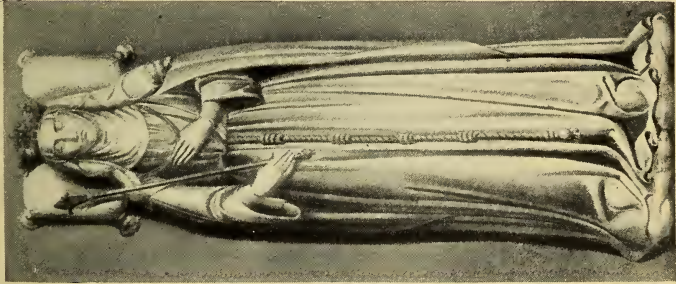
Two children, a son and a daughter, were born to the Count and Countess of Galicia before the lamented death of the former. Both were destined to attain greatness ; the son (whose birth, on March 1, 1104, was announced to the superstitious Galicians—always addicted, says a cynical modern writer, to seeing signs and wonders in the heavens—by a miraculous star, which blazed for several days in the sky) as Alfonso VIII, first Emperor of the Spains ; the daughter, Doña Sancha, no less great in Christian virtues than her brother in military talents, as the Spouse of St. Isidore.

In the latter part of his life, Raymond of Burgundy and Galicia fell under his father-in-law's displeasure, owing, it is said, to the open hostility and disrespect which he showed to his wife's beautiful stepmother, the Moorish Queen Zaida, or Isabel, the adored wife of King Alfonso and the mother of his idolized only son and heir, Don Sancho, although it is also suggested that the Count's practical banishment from the Court was in reality owing to the discovery by the King of a secret understanding between the two brothers, Raymond and Henri, to seize and divide their father-in-law's dominions between them on the death of the latter. Alfonso, the Count's heir, shared in the disfavour incurred by his father, and was brought up, at a distance from his grandfather's court, in the care of the Countess de Trava.

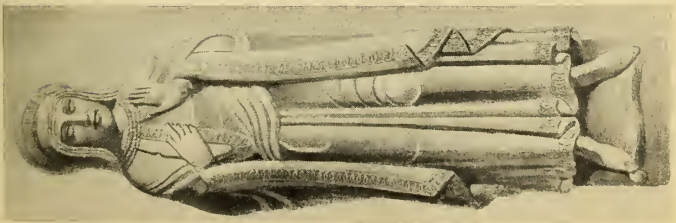
The death of Count Raymond, which occurred at Grajal when his son was about seven years old, was the first of the long chain of misfortunes in which it involved his young widow. Scarcely had the countship over which he had ruled with so paternal a sway lost its head, ministered to on his death-bed by that astute and powerful prelate, Diego Gelmirez, Bishop of Santiago, who was to have so much to say in the after fortunes of Doña Urraca, than the second calamity of her life fell upon her. More than once in the history of Spain, as well as in that of other countries, the death of a little child has plunged a whole kingdom in confusion, if not



Doña CONSTANZA
DE ARAGON



Doña SIBILIA
DE FORCIA



Doña URRACA
OF CASTILE

in disaster. It was so at the battle of Uclés, that "fatal site in Spanish annals," when the young heir to the throne of Castile and Leon, fighting bravely in his father's stead against the Moors, lost his life at the age of eleven years, leaving the inheritance in which he seemed, says Mariana, "to have been born to accomplish great deeds," to his sister, the widowed Countess of Galicia. Hardly had that piteous and heart-rending cry of the bereaved father, which seems to have lost none of its poignancy as it comes to us across the centuries—"Ah, my son, my son! Joy of my heart and light of my eyes, and solace of my old age!"—died away, when the grandees of Castile, viewing with apprehension the succession of a woman to a throne threatened by Moorish foes, grown bolder since the victory of Uclés, insisted on the immediate remarriage of his widowed daughter, now become sole heiress to her father's dominions, as the only present safeguard and future security against their hereditary enemies. The choice of the Castilian nobles seems to have coincided with that of Doña Urraca's own heart. The strong man whom, they agreed, both the Infanta and her country needed at this critical juncture in their history, was one of their own order, the gallant knight and soldier, Don Gonzalo Gomez, Count of Candespina, whose suit, it was further believed, would not be altogether displeasing to the Infanta herself. Kings of Castile, however, were no Kings of Aragon, willing to submit in all things to the will of their subjects, and Alfonso was in no mood to be dictated to in the all-important matter of his daughter's second marriage. He was certainly not disposed to entertain for an instant such a union as that proposed to him, a union which, as he knew well, would have resulted, as soon as the breath was out of his body, in that kingdom which he had won with the sword being given over to ceaseless border skirmishes and petty wars amongst the turbulent nobles, who would resent none the less the rule over them of one of their own order because they themselves had raised him to the side of their

Queen. Her father indeed desired that that place should be occupied by a strong man ; by none other could his great political designs be accomplished ; but he looked for him beyond the borders of his own dominions, to which he counted on that chosen bridegroom adding yet another province. Without hesitation, in short, Alfonso marked him in his namesake of Aragon, the Battler, a man after his own heart, already the terror of the Moors, and therefore the more invaluable as ally and husband to a country and Queen specially threatened by the infidel armies. The grandees of Castile had chosen as their spokesman a certain Jewish physician named Cidelous, who was in attendance on the King, and must have congratulated themselves on their prudence, for the unlucky Ambassador was driven from the presence of his sovereign, whose rage at his temerity knew no bounds, and forbidden ever to approach him again. Immediately after this peremptory dismissal, the King sent for the Archbishop of Toledo, Don Bernardo, and made known his royal will and pleasure that Doña Urraca's betrothal, which there can be little doubt he had already negotiated, should be instantly celebrated. This ceremony took place, it is said, at Toledo, with great pomp and royal splendour, in 1116. Three years later, the death of Alfonso VI left Doña Urraca in undisturbed possession of her great inheritance, her betrothed husband, Alfonso of Aragon, having meanwhile succeeded his father, Don Pedro I, on the throne. Following on her proclamation as Queen, the Cortes urged upon Doña Urraca the speedy fulfilment of her betrothal vows. In the autumn of 1119 the notables were summoned to assist at the castle of Monzon at the ill-assorted marriage. The repugnance with which the bride consented to this union of political expediency was expressed a few years later, when, seeking release from her marriage vows, she wrote that " in conformity with the will of my dead, pious father, I saw myself forced to submit to the will of the grandees, who thus disposed of me for the good of the kingdom, uniting me to that bloodstained tyrant,

the King of Aragon, in a base and execrable marriage." And again the Galicians were able to point to the omens of sympathetic nature, for on the very night of the marriage, the vintage, which, until then, had promised an abundant harvest, was totally destroyed by a terrific hailstorm.

It was indeed a marriage foredoomed to failure from the outset, to disappoint all the hopes which the dead King had formed for the future of his kingdom, and to delay for more than three centuries that ultimate union of Aragon and Castile which was to be so gloriously accomplished by the marriage of the son of the last Queen of Aragon. Meanwhile, it was to be but the fruitful source of wars, dissensions, and countless calamities. The temper of Christian Spain, still in the thick of its prolonged struggle with the Moors, was not yet ripe for unity. And Aragon was a foreign neighbour, almost as much alien as the Moor himself. The very fame of the Battler, which had seemed to designate him as the elect of Castile, made him the more unacceptable to the Castilians. The clerical party in the State, moreover, viewed the marriage with undisguised abhorrence, the contracting parties being within the forbidden degrees, a fact to which the Queen owed her eventual release from a yoke which was not long in becoming intolerable.

But the most powerful of the causes which militated against the success of a marriage on which both the living and the dead had built such lofty expectations, was the hopelessly irreconcilable characters of the royal consorts.

Those characters have been hotly defended and as fiercely denounced by the opposing partisans of husband and wife. Diligent and unprejudiced research has cleared away much of the mist that has long obscured the figures of Don Alfonso and Doña Urraca, and shown us the plain truth about them and the failure of their marital relations. It is a common failure of commoner folks than royal personages.

Alfonso the Battler, worthy of his name, was, above all things, the rough soldier, the hardy mountaineer, simple and frugal in his habits, more accustomed to the stern life of camps than the luxury of courts, understanding women not at all, certainly not such a one as the light-hearted, high-spirited woman he had married. Whilst she, on her part, could not but contrast the harsh and domineering temper of her second husband with the courtly and cultured gentleness of Raymond of Burgundy, her enemies declaring that there was at her Court, and ever at her side, one who, unhappily for the King's honour, was only too fatally akin to her memory of her first husband. The quarrels between the King and Queen grew to be a public scandal. The Church, thereafter to be her champion and deliverer, looked on, and waited. From harsh words the King proceeded to physical violence. "None but you," cries the unhappy wife to one of her faithful adherents, the Count Fernando, "know what scorn, what grief, what torments, I have suffered at the hands of this cruel tyrant, who has not only dishonoured me with infamous speech, but has struck me in the face with his rude hands and trodden me underfoot." Little wonder if, as the partisans of Alfonso assert, she sighed for "the good times gone by," or that she exclaimed, in the hearing of the King, "Ah, Count Gomez, well had it been for me if I had married you!" Doña Urraca was careful, however, not to rely merely upon her husband's brutal treatment of her in her appeal to the Holy See for the annulment of her marriage. To the plea of an injured or outraged wife, Rome had been known to turn a deaf ear if that plea did not march with political expediency: but Doña Urraca had a still more powerful accusation to bring against her hated consort. Not only was he flagrantly forgetful of his conjugal vows, but he was also "wholly given to divination and to auguries by birds, believing that the ravens and crows can work us harm"—a sin, in short, against which both Church and State pronounced the direst penalties. Nor was this the sum-total of the

Queen's denunciations. Not only did the Battler dabble in forbidden arts and maltreat his wife, he was a violator and despoiler of churches, a robber of the Divine treasury, and a confiscator of the property of priests.

In the face of such heaped accusations, there could be no hesitation on the part of Rome. The Pope ordered the Archbishop of Toledo to declare the marriage of Don Alfonso and Doña Urraca null and void, owing to the relationship, that of third cousins, between them. The Archbishop transmitted the Papal decree to Bishop Gelmirez, who in turn pronounced the unlawfulness of the continued cohabitation of the King and Queen, threatening the latter, should she persist in the same, with deprivation of the royal power, and of the community of the Church. The King's reply to this imperious edict was his committal of his wife to the Castle of Castellar, where, in her humiliating captivity, the imprisoned Queen seems to have suddenly bethought her of one weapon still left to her whereby she might, at one stroke, secure her own freedom, and be revenged on her implacable and detested gaoler. In the little village of Caldas—afterwards to be known as Caldas del Rey—there was growing up under the affectionate tutelage of the Count and Countess de Trava the little son of Raymond and Urraca of Galicia. In him centred the last hopes of the mother who seems to have been long forgetful of his very existence. From her prison, she found means to send word to her trusty servants to have the child crowned as King of Galicia, this being the only title which she was disposed to confer upon him, her own manifold designations being, as yet, too precious a treasure to yield, even to a son, as the price of liberty. Scarcely had her edict gone forth, when the King suddenly manifested an inexplicable desire for a reconciliation with his wife. Any willingness on the part of the Queen to consent to resume their former relations was, however, peremptorily nipped in the bud by the masterful Gelmirez, who, in the name of the

Holy See, which had already pronounced the decree of divorce, solicited by Doña Urraca herself, forbade any such step on her part. The King, exasperated at the refusal, had the Queen brought to Soria, where he publicly repudiated her, thereby giving great offence to her Castilian subjects, and plunging the kingdom, as the old chroniclers relate, "in such great ills and wars," that many a man must have acknowledged in them the fulfilment of the omen of those miraculous tears said to have been shed by the very stones of St. Isidore at the death of Alfonso VI, and held at the time to be prophetic of the just cause the dead monarch would have for weeping had he but lived to see the havoc which the Battler of Aragon was to work in his land.

From the moment of their final rupture, the King of Aragon became the implacable enemy of the Queen of Castile. Making himself master of all the most important castles and fortresses in her kingdom, he garrisoned them with his own soldiers, and embarked upon that campaign of robbery of churches and profanation of sanctuaries which the partisans of his wife do not hesitate to lay to his charge. It is only just to place against these charges the terms of respect in which even his infidel enemies write of him, hailing him the most valiant of the kings of Christian Spain, whilst none have ever cast a stone at his private life. He it was who, when asked why he did not contract, like his brother sovereigns, irregular alliances with some of his beautiful Moorish captives, was said to have answered that, in a soldier's life, love should play but a secondary part. He paid for his defection from that ideal with his ill-starred matrimonial experiences.

History has left us but few glimpses of this mediaeval Queen, but they serve to reconstruct a picture for ever swept by storm, before which this royal petrel is ceaselessly driven, over snowy, wind-lashed mountains, in the teeth of pitiless rain, now a fugitive, imploring shelter at some monastery gate, now barely escaping

with her life from the infuriated mob howling for that of Gelmirez as well, but always fearless, never beaten, every inch a Queen, even in her darkest hour.

Beside this restless, storm-tossed figure moves that other, no less remarkable personality of Don Diego Gelmirez, Bishop of Compostella from 1101, and its first Archbishop, twenty years later.

It was to this masterful prelate that Spain owed her first navy. In 1120 Gelmirez sent to Genoa for a ship-builder, Ogier, to build him two galleys.

Of the character of this notable prelate, men of many minds have been in doubt. To some, he has seemed a kind of sacerdotal Mephistopheles, astute and dexterous in negotiation, cunning in politics. To others, he is "a great Prince of the Church, who suffered many things, both in peace and in war." He belonged, as a modern historian bids us bear in mind, when we come to pronounce judgment upon him, to an age little concerned with political morality, when men changed sides without the least regard to faith or friendship, or even solemn promises. Thus, when we find him now the friend, now the foe, in turn, of Doña Urraca and her son, now taking the field, soldier-prelate as he was, against Queen or King, then intriguing, apparently, against both mother and son, with Doña Teresa of Portugal, half-sister of Doña Urraca, and one of her most troublesome enemies, surprise should be the last feeling with which we mark his devious ways. He was a man of great talents, ambitious, both for his own aggrandizement and for the Church in which he rose to such high dignity. As Bishop of Compostella, that unrivalled goal of the world's pilgrims of his day, he was one of the most princely of feudal lords. But his sway was one of iron, and Santiago was often in arms against him. On one such occasion, the citizens having besieged both their Bishop and the Queen, who chanced to be in Santiago also, in the church, the two illustrious prisoners were forced to take refuge in a tower, to which the rebels

proceeded to set fire. The Queen was compelled, in order to save her life, to make her way through a hostile crowd, by whom she was roughly handled, Gelmirez, meanwhile, making his escape only by assuming the disguise of a beggar. The Bishop of Santiago lived to attain, under the son of Doña Urraca, the Archiepiscopal dignity of his See, in addition to much worldly reward at the hands of the young sovereign, who owed his accession to his throne, in the first instance, there can be little doubt, to the powerful influence of his mother's ancient partisan. To the young King, Gelmirez was none of those things which his enemies have laid to his charge. With his treacheries, his simony, his litigiousness, the shifty and sacrilegious means whereby he replenished his own coffers and those of Rome, the boy-sovereign had nothing to do. For him, he was solely the champion to whom he owed a crown, as to his priestly advocates he was a model of virtue and saintliness, "singularly favoured by God" both as prelate and soldier. Was he true patriot, or faithless statesman? Who can tell? His true judgment rests in shadow, with that of Urraca of Castile.

We track that lonely, storm-driven figure, in her quaint, high head-dress and fur-lined mantle, from rôle to rôle of those which she was in turn compelled to play. Now, we see her prostrate before the shrine of the world-famous Santiago de Compostella, entreating that light may be shed upon her dark path: "Thou, O most holy Saviour, deign," she prays, "to grant this kingdom to whomsoever has the right to rule over it. Vouchsafe, also, to put an end to war, and to give us the peace which we desire, that Thy faithful people may dwell peaceably, and may be set free to serve Thee, Who art the living and true God, throughout all ages." See her, suppliant still, at the feet of the Blessed Virgin of Lugo, imploring Our Lady "to accept this, my oblation, though it be but small, together with my sighs, and tears, that, by thy pious intercession, I may continue in the peaceful possession of the kingdom of

my fathers, and be thou my shield and defender through life and in the day of the tremendous judgment." And, lest any deem her but a weak, priest-ridden devotee, let us follow her from the steps of the altar, out into the rigours of winter, the intolerable frosts and snow, through which, "at the head of her troops, she played the man, sharing with them the fatigues and hardships of their long campaign"; let us scale those bleak, forbidding mountain heights which she traversed at the call of duty.

Rest came but rarely to Doña Urraca. Now, she keeps a small court at the Benedictine Monastery of Samos; we read of her steward, Ximenez Lopez, of her notary, Juan Ramirez, of Gutierre de Fernandez, her majordomo, besides a few faithful ecclesiastics, the Bishops of Lugo and Mondonedo, and others. Above all, ill-fated as she was in many of her relations throughout her life, she had by her side amid all its vicissitudes one bound to her by the closest ties, to whom she found leisure, rare though it must have been, to teach statesmanship, if not saintliness—that was an inheritance which Doña Sancha, only daughter of Doña Urraca's first marriage with Raymond of Burgundy, may well have owed to her grandmother, Constance, first Christian Queen of Toledo. The life of this great Infanta, the Spouse of St. Isidore, and the ornament of her times, demands greater space than can be devoted to it in this place. Her great virtues and saintly life, as well as her notable wisdom in worldly affairs, have been extolled by all the chroniclers of Castile. While her mother lived, she signed in conjunction with her all State documents, and on the accession of her brother, Alfonso VII, to the throne, he was guided, we are told, by his sister in all matters—secular, as well as ecclesiastical—pertaining to the government. In recognition of her constant and affectionate devotion to his interests, the grateful King bestowed upon her the title and rank of Queen, giving further proof of his confidence in her goodness and prudence by entrusting her with the care and education

of his daughter, her namesake, Doña Sancha, afterwards Queen of Pampeluna.

With another Sancha, daughter of Alfonso VI and his fifth wife, the French Princess, Isabel, Queen Urraca was also on the most cordial terms. This noble-hearted Infanta, who became the first wife of Count Don Rodrigo Gonzalez de Lara, one of the greatest lords in Castile, more than compensated her royal stepsister for all the treacheries of their other half-sister, Doña Teresa of Portugal. Both she and her husband never swerved from their allegiance to their sister-in-law, the Count fighting her battles loyally on all occasions against the Battler and the young Alfonso of Castile, the latter of whom, after his mother's death, with great magnanimity, received the former rebel against his rule into his service, "giving him Toledo and great honours" in his kingdom, and following, like a son, in his funeral procession, when the remains of the Count were brought back from the Holy Land, where he died, to be interred, according to Sandoval, in the Monastery of Santa Maria de Piasca, patron of his House in Liebana.

The marked contrast between two other half-sisters of Doña Urraca, the Infantas Teresa and Elvira, born of the marriage, afterwards annulled by Papal decree, of Alfonso VI and Doña Ximena Munoz, gave to their royal sister, on the one hand, a faithful friend, whom she associated with her and her own daughter in the government, and, on the other, a treacherous and dangerous enemy. With the restless, ambitious character of Gelmirez, the Infanta Teresa had much in common. Her husband, Don Enrique of Lorraine, saw in the internal troubles of Castile and Leon during the reign of Doña Urraca, an opportunity of which neither husband nor wife were slow to avail themselves of extending the borders of the little kingdom which was to be the cradle of the later Portugal. Doña Teresa, it would seem, never ceased to resent her illegitimacy, nor to regard her royal sister as a usurper of the throne from which the bar sinister alone had thrust her, nor

did she deem it compensation to have been placed by her father, as though in some sort to make amends for his treatment of her beautiful mother, on a par with his legitimate daughter and ultimate heiress, Doña Urraca, by bestowing her hand upon a kinsman of the latter's husband.

Of a very different character was Doña Teresa's sister, Doña Elvira, worthier than the latter in every respect of the title of Queen, which, in accordance with mediaeval custom, was assumed by both sisters, Doña Elvira being also, by her marriage with Raymond IV of Toulouse, the famous crusader, Countess of Toulouse, Duchess of Narbonne, and Marchioness of Provence. Beside the hero sung by Tasso, the chroniclers of her time place the sweet and poetic figure of this Spanish Infanta, who, in fulfilment of the solemn vow, accompanied her lord to the Holy Land, sharing his triumphs and perils, and ministering to him in all his misfortunes, her brave spirit making her a worthy helpmeet for such a gallant knight. The only son of the illustrious couple, born in the Holy Land, and named Alfonso Jordan, was a noble son of noble parents, and won honour for himself in turn at the court of his cousin, Alfonso VII of Castille.

Even before the final veil falls upon the stormy life of Doña Urraca, the clouds of uncertainty gather about her turbulent reign. Some historians maintain that mother and son reigned together over a divided kingdom for several years before the death of the former, others that Gelmirez, seeing nothing but ruin and dismemberment for the realm if the unseemly struggle for the supremacy was prolonged, prevailed upon the Queen to bring all the long dissensions of her rule to an end by resigning her crown to her son. From the day when Urraca gave her consent—it can scarcely have been an unwilling one—Don Alfonso, it is said, “loaded her with honours, and paid her the most profound respect.” It was sufficient return, one may believe, for the relinquishment of a burden of which she, if ever a queen was,

must have grown intolerably weary. There were, moreover, if report did not wrong her, other and more secret reasons why Doña Urraca should have willingly embraced obscurity. That obscurity was illuminated, so it has always been maintained, by the romance of her third marriage, no less disastrous to her fame as woman and queen than the second had been. Its clandestine character has for many years brought down upon her memory that torrent of vilification and calumny which has only recently been cleared away from her history. The lawfulness of her union with the famous Count Pedro Gonzalez de Lara has been amply demonstrated. She was not the mistress, but the wife, of the first noble in her land, in whose veins ran the blood of kings no less than in hers. Their marriage preceded the abdication of the Queen. It would seem, indeed, as though the arrogant pretensions of the Count, which aroused against him the ill-will of his fellow grandees, and resulted in his being banished from Castile, was the chief cause of Doña Urraca's compliance with the suggestion of Gelmirez. The children of this shadowed marriage were Don Fernandez Perez de Lara, surnamed *Hurtado*, from the secrecy surrounding his birth, and Doña Elvira Perez de Lara, who married, first, Garcia Perez de Trava, and, secondly, Don Beltran de Risnel, Count of Carrion, a great adherent of the cause of Doña Urraca, and afterwards a faithful servant of her son's.

The storm-swept life of Urraca of Castile came to an end in March, 1126. Morales tells us, in his description of the city of Leon, that she was laid to rest in the royal mausoleum in the Chapel of St. Isidore, and that, at the date of his visit, at the close of the sixteenth century, he found no more trace of her tomb than a coffer of marble, covered with a plain slab. Her effigy depicts her wearing the royal robes of the period, and the high head-dress already alluded to, which Morales styles "the tall coiffure of ancient Vizcayuna." The inscription on that forgotten tomb declares that within it "lies the Queen, Urraca, daughter of the good King, Alfonso VI, and

mother of the Emperor, Alfonso, who died in the month of March, 1126.”

In striking contrast to the obloquy which for centuries has been heaped upon her name, the children of Doña Urraca have, literally, risen up to call her blessed. Thus her son, Alfonso of Castile, styles her in certain documents of his reign, “Queen of worthy memory,” whilst his sister, the saintly Doña Sancha, names her “the Venerable Queen, Doña Urraca,” and also “Queen worthy of veneration.”

RÉSUMÉ OF CHAPTER II

Accession of Don Pedro I to throne of Aragon, 1094.

Doubtful marriage with an Italian lady, Doña Berta.

Birth of Doña Urraca of Castile, 1080.

Betrothed to Raymond of Burgundy, created Count of Galicia, 1093.

Birth of their son, Alfonso, afterwards Alfonso VIII of Castile, 1104.

Death of Count Raymond, 1111.

Battle of Uclés, death of Don Sancho, Doña Urraca becomes heiress of Castile and Leon.

Death of Alfonso VI of Castile, accession of Doña Urraca to his throne, 1119.

Marriage of Doña Urraca and Alfonso the Battler of Aragon, 1119.

Quarrels of the King and Queen and dissolution of their marriage, their wars, Doña Urraca's son proclaimed King, sketches of Doña Urraca's sisters, her daughter, and Don Diego Gelmirez, Bishop of Compostella.

Her abdication and second marriage. Her death, 1126.

CHAPTER III

DOÑA PETRONILLA

THE death of Alfonso the Battler without heirs called his successor, a younger brother, thereafter known as Ramiro II, from the cloister to a throne. Dispensed from his monastic vows, the Monk-King, as he is styled in history, married Agnes, or Iñez, daughter or sister of Guillaume, Count of Poitiers, by whom he became the father of Doña Petronilla, the only Queen of Aragon in her own right. Having secured the future of both kingdom and daughter by betrothing the latter, almost in her cradle, in 1137, to Ramon Berenger, Count of Barcelona, Ramiro abdicated, and retired once more to his monastery. The name, the origin, and the after-fate of his consort are alike doubtful. By some writers, she is given the name of Matilda; others assert that she was a widow who had herself embraced the religious life when, equally dispensed with her husband, she was brought from a convent to be married to the Monk-King. If this legend be fact, it is more than probable that, after her husband's death, she returned to the obscurity from which she had been torn. However that may be, the history of Aragon knows her no more. Her child, thus orphaned, was taken, it is said, to Castile, where she was brought up under the care of Ramon Berenger's sister, Doña Berenguela, Queen of Alfonso VII, and daughter-in-law of Doña Urraca. Suitable in all respects as such a guardianship seemed to be, it yet threatened, at one time, to rob the Count of Barcelona of his bride and her contingent inheritance, secret intrigues, it is said, having been set on foot at the Court of Castile to betroth the child-Queen of

Aragon to the heir of Castile, Don Sancho. Ramon Berenger, deeply incensed at this treacherous attitude on the part of his sister and brother-in-law, retaliated by entering into negotiations with the King of Navarre for the hand of his daughter, Doña Blanca, who eventually became the bride of Don Sancho above-mentioned. Aragon, meanwhile, alarmed at the possible turn which events might take should the betrothal bond between their little sovereign and the Count of Barcelona be broken, insisted upon her immediate return to the country over which she was to reign, the excuse being given that the climate of Castile was not suited to her constitution.

That "early entry into the field of politics," as the marriage of Doña Petronilla and Ramon Berenger of Barcelona has been called, is noteworthy, not merely because the child-bride was the first and last *Reina Proprietaria*, or Queen in her own right, of Aragon, but because, as another writer has pointed out, it "laid the foundation of the greatness of Spain."

If the Monk-King had sat loosely, while he reigned, to the responsibilities which had been thrust upon him, if he had shown himself, as the story of the Bell of Huesca testifies, both cruel and treacherous, yet it must be laid to his credit that, before shuffling off the crown to resume the cowl, he left the kingdom of which he was so lightly quit in excellent hands.

Ramon Berenger was the first Count of Barcelona, says Señor Mila y Fontanals, celebrated by the poetry of the troubadours, to whom this noble warrior-prince and statesman, closely bound both by ties of kinship and of policy to Provence, through the countships of his brother and nephew, found leisure to show a sympathetic patronage. Their grateful strains attended him on his wedding-day in 1151, the marriage procession to the Cathedral of Lerida, where the nuptial Mass was sung, being preceded by a great chorus of gleemen and gleewomen, who also performed several dances, which appear to have been of a descriptive or pantomimic

character, particular mention being made of a combat between Moors and Christians ; while the bridegroom was everywhere acclaimed with songs of praise, the very monks and hermits forsaking their cells and caves, adds the anonymous chronicler, in honour of the occasion, and joining in the celebration of the Prince's triumph and victories, " now in the Catalan, now in the Latin tongue."

The Kingdom of Aragon and the Countships of Provence and Toulouse took precedence, as it has been well pointed out, of Castile, as the classic country of the Troubadours. To the illustrious House of Barcelona, whose Counts now became virtual rulers of Aragon, Spain owed, not only great political, but no less great economic and literary advantages. In 1113, the crown of Provence had been transferred, by the marriage of its heiress, Dulce, to the third Count of Barcelona. Its culture, its grace of manners, and its cult of poetry had all followed from her native land in the wake of the young Countess. This " gay vegetation," that " beautiful flower which sprang up on a sterile soil," as Sismondi describes the literature of the troubadours, was now to take root in the north-east corner of Spain. The Catalan-Aragonese dynasty was to give a King to its ranks ; in another reign, Aragon was to join the brotherhood of that " group of sovereign princes of mediaeval France whose only common bond was the Provençal language, namely, the Counts of Toulouse, the Dukes of Aquitaine, the Dauphins of Viennois and Auvergne, the Princes of Orange, of the House of Baux, and the Counts of Foix " ; and whose numbers were still more reinforced by the greater fraternity of those petty princes, who, each in his province, his feudal township, or fortress, enjoyed the prerogatives of sovereignty. Henceforth, not merely the magnificence of the city of Barcelona, which was to be the chief place of residence of the Kings of Aragon for many centuries, but the wealth of her commerce and the music of her troubadours, were to be the prize of Aragon.



THE CONVENT OF SANTA CLARA, BARCELONA, AT THE BACK OF THE
OLD PALACE OF THE KINGS OF ARAGON

The lonely little Princess whose baby fingers were first to close upon this prize was no less fortunate than her kingdom in the disposal of her destiny. The husband, so many years her senior, to whose care she had been committed by her father prior to his renunciation of crown and sceptre for the habit which had been torn from his shoulders for awhile, proved himself a noble gentleman, worthy of the name he bore. Taking upon himself all the burden of the sovereignty which his child-bride was not of an age to assume, he modestly refused the title of King, merely adding to his style of Count of Barcelona that of Prince of Aragon. Throughout their married life, Petronilla, we are told, never occupied herself with the affairs or the administration of the government, leaving all such concerns in the hands to which she had learned from childhood they could safely be entrusted.

If this important political union, which proved in the sequel to be no less a marriage of affection, was fortunate in both aspects, the baby bride of Ramon Berenger was equally so in being transferred at an early age from the grim and bleak hill-cities of Aragon which had been the cradle of so many royal Aragonese children before her. To the palace of the Counts of Barcelona, *El Palau*, which first belonged to the Templars, not only the comforts, but the refinements of life had preceded her.

Barcelona, the city of orange groves and pure water, extolled by travellers from the earliest date for her spacious streets and palatial houses, set in delightful gardens, shaded by cedar and myrtle, and musical with fountains, was already the mistress and the terror of the Mediterranean. She had brought commerce to a fine art. Her merchant princes gloried in the "mark" of their calling, as elsewhere in Spain they prided themselves on their armorial bearings. Into her marts, the East, Italy, Greece, Sicily, France, Flanders, and England poured all the treasures of their looms, all the products of their spice groves and alembics. Her own craftsmen were the rivals of all Europe; her silversmiths

and glass-blowers famous from antiquity. The earliest impressions of the child-Princess would be of a city "surpassing every other," as Marineo Siculo testifies, "in the elegance of its buildings, the cleanliness of its streets, its pleasant gardens and the beauty of all things therein." Housed in that "most noble city of his crown," as it was afterwards to be styled by Pedro IV, "celebrated," "illustrious," "magnificent," as others have acclaimed it—she was indeed splendidly lodged. The style of furniture was still, as in Aragon a century earlier, solid, heavy, little decorated, but the niceties of the table and the toilet were by no means neglected. Cushions, piled high on the tall and capacious beds, served for pillows and bolsters as well, offering scope for their ornamentation by the skilful embroideress. Lamps of bronze and silver shed their light through the palace apartments, and the dressers, placed against the walls hung with Arras cloths, were laden with gold and silver ware. The wardrobe of the Queen-Countess was of the most royal description. All the cloth-halls of Europe seem to have been emporiums for the robing of the noble ladies of Catalonia and Aragon in the twelfth century. Their humbler sisters must be content with barracan (a coarse fustian), burel, burnet, frieze, and *sarcilis* or sackcloth; those more well-to-do with *stamfortis* (a strong cloth of superior quality, says Fairholt), a single tunic of which was valued at fifteen shillings; with camlet, Syrian cloth, or *tiritania*, all these fabrics being imported from Bruges, Caen, Chartres, Ratisbon, Arras, Rouen, Saint Omer, Valenciennes, Ypres, Ghent, Tours, Beauvais, Provins, and other French, German, and Belgian marts. But for such great ladies as Queen Petronilla, there were costly and exquisite fabrics whose very names transport us to the Middle Ages. Lucca and the East proffered their famous cendals; samite, with its interweaving of golden threads, *baudekyn*, that sumptuous wear of kings, named for Babylon, where it is said to have been first manufactured, siclatoun from the East, the curiously named *oztori*, "used for great

personages," scarlet cloth of every shade from rose to purple, woven on the looms of Catalonia as well as brought from the utmost East, were all for the clothing of the young Queen. Dress in Catalonia had not indeed attained to that pitch of extravagant splendour which drew forth sumptuary laws of pitiless repression at a later date from the Spanish Kings, but already there were signs of the need for such repression. A contemporary Catalan document of this century describes the ordinary dress of the people as consisting of shirt, hose, breeches, tunic, and cloak. The clergy wore coloured garments, like the laity, which drew forth in 1129 a prohibition from the Archbishop of Tarragona, regarding this fashion, and forbidding the use of cendal, pointed shoes, coloured and embroidered cloaks, gold cords or silken girdles. The ordinary dress of the women of Catalonia at that date was the wide, loose tunic, over which noble ladies wore that characteristic garment of the time known as the *brial*. This was a robe of silk or rich stuff fitting tightly as far as the waist, and falling thence as far as the feet, sometimes opening at both sides. Worn almost exclusively by women of the highest rank, the *brial* was frequently presented by royal ladies to monasteries enjoying their special patronage. Thus, in 1467, the Princess Leonora of Navarre gave to the Monastery of Santa Maria of Roncesvalles a *brial* of gold brocade for the service of the altar, desiring that if any of the material remained over, it should be made into a cloak to cover and adorn the statue of Our Lord in the same monastery. Peculiarly Catalan was the *garnacha*, introduced from the East, and afterwards adopted in Castile. It is described as an imperial garment, wide and long, with long, flowing sleeves, turned back with fur and falling back from the shoulders. The head-dress of the period was high, described by Altamira de Crevea as a cap or helmet of cloth, fastened with strings under the chin. Such a head-dress appears on the effigy of Urraca of Castile on her tomb in the Royal Pantheon of Leon, while in 1869,

Richard Ford tells us that "the women of the Maragato tribe near Astorga still wear, if married, the Moorish headgear called *El Caramiello*." The Count de Clonard says that unmarried women of the thirteenth century wore their hair covered with mitres called *caramiellos*, from the Arabic *kermil-lon*, which means, that with which a woman covers her hair. According to documentary evidence of the period, women's shoes were made of wood—"zuecos buenos de muger" (according to Strutt, these shoes were merely wooden-soled, the upper part probably of some more pliant material)—cowhide and goatskin, fastened with leather straps or thongs.

Women who had embraced the religious life were by no means debarred, if of noble birth, from elegance in dress, but were allowed to wear tunics of purple trimmed with fur, violet mantles, transparent hoods, and boots with precious stones.

Turning to domestic manners and customs, it was the general observance in Catalonia to wash the hands before sitting down to meals. Of these there were three daily, breakfast, dinner, and supper. The royal larder was well stocked, industrial Catalonia having agricultural Aragon for its granary and vineyard, although Ocampo states that the former province had enough wine, over and above its own consumption, to supply the English and other markets. Pork and poultry appear to have been the favourite dishes at the royal table, the former, as Ford reminds us, having "always been of unequalled flavour" in Spain; those of Galicia and Catalonia, he adds, however, though celebrated, "are not to be compared for a moment with those of Montanches, which are fit to set before an emperor." The same entertaining traveller declares that the only rivals of "the illustrious Estremadurian porkers" are the sweet hams of Trevez in Granada. Served on the great *garals* or dishes, with their pairs of spoons, sometimes, as we gather, made with coral handles from the famous fishery of the capital, was not only the more substantial fare alluded to above, but long-lost *plats* in

which figured, in many dainty disguises, rice and saffron of Aragon, figs of Jaen and Malaga, honey of Alcarria, "marvellous for taste and sweetness," besides "chamber spicery" from the East. On fast-days, the royal household partook of cheese, eggs, onions, and bread. A jar of ginger is not unknown amongst the Household Accounts of Spanish Infantas in the Middle Ages.

Within the palace, life was musical with many instruments, psalterion, vielle, and taburel, a kind of tambourine, played on with drumstick, every great lord or king having his court player. These were not all of Provençal origin. The Moors were not only cultured and erudite poets, but also strolling minstrels, who, accompanied by gleewomen or female acrobats, performed in the public streets or squares, intoning to music *canciones* and poems of a fabulous, historical, amatory, or satirical character. The games of chess and draughts, dice and quoits were not unknown, while the mountains of both Catalonia and Aragon, abounding as they did in wild game, offered splendid sport to royal huntsmen.

As elsewhere in Europe in the Middle Ages, falconry was held in high esteem, kings and nobles setting out for the chase with gaily-caparisoned steeds and a splendid retinue, huntsmen, archers, and falconers, the former in gorgeous liveries, the latter in rich collars and hoods. The ladies accompanied their lords on these expeditions, their hawks chained to their slender wrists, penetrating the dense thickets without fatigue or fear. The birds of prey which contributed to this sport of kings were protected by law. Penalties were imposed for robbery of falcons' nests, and for exporting the young. Great store was set by the following kinds: *garceros*, *anaderos*, *perdigueros*, and *torzuelos* (the name given to the third to leave the nest); those known as *bornis*, which were very strong and agile; *baharis*, a ruddy-coloured species, used for fishing; *neblis*, rapid in flight; and the *sacre*. Other kinds were used for stalking quails and widgeon.

Flamingos were also occasionally employed in hawk-

ing, but they were difficult to get out of the water. Heavy fines were inflicted for the detention of a hawk, the penalty for the theft of a goshawk being greater than that for the robbery of a falcon, half of the fine going to the King, and half to the informer.

It is uncertain whether the hawking expeditions of the Kings of Aragon were inaugurated, as in the case of their brother sovereigns of Navarre, with a religious ceremony. Then, as now, the first thing that struck the traveller in Spain was "the number and variety of the birds of prey," but the royal sportsmen were specially addicted to the imported falcons of Sardinia.

In such a setting as we have attempted to reconstruct, it is possible to picture the young Queen Petronilla growing up to womanhood, under the watchful eye and encompassed by the devoted guardianship of her husband. Beneath his guiding influence she grew to be all that the contemporary chronicles of her time acclaim her—"faithful wife, tender mother, wise Queen, devout Christian, her life was a gentle and revered one." In 1152, when she was awaiting in the palace at Barcelona the birth of her first child, the young Queen affixed her signature to a document which was to have far-reaching and important consequences for future heiresses to the Spanish throne. The will of Petronilla, upon which the exclusion of women from that throne was afterwards based, was, paradoxically enough, that of the only Queen of Aragon in her own right. From that date, women transmitted to their sons a right which they themselves were not permitted to exercise apart from their husbands. It is another curious feature of this will that it should have been drawn up on Catalonian soil, where, in marriage contracts, the right of inheritance was vested in the daughter, in default of sons, and where the heiress, in that event, was considered the head of the house, and gave her name, and not that of the father, to any sons she might have.

The eldest son of Petronilla of Aragon and Ramon Berenger of Barcelona, to whom she gave birth at

Barcelona in 1152, was given the name of Ramon, afterwards changed to that of Alfonso. He is known in history as Alfonso the Chaste, first King of the united Kingdom of Aragon and Countship of Barcelona. Her other children were Ildefonsus, who married Sancha of Castile, Sancho, Count of Roussillon and Cerdaña, and two daughters, who became Queen of Portugal and Countess of Urgel. Left a widow August 6, 1162, at the age of twenty-eight, Doña Petronilla actually reigned alone only until June 14, 1163, when, having arranged a marriage for her son with the Princess Eleanor, daughter of Edward I of England, she abdicated in favour of the young Prince, who now ascended the throne of Aragon, as Alfonso II, first of the line of the House of Barcelona. Doña Petronilla lived for ten years after, retired from the state which she had renounced, though her son, we are told, ever found in her, whilst she lived, his best and wisest counsellor. The abdication of Petronilla of Aragon in favour of her son is paralleled in Spanish history by that of Berengaria of Castile in favour of Ferdinand the Saint. Both these illustrious mothers, Queens in their own right, generously renounced, for the higher good of their people, a crown to which their magnanimity gave the priceless boon of unity. Linked together, they are worthy to be remembered in the annals of Spain, rich above all other nations in the noblest types of womanhood. Doña Petronilla passed away, October 13, 1173, in the clean and queenly city which had been the scene of her unique reign and happy married life. The place of her interment is in doubt; it was probably the Cathedral of Barcelona.

DOÑA SANCHA OF CASTILE

Don Alfonso II of Aragon, known in history as Alfonso the Chaste, has been doubly crowned by the Church, of which, following the noble example of his parents, he was a generous and loyal benefactor, and

by the troubadours, who acclaim him first in their ranks in Spain. Both agree in describing him as "a very pious and charitable prince, who conferred great benefactions on monasteries, and made great bequests in his kingdom, chiefly to the Knights of the Templars and St. John, and was so discreet in his life and manners as to merit the title of "the Chaste." The son of Doña Petronilla was as fortunate in his marriage as his parents had been before him. The alliance with England, so ardently desired by both, had been frustrated by the death of the bride at the moment of the signing of the marriage contract by Jean de Grailly, the English ambassador, at Barcelona.

Rumour, brought it may be from the East by Catalonian merchantmen, more than once a determining factor in the marriages of the Kings of Aragon, next turned the young monarch's thoughts in that direction. An embassy was despatched to the Court of Manuel, Emperor of the East, soliciting the hand of his daughter, Eudoxia. The terms of this still more imperial alliance than that lately snatched from Don Alfonso having been concluded, the bride set out for her new home. Storms, however, delayed her ship, and when at length she landed on French soil, it was to learn the astonishing and mortifying news of the marriage, at Zaragoza, on January 8, 1174, of her faithless suitor, her supplanter being Sancha, daughter of Alfonso VIII of Castile, and his second wife, Rica, or Richilda, daughter of Ladislaus of Poland. Eudoxia, stranded in a strange land, was forced to accept the proffered hand of William of Montpellier, a marriage which, in the next reign, was to give another Queen Consort to Aragon. The Queen of Alfonso II was worthy in all respects to be the successor of Doña Petronilla, a devoted wife and a tender mother of the seven children whom she bore to the King. The Court over which she presided was one to which the thoughts and the footsteps alike of many a troubadour turned with certainty of the welcome awaiting them at the hands of one who was first of Spanish troubadours,

though the part played by his Queen in that welcome was probably restricted to that of an onlooker and awarder of coveted prizes at the contests of the wandering minstrels. The son of Ramon Berenger and Doña Petronilla had been cradled in that palace of the Counts of Barcelona where, as Bouche reminds us in his *History of Provence*, "Provençal poetry was brought to perfection." The *coplas* to which he was afterwards to add his quota were his earliest lullaby. Like many another poet, though uncrowned, he sang none the less sweetly because of the first sounds his memory could recall. Thus, the quick wit, the sensitive and warm hearts of the troubadours recognized in him not merely the generous patron, but the sympathetic comrade, "a poet who made himself," as one of them writes, "their head and the crown of their honours." None ever weary of singing the praises of their "steady friend." Peire Raymond thus: "Journey, Canzone, to Aragon, to the King, whom God maintain, for he it is that upholds all things noble, above all other kings born of woman. Even as the white blossom is above the green foliage, so is his fame uplifted and spread abroad above that of any other; therefore, whithersoever I go, his watchword is within my mouth. I proclaim his fame and do homage beside to no Duke, King, or Admiral." This jongleur was royally welcomed at the Court of Alfonso, who "did him great honour." Calanson, the Gascon jongleur, after having instructed the aspirant in the Gay Science, tells him that when he knows it well, he must seek the young King of Aragon, for that no one can better appreciate such accomplishments, and that if he plays his part, and distinguishes himself amongst the foremost, he will have no occasion to complain of that monarch's want of liberality. And lastly, if he does not rise above mediocrity, he will deserve an ungracious welcome from the best prince in the world. Giraud de Calanson's advice to jongleurs is thus translated for us by Sismondi: "He must know how to compose and rhyme well, and how to propose a

jeupartii. He must play on the tambourine and cymbals, and make a symphony resound. To throw and catch the little balls, on the point of a knife, to imitate the songs of birds, to play tricks with the baskets, to exhibit attacks of castles, and leaps (no doubt of monkeys) through hoops, to play on the citole and the mandore, to handle the clavichord and the guitar, to string the wheel with seventeen chords, to play on the harp and to adapt the gigue so as to enliven the psaltery, are indispensable accomplishments. The jongleur must prepare nine instruments with ten chords, which, if he learns to play well, will be sufficient for his purpose, and he must know how to sound the lyre and bells."

Between the troubadour and the trouvère, it should be mentioned in passing, there was a considerable difference. "Every jongleur," says one authority, "was often enough a trouvère, but the trouvère was not always a jongleur." In other words, the troubadours were composers or creators of the poems recited by the jongleurs, of inferior rank, who travelled about the country, often in troops, attended by dancers and buffoons, accompanying their songs on different instruments, chiefly on the vielle, or portable harp, or *rote*. When on horseback, the vielle was attached to the saddlebow; if on foot, the jongleur slung it round his neck. Besides these strolling players, there were the bards who assisted at royal feasts and occasions of special circumstance. Upon these honourable entertainers, kings and knights bestowed the richest gifts, as we shall see in this history. "It was thus the highest ambition," says Sismondi, "of the reciters of tales to amuse the leisure of the great and to please them with their flatteries." The recompense received both from Christian and Moorish Princes was permission to take part in festivals, and to accept costly gifts, garments or horses. It has been doubted by some writers whether the jongleurs in Aragon ever attained to the heights of fortune which kingly favour enabled them to scale elsewhere, as for example in the case of Pierre Touset,

whom his master, Philip the Long, permitted to purchase many noble fiefs; but there can be little doubt that they were at least equally as fortunate as those jongleurs of Rouen on whom Charles V of France bestowed 200 golden francs in return for their songs, for in this very reign of Alfonso II we read of the Countess of Urgel sending a crown valued at 40,000 sueldos to a certain Guillermo Mita, King of all the jongleurs, at a feast at Beaucaire in honour of the reconciliation of the King of England and Count Raymond of Toulouse; and we shall see yet greater rewards showered on the jongleurs who figured at the coronations of the later Kings of Aragon. The Aragonese Court singers had songs of love and war for their weekday audiences. On Sundays they recited Bible stories and extracts from the lives of the saints, a form of entertainment which was the forerunner of the mystery plays commonly performed at a later date in the Spanish churches, "with music and dancing, canons, servers, and laity taking part in them," a fashion which called forth stringent laws to repress the "villainies and indecencies committed in the House of the Lord," as for example in the burlesques and farces performed on the Innocents' Day.

The early jongleurs, however, were by no means all foreigners. The Knight de Blacas, whose funeral eulogy was written by Sordello, was an Aragonese, whose heart, says his eulogist, should have been divided among all the monarchs in Christendom, to supply them with the courage of which they stood in need.

The harmony of Doña Sancha's married life was probably no more disturbed by her husband's exploits as troubadour than that of any other lady of the period when her lord sang in other ears of love and loveliness. The lady for whom Don Alfonso II wrote the one poem of his that survives, as Mr. Justin H. Smith reminds us in the fascinating pages of his *Troubadours at Home*, was the beautiful Lady Alazais, wife of Bernat de Boissezon, first celebrated by the verses of Arnaut de

Maruelh. The poem in question, characterized by Mr. Smith as "not so very bad—for a king," runs as follows :—

Few the joys to me denied,—
Pleasures bloom on every side,
And in groves and meadows wide,
'Midst the flowers and the trees,
Choirs of merry songsters bide,
Vocal in the freshening breeze ;
But nor snow nor summertide
Can my heart a song provide,—
Save as God and Love may please.

Yet, to glad my joy and pride,
Verdure, sun, and sky—outvied
By sweet birds that hedges hide—
Cheer and set my heart at ease ;
For delight is now my guide,—
So a lady fair decrees ;
Honour and worth in her reside
Joy and beauty,—wit beside ;
Naught I grudge, her heart to appease.

Beauty, goodness, worth, o'erride
All my fears, my course decide ;
I would stay and hear her chide,—
Drink her harshness to the lees,
Though the sweetest lady sighed,
Fain to cure my heart's disease ;
Here am I, whate'er betide,
None my fealty shall divide,
If she'll deign to heed my pleas.

Strained relations, indeed, threatened for a time to make shipwreck of the domestic happiness of Don Alfonso and his Queen, but the incident from which they took their rise, and which is but briefly alluded to by chroniclers of the period, was purely political. According to contemporary authorities, "the King being occupied with the affairs of Provence" (of which he was Count, by inheritance on the paternal side), "the Queen entered the Countship of Ribagorza, and took possession of the fortresses and castles there, which belonged to the Crown." These were, probably, how-

ever, part of her own dowry; but we are without details of the matrimonial quarrel which ensued upon Doña Sancha's high-handed action, which took place in 1177.

Left a widow in 1196, Doña Sancha almost immediately retired to the convent of her foundation, at Sijena, thus enrolling herself amongst the long line of royal ladies who, on the decease of their lords, exchanged the title of Queen in the world for that of *Regina Deo dicata* in the cloister. Quadrado asserts that the impulse which gave the widowed Queen to the religious life was neither the irresistible sense of vocation nor that of incurable grief at the death of her husband, but the wounds dealt her by the ungrateful conduct of her son, who, on his accession to the throne as Don Pedro II, promptly relegated his mother to the rank of a mere figurehead in the affairs of State. Later, however, reconciliation seems to have taken place between mother and son, for we are told that, on the rare occasions when the royal religious emerged from her cloister, it was to have interviews with Don Pedro, probably to place at his disposal the treasures of her ripe experience and maternal counsel, spurned in the headstrong thoughtlessness of his youth, but eagerly sought in the graver crisis of his manhood.

Doña Sancha entered the Convent of Sijena, whose first Prioress, Doña Sancha de Abiego, chosen by the royal founder herself, was possibly a godchild, as a home-coming. She had already given to the convent of her predilection a little daughter, Doña Dulce, sweetly named for her ancestress of Provence who brought Provençal melody to Barcelona, but the child, as recorded in the convent archives, had "passed from the earthly to the heavenly cloisters" on February 3, 1189, in the eleventh year of her age and the ninth month of her profession. The simple inscription on her tomb reads thus: "Dulce, a Sister, the daughter of the King and Queen." Another daughter of Doña Sancha, Doña Leonor, was less fortunate than the little Dulce.

Brought up by the nuns of Sijena, she was taken from their sheltering care in 1200 to become the wife of Ramon, Count of Toulouse, whence she returned, two years later, a broken-hearted and deserted wife, to end her days at her mother's side. To this Aragonese Infanta, the famous troubadour, Aimeric de Péguilha, addressed some of his loveliest *canzones*.

Doña Sancha and her daughters were surrounded, within the walls of the cloister, by the bearers of the noblest names in the Aragonese aristocracy, such as those of Entenza, Urrea,¹ Lizana, Losa, Moncada, and others. No less illustrious were those who filled the most menial offices in the convent. Thus, Alais, Countess of Armagnac, was sacristan there in the thirteenth century; whilst a Countess of Barcelos, daughter-in-law of St. Isabel of Portugal, was professed there at a later date. Contemporary documents attest that Sijena, besides being a favourite retreat for noble and royal ladies who assumed the veil, was also a select educational establishment for their young daughters and sisters. Thus, in 1212, Don Pedro II paid the sum of 6000 sueldos to the Prioress for the school fees of his sister, Doña Leonor; whilst at a later date we shall find certain nuns of Sijena summoned to Barcelona in order to take in hand the neglected education of a Queen of Aragon.

From the "great famine and pestilence" which marked the year of Don Alfonso's death,² Doña Sancha, as we have seen, passed to the cloister. The cross of the Order of St. John of Jerusalem, which she then assumed, she wore to the end of her life. The formula of her profession was as follows: "I, Sancha, by the grace of God, Queen of Aragon, Countess of Barcelona, and Marchioness of Provence, offer myself to the Lord God, to the Blessed Virgin Mary, to Blessed John of Jerusa-

¹ Don Pedro de Urrea, at his death, bequeathed his daughter Sancha, a namesake, and possibly a godchild, of the Queen, to Doña Sancha's guardianship.

² At Perpignan, April 25, 1196.

lem, and the sick poor of Jerusalem, in life and in death, and I desire to be interred in the said Monastery."

The last year of her life, 1208, was concerned, we are told, with the arrangements for the re-marriage of her daughter, Doña Constanza, widow of Emeric, King of Hungary, to Frederic II, King of Sicily, the bride being entertained at Sijena prior to her departure from Aragon. The same September brought another and more tragic guest to the convent, a traveller also, but bound on what a different journey! For Doña Constanza, still in the flush of early womanhood, was passing, with the acclamations of two nations, to assume, for the second time, a bridal and a royal crown, whilst for Marie de Montpellier, her unhappy sister-in-law, who also visited Doña Sancha on the eve of her last sorrowful pilgrimage to Rome, death waited, in friendliest guise, at its close.

In November, 1208, the royal nun breathed her last amongst her sister religious, by whom she was interred in a niche near the High Altar of their church. On her tomb was subsequently carved her effigy, with scenes from her life. In one, she was portrayed ascending to heaven, supported by two angels. "From time immemorial," says a modern writer who has collected the traditions of Sijena, "a certain cult was paid to their foundress by the community, a cult of mingled reverence and gratitude"; and he adds, that "on the very rare occasions when the slab was raised from her tomb, none could contemplate without tears of devotion the long-since-withered corpse, which continued to preserve throughout the centuries its long and ruddy hair." Yet another pious tradition of the Order was to the effect that, in times of scarcity, when the daily dole of the poor had to be curtailed, tears of blood seemed to issue from the tomb of the pious Queen, as though she wept over the failure of charity and the want of faith in God, on the part of her successors.

RÉSUMÉ OF CHAPTER III

Accession of Ramiro II to the throne of Aragon, 1134.

Dispensed from his vows and married to Iñez of Poitiers, 1134.

Birth of their daughter, Doña Petronilla, 1135.

Betrothed to Ramon Berenger, Count of Barcelona, 1137.

Abdication of Ramiro II, Regency of Ramon Berenger, 1137.

Marriage of Doña Petronilla at Lerida, 1151.

Birth of their son, Alfonso, 1152. Doña Petronilla's will made on this occasion, afterwards excluded women from the throne of Aragon.

Death of Count Ramon Berenger, 1162. Doña Petronilla reigned alone, 1162-1163. Abdicated in favour of her son, 1163. Died, 1173. Manners and customs of her times.

Marriage of Alfonso II to Sancha of Castile, 1174. The King as troubadour and patron of jongleurs. Political differences between the King and Queen, 1177.

Doña Sancha widowed, 1196. Embraces religious life at Sijena. Her daughters. Her death, 1208. Her cult.

CHAPTER IV

DOÑA MARIE DE MONTPELLIER

THE death of Alfonso II, which occurred April 25, 1196, at Perpignan, called to the throne of Aragon, under the tutelage of the Queen-Dowager, Doña Sancha, until the attainment of his twentieth year, their eldest son, Pedro, second of the name in Aragon. The early days of the new reign were filled with the last offices of pious and filial homage at the bier of the dead King, whose mortal remains were brought from the capital of Roussillon to the Monastery of Poblet, where he had directed that they should be laid, thus inaugurating the rivalry which henceforth subsisted between Poblet and San Juan de la Peña as pantheons of Aragon's illustrious dead. Funeral honours having been paid to the late monarch, the nation proceeded to the confirmation of the young King in his inherited rights. In the following autumn, in Cortes convoked at Daroca, "with the will and consent of the Queen," Pedro assumed his full responsibilities, and entered felicitously on his reign. Friction between mother and son unhappily arose to trouble both Court and kingdom, but the intervention of Alfonso VIII of Castile succeeded in bringing about a reconciliation at Ariza. Pedro next appears in the character of peacemaker himself, the contending parties in this instance being his brother, Alfonso, Count of Provence, and the Count Guillermo de Folcarquer. Some chroniclers aver that, in return for his friendly offices, the latter nobleman bestowed upon the Aragonese sovereign the hand of his niece, a lady of great beauty. Her name does not appear, however, among the Queens of Aragon.

For eight years, while the shadow of the Keys was falling darkly on the domestic happiness of his brother sovereigns of Leon and Castile, Pedro happily evaded it. For the fulfilment of a secret ambition which he alone, of all the Kings of Aragon who had preceded him, seems to have cherished, the friendship of Rome was necessary to him. If, indeed, he was not altogether free from Papal suspicion in the matter of his tolerance of the Paulician heresy, he appeared to be in no danger of contracting a marriage within the prohibited degrees, and thus unsheathing against him and his kingdom the two-edged sword of excommunication and interdict which was the chosen weapon of the Chair of St. Peter in the Middle Ages. He ruled in lonely state over the Court to which, like his father before him, he bade the troubadours welcome. In his boyhood he had known and listened to the songs of that gifted but eccentric exponent of the Gay Science, Peire Vidal, who "sang better than any other poet in the world, and was one of the most foolish men who ever lived," and who passed, two years after the accession of Pedro, to the Court of his brother-in-law, Emeric, King of Hungary, whose Queen was Constance, daughter of Alfonso II. At the Court of King Pedro sang Perdigon, the fisherman's son, Hugh of St. Circ, Raymond of Miraval, who "loved many ladies and made many good songs upon them," notably the Lady Azalais, and many another wandering minstrel, to the music of whose harps, and rotes, and vielles, their kingly patron doubtless oft-times shaped his dream of vaster and more accredited sovereignty. In the late autumn of 1204, he at length disclosed that dream. It was nothing less than his determination to proceed to Rome to be crowned there by the Sovereign Pontiff himself, his predecessors having hitherto been content with the simple ceremony of their acknowledgment as King by their assembled subjects, and with the equally simple assumption, either on their attaining the age of twenty, or on the occasion of their marriage, of knightly rank

and honours. Pedro II, no less a lover of pomp and show than a later namesake who was to wear his crown, desired a more imposing function than these. Escorted by a stately flotilla and attended by a noble following of Catalan and Provençal knights, Pedro set out on his journey to Italy, landing at Ostia, to be received, by direction of the Pope, by as splendid a retinue, ecclesiastical and secular, as any monarch could have wished. On the following day, November 3, 1204, after being solemnly anointed, he received from the hand of Innocent III the Royal Insignia, Crown, Sceptre, and Orb, the first-named of these, it is said, having been made of unleavened bread, with jewels inset, in order to oblige the Pope to crown the King with his hand, and not with his foot, as was customary. Laying both Crown and Sceptre on the altar of St. Peter's, the King, girt with baldrick, in token of his double knighthood, in the world and in the Church, offered to the Pope, in return for the high honour conferred upon him of Gonfalonier, or standard-bearer of the Holy Roman Church, the vassalage of his entire kingdom, promising to pay an annual tribute to the Holy See of 250 golden maravedis, a promise and submission which were both indignantly repudiated later by the proud and freedom-loving Aragonese. For the moment, however, Pedro saw his dream fulfilled, a fulfilment to be practically and visibly brought to mind every time hereafter he should see the banner of Aragon fluttering in the breeze, its colours, red and yellow, being henceforth identical with that of the Gonfalon of Rome. At the same time, Innocent III bestowed upon all the future Queen-Consorts of Aragon the right to be anointed and crowned with all the same ceremonies as their lords, with this exception, that, although they were to receive the Sacrament of Unction from the hands of the Archbishop of Zaragoza, Crown, Sceptre, Orb, and Ring were to be bestowed upon them by the hands of the King himself. There still remained to Pedro II the choice of his consort. It was not destined to be propitious.

Twice in the history of Aragon, the marriage-motives of its Kings would appear, at first sight, to have been inspired by the praiseworthy and chivalrous desire to make reparation for an ancient affront offered by one of their kin to the chosen bride or to her house. In both cases, the result was disastrous; in the one instance, to the first family of the bridegroom; in the other, to the bride herself. It is the latter of these which comes first in point of time.

It will be remembered that Alfonso II had been the fickle suitor, prior to his marriage with Doña Sancha of Castile, of Eudoxia, daughter of the Emperor Manuel, of the Greek House of Comnenus. The circumstances of the affront offered by the Sovereign of Aragon to the Greek Princess have already been narrated, together with her eventual marriage to Guillaume VIII, Seigneur of Montpellier. Romantic as the alliance seemed which thus sought to compensate her for the higher destiny of which she had been rudely cheated, romance, if it had ever existed, quickly flared out on the conjugal hearth of Guillaume and his Greek bride. Naturally haughty and capricious, Eudoxia was permanently embittered by the insult which had robbed her of a crown, and, after the birth of a daughter, even the outward semblance of harmony between husband and wife came to a close. For the second time, an arrow of affront was to wing its way from the Court of Aragon to the heart of Eudoxia. Whilst a guest at that Court with which the Lords of Montpellier had always maintained the closest relations, Guillaume VII having married Sibilia de Mataplana, a noble lady of Aragon, Guillaume VIII's roving fancy was caught by the beauty of Agnes of Castile, a kinswoman of Queen Sancha, and a member of her household. With characteristic mediaeval effrontery, the Seigneur of Montpellier returned to his lordship accompanied by his mistress, whom he insisted on regarding as his lawful wife, in spite of all the threats and thunders of the Church. The unhappy Eudoxia, in fear of her life, fled to the Convent of

Aniane, that ancient little town where no trace remains to-day of her refuge. Still more luckless than her mother, the only child of Eudoxia found herself abandoned at her father's Court to the mercies of a step-mother to whom the silent protest of her innocent presence must have been an intolerable reproof. At the age of twelve, the little Marie was bestowed in marriage upon Barral, Vicomte de Marseille, who, however, shortly after, left his child-bride a widow, with 500 silver marks, which were immediately confiscated by Agnes. For three years, the child-Viscountess was allowed to dwell on sufferance at her father's Court. Then, a second marriage banished her once more from what could scarcely have been a home. The chosen bridegroom was Bernard de Comminges, an elderly roué, who had already divorced two wives, and who was credited with holding the lax theories regarding marriage which were commonly attributed by their enemies to the heretic Albigenses. His second divorce, from Condor, daughter of Arnauld Guillaume de Barca, was doubtless facilitated by the eagerness of Guillaume de Montpellier and Agnes of Castile to get rid of the unfortunate child whom they sacrificed to him, for the decree of divorce was pronounced in November, 1197, and a month later took place the marriage with Marie de Montpellier, the bride's dowry being 200 marks of fine silver and her wedding garments, the Count's bridal gift being the Château of Murel. If a son was born to them, he was to inherit all his father's property; if a daughter or daughters, all, except Comminges, La Montagne-Deserte being reserved for his son by Condor de Barca. Bernard de Comminges had apparently much in common with his faithless father-in-law. While his young wife was expecting the birth of a second child, which proved, like the first, to be a daughter, her husband took a fourth wife. Marie appealed to the Pope, who instantly commanded the Archbishop of Narbonne and the Bishop of Comminge, also the Chapter of Auch and of Toulouse, to compel the Count of Com-

minges, under penalty of ecclesiastical censure, to recall his lawful wife, whom he had repudiated without reason, and to treat her as a husband should, with all conjugal affection. The death of Bernard de Comminges, which seems to have occurred about 1201, at which date we find several vassal knights doing homage to Marie and her two daughters, Mathilde and Petronilla, for certain castles held by them, gave Marie de Montpellier her welcome freedom. The death of her father, in 1204, made her, by universal consent of the inhabitants of Montpellier, their sovereign lady, to the exclusion of the illegitimate half-brothers who threatened to seize her inheritance. A third marriage was at once proposed for her. It was more brilliant, but destined to be no less ill-fated, than the others. Pedro II of Aragon was then at the height of his fame as the knightly ideal of his times. Since that fame had reached to the kingdom of Jerusalem, whose young Queen, Marie, the daughter and sole heiress of Queen Isabel and the Marquis Conrado, had been offered in marriage to the Sovereign of Aragon, small wonder that the same ideal had attracted the *prud'hommes* of Montpellier, anxious to bestow their lady in safe and honourable keeping. While the one Marie was taking a solemn oath, in the presence of the prelates and nobles of her kingdom, to accept the King of Aragon as her husband, for the good of the Holy Land, Pedro, attracted less by the virtues of the other than by the opportunity presented through her lordship of extending the power of Aragon in the South of France, had become the husband of the widowed Comtesse de Comminges. If she had hoped to be compensated for the troubles of her former marriage with the crown of a Queen-Consort, disillusion waited on Marie de Montpellier no less rudely than it had waited on Eudoxia of Constantinople before her. Aragon was a name of ill-omen for both mother and daughter. Patron of troubadours and ideal knight as he was, Pedro II was not the man to be held by virtue, and he had married a saint. "She was a very saintly

person," writes the old Catalan chronicler, Ramon Muntaner, "as dear to God as to men"; but one man at least was at no pains to disguise his frank aversion from the woman he had married from purely political motives, even before they had returned, man and wife, to the Palace of Montpellier. There is no record of her coronation—a strange omission, seeing that she should have been the first to avail herself of the recently granted Papal permission to receive the Consort's crown of Aragon—and it would appear that the Courts of Barcelona and Zaragoza knew her not. None of the Queens of Aragon, indeed, were so little queens, save in name, as Marie de Montpellier. Her lordship soon rang with tales of her husband's gallantries and of his flagrant neglect of his wife. She had learned meek patience in a hard school, and was doubtless inured to conjugal coldness and cruelty. But the plain and practical *prud'hombres* and councillors of her seigniory were cast in rougher mould. Meekness was not a weapon with which they were disposed to challenge even so powerful a sovereign as their new lord. Jealous for the honour of their lady, and bitterly resenting the treatment which she was receiving at the hands of a husband who openly declared himself to be so in name only, they determined to take matters into their own hands. How, in connivance with one of Pedro's own grandees, Guillen de Alcala, with the blessing of the Church, and the prayers of a whole city, they tricked the King, by a device truly mediaeval in its sly quaintness, may be read in the pages of Zurita, Muntaner, and other chroniclers of the time. The romance of Marie de Montpellier's third marriage lay, not in the love of a husband—which was never hers—but rather, in the "miraculous" birth, as it was called, of her son, afterwards to be the greatest of the Kings of Aragon, under the name of James the Conqueror. The birth of their son does not seem to have drawn husband and wife any nearer. Before the child's advent, indeed, Pedro, furious and mortified, rode at full gallop out of Mont-

pellier, only intent henceforth on ridding himself of a yoke grown still more intolerable than before.

The baby Prince, who was afterwards to be one of the most illustrious figures in the roll of the Kings of Aragon, was born at Montpellier, as he himself tells us in his Chronicle, "in the house of the Tornamira, the eve of Our Lady Saint Mary, Candlemas Day (Feb. 1, 1208)." "And my mother," he adds, "as soon as I was born, sent me to Saint Mary's" (Our Lady of the Tables); "they carried me in their arms; matins were being said in Our Lady's Church, and as they took me through the porch they sang *Te Deum Laudamus*. The clergy did not notice the arrival of those who carried me, as when they entered they were singing that canticle. And then I was taken to Saint Fermin, and when those who carried me entered the church the priests were singing *Benedictus Dominus Deus Israel*. And when they took me back to my mother's house, she was very glad because of those prognostics that had happened." From the same authority we learn that the illustrious infant came by his name in the following manner: his pious mother "made twelve candles all of them of one weight and size, and had them lighted all together, and gave to each the name of an Apostle, and vowed to our Lord that I should be christened by the name of that which lasted longest. And so it happened that the candle that went by the name of Saint James lasted a good three fingers' breadth more than all the others. And owing to that circumstance, and to the grace of God, I was christened 'En(Don) Jacme.'"

The baptism of the little Infante coincided with the commencement of that long process of divorce which his father, unmindful of his solemn oath, "on the Holy Gospels, that he would never separate from his wife nor take another in her lifetime, and always remain faithful to her," now set on foot. His shameless appeal to Innocent III, that masterful Pope who, as Green writes in his *History of the English People*, "had pushed

the claims of supremacy of the Papacy over Christendom farther than any of his predecessors," was, however, to prove him truly a Father in God to the unhappy lady whose fresh matrimonial complications were now, for the second time, submitted to his august tribunal. The grounds upon which Pedro sought his freedom were the previous marriage of his Queen to the Comte de Comminges, and her distant relationship to himself. Into these matters, the Pope commanded the Bishop of Pampeluna and two legates, appointed to assist him, to enquire. Death having removed the latter, the Archbishop of Narbonne and the Abbot of Citeaux were directed to take their places. These ecclesiastical judges were confronted with a tangle indeed. Marie de Montpellier did not dispute her previous union—she had never done so—but she now contended that it had been one of compulsion. Next, she demanded that the cause should be remitted to Rome, where she herself proceeded, to bear witness in her own defence. Her husband, meanwhile, in accordance with the wishes of the Pope, was busied in the matrimonial negotiations of his widowed sister, Constance, Queen of Hungary, with Frederic, King of Sicily. While his own divorce proceedings were pending at Rome, Pedro was celebrating, with all the customary splendour of the Aragonese Court, the marriage, by proxy, of his sister at Zaragoza. Thence the bride proceeded to Provence, where she embarked, escorted by her brother, Alfonso, Count of Provence, and a great retinue, for Sicily.

Not until January, 1213, was sentence delivered in the matter of the Aragonese divorce. By it, Marie de Montpellier was declared to be the lawful wife of Pedro II, the Pope "requesting and advising" the King to receive the Queen kindly, "for the safety of his conscience," remembering that he had an heir by her, while, "being so faithful a servant of God," her Queenship should be of great value to the Church and to Aragon. The Bishops of Carcassone and Avignon were charged to threaten the King with the utmost ecclesiasti-

cal penalties if he did not forthwith comply with the Papal mandate. In spite of this, however, there seems to have been no attempt at a reconciliation. Marie never returned from Rome, where she died in 1213, a year before Pedro himself fell at the battle of Muret. By her will, she left all her possessions to her son. In case of his death without heirs, they passed to her two daughters, married to Sancho de Barra and Centulle, Comte d'Estarac. If they in turn died without heirs, or entered convents, Ramon Gaucelin, Seigneur de Lunel, and his sons, were designated heirs. At his wife's death, Pedro, in violation of the promise made at the time of their marriage in 1204, handed over Montpellier to Guillaume, bastard brother of the dead Queen. His sons held high offices and made rich marriages in Aragon in the reign of Jaime I.

Marie de Montpellier was buried in St. Peter's at Rome, beside St. Petronilla, spiritual daughter of the tutelar. Of his mother, James the Conqueror wrote in his Chronicle: "As regards the Queen, our mother, suffice it to say that, if ever there was a good woman in the world, it was she. She feared, loved, and honoured God, and was endowed with so many perfections, that it may be said, once for all, that she was esteemed by all who knew her virtues. So great was her love of God, and such grace did He grant her, that within and without Rome, she merited to be called the Sainted Queen." The King adds that many sick persons were known to have been healed by the powdered scrapings from the stone of her tomb, mixed with wine or water.

Marie de Montpellier partakes of that elusive quality which is characteristic of the Queens of Aragon. She lived and died much alone. Perhaps she found her only consolation in the humble affection of her two serving-women, that Fisendia to whom she bequeathed her mantle, *garnacha*, pall, tunic, and new pelisse of scarlet, and a second *garnacha* of green cloth, and that Gulielma, to whom she gave another *garnacha* of black cloth and a scarlet pelisse.

The Court over which Marie de Montpellier should have reigned was exceptionally rich in both local and errant troubadours. Chief amongst the former was the famous Hugo de Mataplana, head of the illustrious Catalan family of his name, who held his magnificent Court in his ancestral castle near Ripoll, where, as we learn from his friend and protégé, Ramon Vidal of Bezalu, fantastic knotty points of the Courts of Love in almost every European centre of the cult were submitted to his arbitration. Vidal depicts the noble troubadour for us presiding over the scenes of joyful festivity which were characteristic of every day in the Castle of Mataplana. We see him, surrounded by his baronial confrères, gracious ladies and brave knights, seated at the princely board, or, the tables cleared, playing at dice or chess, reclining on carpets and cushions, green, red, white, blue, and crimson, engaged in "sweet and courteous discourse," or listening to the "cancions" of the jongleurs, summoned to entertain the noble and sympathetic audience. There, we may well believe, "the sweet love-time of the spring" was for ever being born anew, "the time wherein buds, and boughs, and flowers, burst forth afresh, when as yet no frost nor snow chills the temperate air." The Lord of Mataplana was not only patron, but poet. We hear of his engaging in that form of poetical contest known as the "tension" with the jongleur Reculaire, with Blacasset, the son of Blacas, other specimens of his art being a *sirvente* against Miraval. The restless Ramon Vidal, the friend as well as the protégé of Hugo de Mataplana, spent much of his time, when travelling through France and Spain, at the Castle of Mataplana, where he was scarcely less sumptuously housed than at the King's Court, where he also sojourned on these pilgrimages. Other troubadours who were habitués of the Court of Pedro II were Guiraldo Borneil, Guillermo de Tudela, Folquet de Lunel, Pablo Lanfranc de Pistoya, and others. We read of Azemar the Black, Guido de Uisel, who sang the eulogy of "his conquests, his gifts,

and his gallantries," and of Guillermo de Magret, a jongleur of Viana, who lavished the most fulsome praises on his royal patron, as well as Aimeric de Pegulha, Guiraldo de Calanson, and Hugo de Saint-Circ, who visited the Court of Aragon in company with his patron, Savarico de Mauleo. To the city of Montpellier, the lordship of the unhappy Marie, belongs the little-known troubadour, Pedro de Bergerac, who sang of the shield, the sword, and the battle in relation to the family disputes which raged around the succession of Montpellier. The youth, so full of promise destined never to be realized, of Don Pedro, inspired a celebrated composition, known as the Romance of Geoffrey, in which the unknown poet describes, under the figure of a legendary king, the virtues of the young King of Aragon.

RÉSUMÉ OF CHAPTER IV

Accession of Don Pedro II, 1196. He proceeds to Rome to be crowned by the Pope, 1204. On the same occasion the Pope confers upon the Queens of Aragon the right to be crowned at Zaragoza. Marie de Montpellier, her ancestry, and unhappy childhood, and first marriage, 1197.

Married to Pedro II, 1204.

Birth of Jaime the Conqueror, 1208. Romantic circumstances attendant on his birth.

King endeavours to repudiate the Queen, 1209-1213. In the latter year, their marriage pronounced canonical. The Queen dies at Rome. Her will, her children, reputation for sanctity. Reputed miracles at her tomb. Troubadours at the Court of Don Pedro II.

CHAPTER V

DOÑA LEONOR OF CASTILE

“HE was the goodliest prince in the world, and the wisest and the most gracious and the most upright, and one that was loved more than any king ever was, of all men, both of his own subjects and strangers, and of noble gentlemen everywhere.”

It is Ramon Muntaner who thus writes of Jaime I of Aragon; the honest, courteous knight and loyal servitor of the sovereign in whose quarrels he was as quick to unsheathe his sword as he was content to wait upon his state in peace. To later generations, indeed, the picture reads as the grossest flattery. For it, Jaime the Conqueror (glory of Aragon though he was), as we know him—lustful, passionate, coarse, faithless—never sat. But for Muntaner, the colours were unsullied by any flaw. Far otherwise, it maybe, his Queens would have drawn the portrait.

The son of Pedro II, “slain by a song,” as his troubadours had it, at Muret, was in safety at the moment of his father’s death, though bestowed in the custody of that father’s sworn foe, Simon de Montfort; for the all-powerful Innocent III was a true friend to the orphaned boy, as he had been to his saintly mother. By Papal mandate, the child-King was at once removed from the guardianship of de Montfort, conducted to Lerida, where the barons of Aragon swore fealty to him, and then committed to the care of the Master of the Templars, Guillen de Monredon, by whom he was placed in the Castle of Monzon, together with his cousin and constant companion, the young Count of Provence. If

ever Aragon had needed a strong arm—and it was her crying need many a time in her history—she needed it now, when the kingdom was torn by contending factions, her King a child, and his foes those of his own household, in the persons of his uncles, Don Sancho and Don Fernando. When men, distracted by open and covert rebellion, looked to the throne for solace or solution, they only saw a little boy, vigorous indeed for his age, both in mind and body, but virtually a prisoner, with the promise of future glory as yet hidden alike from his people and from him. But boys' thoughts, then as now, were "long, long thoughts," and together the boy kinsmen dreamed and talked in secret of freedom and of the place and duties that awaited them in the world outside their prison walls. It was to Ramon Berenger that freedom came first, the young Count making his escape under cover of the night from Monzon, and speeding away to his countship, there to be welcomed with hearty rejoicings by his subjects of Provence. It was at dawn, a few months later, that his royal young kinsman followed him along the path to liberty. Clad, for the first time in his life, in armour, borrowed from one of his knights, and traversing a country bristling with the spies and armed bands of his uncle, Don Sancho, the young King reached Huesca without adventure, and proceeding thence to Zaragoza, made his solemn entry into the capital of Aragon amid the enthusiastic welcome of his subjects. Men felt the needed strong arm was at length at their service, though their King was still a child. Confirmation of the treasured privileges of the municipalities and generous reconciliation with his revolting kinsmen gave peace to the distracted kingdom. The sun of this most glorious reign in all the annals of Aragon was not yet fully risen above the horizon, but there was abundant promise in its rays. Jaime I had come early to his throne; he was called no less early to enter upon the responsibilities of married life. His marriage was indeed a matter of urgent and vital importance, both for himself and for his kingdom. He

had not, as so many of his predecessors, a wise kinswoman at hand—grandmother, sister, or aunt—to make his Court a home and to assist his youth with her riper judgment. The more need, therefore, of a wife. The human factor was of no account; security of the succession and safeguarding of the realm, everything. The choice was not the King's, but his counsellors'. With one consent, and by foregone conclusion, their eyes turned in the direction of Castile. Prudence and policy alike dictated the wisdom of summoning to the side of this King of thirteen years a sister of that Doña Berenguela who was the glory, not of Castile and Leon alone, but of all Spain, even to this day. It was from this noble and illustrious Princess herself, doubtless, that the ambassadors of Aragon sought the hand of the Princess Leonor; it was she who accompanied the bride to Agreda, where her marriage with the boy bridegroom was celebrated with regal pomp and splendour in February, 1221, the brilliant escort of Castilian and Leonese knights who attended the bride and her noble relatives being matched by the young King's magnificent retinue of prelates, nobles, and grandees. Doña Leonor's jointure consisted of the towns of Daroca, Epila, Pina, and Uncastillo, the city of Barbastro, Tamarite, Montalvan, Cervera, and the hill-country of Prades and Siurana. Immediately after his marriage the King armed himself knight in the Cathedral of Tarragona, whence he proceeded to Huesca, where he convoked the Cortes, accompanied throughout his itinerary by his Queen. We gather next to nothing of the married life of Leonor of Castile. We cannot be sure that she possessed sufficient charm of person or strength of mind to hold and shape according to her will the boyhood to which she had been bound for reasons of state. It may have been but the denial of opportunity, the clashing of contrary wills, that withheld from Aragon such a Queen as Berenguela was to Castile. There are yet, however, certain casual allusions and vivid, though passing incidents, recorded for the most part in

the Chronicle of Don Jaime himself—which are not without their suggestion that, but for disparity of years, or some more obscure cause at which we cannot now even faintly guess, the first marriage of the Conqueror might well have proved a happy one. The King himself bears witness that from the first to last Doña Leonor was ever at his side and in his councils, as was her right as Queen-Consort. From Agreda, where they were married, to Tarragona, where the boy bridegroom “having first heard the mass of the Holy Ghost” in the Church of St. Mary of Orta, “girt himself with a sword, which he took from the altar”; from Tarragona “into Aragon and Catalonia,” the Chronicle repeatedly reads, “my wife, the Queen, with me.” The King is at Huesca, “and the Queen also”; “in the presence of the Queen,” he learns of the revolt of Guillen de Moncada; she accompanies him to Alagon, where two hundred knights, adherents of Moncada, are let into the town during the night. It is to her that he rushes, with all a boy’s impulsive indignation, though with never a hint of fear, with the astounding and unpleasant news; “and I said to the Queen Doña Leonor, ‘Know ye that all the knights who came with Don Fernando and with En (Don) Guillen de Moncada and with Don Pedro Ahones, are already inside the town?’” The wife, doubtless, sat by, helpless as the husband, while the conspirators “cajoled them so with fair tales and words,” that both permitted themselves to be escorted next day to Zaragoza. “And when I was inside and in my own palace, called La Suda, at the Toledo gate, they came and told us after sunset that there were fully one hundred armed men between the aforesaid gate and a postern there was close by, through which one got to the city wall. Soon after Guillen Boy and Pere Sanz de Martel came, sent by the people of Zaragoza, and entered my house; they had their beds made, and laid down where the women usually lay. Meanwhile, the Queen, hearing the noise of the armed men who remained outside, and of those who had entered the house to lie down before us, took to

weeping very bitterly. I comforted her," adds this fourteen-year-old husband, "as well as I could." He was at least kind to her in those days. "And there came in before me," he continues, "the said Guillen Boy and Pere Sanz de Martel; and Guillen Boy said to the Queen, 'Lady,' said he, 'do not weep; for soon you will be comforted; tears destroy reason; and all those tears of yours will turn to joy, and your anger will pass away.'" Did any of her entourage, or either of those insolent midnight intruders, reflect, it maybe, in what a wholly different spirit her elder sister, Berenguela the Great, would most certainly have confronted them? Not with tears, but with calm courage, as Doña Leonor herself must have recalled, for she had shared the captivity of the Queen-Regent of Castile, in the Castle of Antillo, near Palencia, when the latter had been hard pressed by the all-powerful de Laras. But before the end of their three weeks' imprisonment, Doña Leonor had so far recovered her courage and dried her tears, that we find her absolutely refusing to forsake the King in his extremity, when the latter advised her to seize the one chance of escape which was open to her. "I went to the Queen," he says, "and said to her, 'Well do I know and see the hurt and dishonour that you and I are suffering; and though I am still a child, I intend having my revenge, and you will also, if you will only follow my advice.' Then I said to her: 'In this house there is a trap-door leading to a subterraneous passage; I will get two ropes; I will seat you on a board, and lower you down; then I will send for En Artal d'Alagon, that he may come here with his men this very night that we are to do this; and when we know that he has arrived, you will go out of the house by the door below, and Don Artal will go with you, and I will remain here at Zaragoza. I dare not attempt anything for fear of their hurting you; but as soon as you have gone away, I will address Don Fernando, and Don Guillen de Moncada, or Don Pedro Ahones, and will tell them that they all did treason in what they did against me.' But the Queen

replied : ‘ Know ye that for nothing in the world will I be lowered down from this on a board with ropes.’ And I begged and entreated her much, but she would not do it. I, therefore, let the thing rest, and did nothing on account of her fears.”

Are we standing here at the parting of the ways, as it proved, for King James and Doña Leonor ? For, though freedom came to them both at the end of their three weeks’ captivity, at the humiliating price of 20,000 morabatins, the King going to Tortosa and the Queen to Burbaguena, the former “ burning,” as he was, “ to draw his sword against the infidel,” had much to do in quelling the fierce outbursts of rebellion against the authority at home which might well have quenched the spirit of a far older man, while we hear henceforward little of the Queen. The shadow of Aurembiax, Countess of Urgel, who had captivated a boy’s wayward fancy, had fallen darkly between him and Leonor. Long before the stroke fell, she must have guessed that the King had wearied of her, while there may well have been a strain of pity making minor of the *chanso* which we read of Armand Plaguès offering to her, while as yet her fate was unsealed. For, though a turbulent and haughty nobility within, and a crafty and infidel foe at his gates, were teaching him fortitude and statesmanship through the seventeen years of turmoil that preceded their subjugation, yet James had still time to hear the troubadours sing, and his Queen must often have listened at her husband’s Court to Guillaume Anelie, who addressed a *sirvente* to the “ young King of Aragon,” Peire Cardinal, who was “ much honoured and cherished ” by him, Nat de Mons, who wrote him verses of good advice, telling him that valour is a good quality in kings, but can be counter-balanced by wrong-doing and injustice, while blame is more to be feared than death. It is probable, however, that the most brilliant epoch of the troubadours in this reign was during the rule over the Court of James I of his second Queen, Violante of Hungary.

The silence of her husband's Chronicle regarding the divorce from his first consort has been generally held to be one of the proofs of its authenticity, for the royal author was apt at glossing over incidents which were calculated to present him in an unfavourable light. Utterly regardless as he remained to the end of his life of all suffering whereby he could purchase even a passing pleasure, he saw no obstacle to his repudiation of Leonor in the fact that she was the mother of the son of his boyhood, for he had only been fifteen at the time of the birth of his heir, Alfonso. The legitimation of the offspring of a repudiated wife was the invariable accompaniment of the annulment of marriages set aside in circumstances such as these.

In March, 1229, John, Cardinal Bishop of Sabina, entered Aragon as Papal Legate, and was met by the King at Lerida. His business was the matter of the King's divorce. In April a council was held at Tarragona, the Bishops of the province, the Archbishop of Toledo and his suffragans being present. The divorce was pronounced, on the usual pretext of consanguinity, and Doña Leonor was sent back to Castile, the remainder of the summer of that year being spent by the King in his preparations for departure to the Holy Land. The final parting between the divorced consorts took place, September 17, 1229, at the Monastery of Huerta, where it was formally agreed, in the presence of them both, and of a great train of Aragonese grandees, that Doña Leonor should be granted the town of Hariza with all its revenues for her life. Of infinitely more worth in her sight, no doubt, was the permission given to her by the King that her only son, now a boy of six years old, should not be taken from her until he attained his majority. Thus, the first wife of the Conqueror passes meekly, as many another noble and repudiated wife in mediaeval times in Europe, from the stage of her eight years' Queenship. Although her after-life is shrouded in uncertainty, it is generally supposed that the divorced Queen ended her days in that royal Convent of Las

Huelgas of Burgos, which had been founded by her mother, the English Leonora, Queen of Alfonso VIII of Castile, of which her sister, Constanza, was first a nun, and afterwards Abbess, and where so many of their illustrious kinswomen, the Great Berengaria amongst them, found sepulture.¹ The son, whom she took with her into exile, did not survive to inherit the throne which had been secured to him by the same decree which deprived his mother of her consort's crown. His shadowed story belongs to the period of his father's second marriage, which, in its bearing on his fortunes, followed the invariable sinister rule of the stepmother in the Aragonese royal family. He married, in 1256, Constanza de Moncada, and died in 1260, "the victim," as has well been said, "for half his life, of his stepmother's spite and his father's coldness."

DOÑA VIOLANTE OF HUNGARY

The power of the Keys, no less concerned, in the Middle Ages, with the making than with the marring of marriages, having annulled King James's first union, with Leonor of Castile, proposed to him, in February, 1234, an alliance with Yolande (afterwards to be known in her adopted land as Violante), daughter of Andreas II, King of Hungary, by his wife, another Yolande, daughter of Peter Courtenay, Emperor of Constantinople. The marriage, brought about by Pope Gregory IX, was in all respects a suitable one. If James was at this time "one of the finest and handsomest men of the day, a palm taller than other men, well built, with a ruddy face, straight nose, teeth as white as pearls, and golden hair," his bride of twenty-one was his equal in beauty ;

¹ Leonor, formerly the illustrious Queen of Aragon, as she is styled in all the documents of her husband's reign after their divorce, is said by some authorities to have joined the Order of Premonstratensian nuns of Almaza, near Ariza, where she lived until her death "a great example and manifestation of sanctity."

later events in her married life show her to have been no mean stateswoman; while her influence over her husband persisted—not always with the happiest results for his kingdom and her stepson—to the day of her death. The dowry of the Hungarian Princess was fixed at 10,000 silver marks, with her right to certain territories in France and Namur, in virtue of her descent from Louis VI of France and Baldwin VIII of Flanders. Escorted from Hungary by a brilliant retinue, and attended by Bartholomew, Bishop of Cincoiglesias, who had been chiefly instrumental in arranging the marriage, and by a certain Count Dionysius, her kinsman, to whom the King afterwards gave lands in his kingdom and a place at his Court, the bride arrived at Barcelona, where her marriage with James was celebrated, September 8, 1236, receiving as *arras* Montpellier, Conflant, Cerdagne, Valespir, and Colibre.

As the conquest of Majorca had loomed large in the closing days of his first marriage, so we find the greater part of his second married life taken up with his darling dream of the conquest of Valencia. In the forefront of that dream, we find Violante in her place. Two years after her marriage, when she had become the mother of her eldest daughter, a third Yolande, or Violante (afterwards to be the wife of Alfonso X of Castile), she is summoned, together with her little child, to join her husband at Burriana, where he is encamped, the fiery-tempered King having taken a solemn oath that he would not “go beyond Teruel and the river at Tortosa till he had taken Valencia.” Don Fernando, the King’s great-uncle, was to accompany the Queen on her journey, which proved no more propitious than might have been anticipated, seeing that the time of year was January, and the roads to be traversed those of mediæval Spain. “There came great rain,” writes James, “so great that when they had to cross the Ulldecona (Cenia) river only one knight could cross, who crossed by his horse swimming.” This fortunate adventurer was charged to make known the Queen’s

plight to her husband, awaiting her at Peniscola. The Queen and Don Fernando had, indeed, obeyed his summons, but now they "could not cross the river with the ladies, and I was to send them word what to do." James's reply was characteristic of the impulsive man who had once been the daring boy. "I told the messenger that I myself would go there. After dinner I took horse; the rain had ceased, but there was such a sea raised by the wind that when the waves struck the Castle of Peniscola on the side of the Grau of Tortosa they went over to the other side of the castle. . . . I left, and found that the water at Uldecona had gone down, but not much. I passed without swimming, but the water was still high, and went up to the saddle-flap."

The intrepid forder of the swollen stream found resolute opposition to his plans awaiting him on the other side. Queen and kinsman entreated him not to forsake his lieges of Aragon and Catalonia for so long a time as must elapse before his mad design could be accomplished. Persuasion was in vain, however; he would not "pass the Ebro till Valencia was taken," and dismissing Don Fernando, he bade him hold himself in readiness to return before the harvest; when he came, he would find the table served; "and no otherwise will I do." The next morning, the waters having fallen, King and Queen and their child crossed together; two days later, the King escorted the Queen to Burriana, where he left her, returning to his camp at Puig, whence he rode a second time to Burriana, "to see the Queen and to comfort her, and bid her be of good heart now that she had come to the front." A little later, he sends two knights to her, "bidding her come to me, as Our Lord had done me that great honour of giving me the Castle of Almenara, where she would be better lodged than at Burriana." The messengers find Queen Violante about to sit down to dinner. Like a thrifty housewife, "she said she would go when she had dined"; though "it was during Lent," the meal was probably

too good to be wasted. Nor was she, possibly, disposed to start hungry, even in a penitential season, on her journey. But the knights said: "The King bids you come; he has prepared dinner; you will dine better and more joyfully there than you would do here." "When the Queen heard that, she left her dinner. I waited till she came," says her husband, "and went to meet her to the hillside below the castle; she and I entered the castle and dined with great joy." Here, the royal couple kept Easter of 1238; thence, the Queen was conveyed to Paterna, where she was left in garrison, with ten knights, of whom we may confidently assert Count Dionysius was one. As she sees town after town in the coveted kingdom of Valencia falling before, or surrendering to, the victorious arms of her husband, Violante is more and more heart and soul in and for his crowning enterprise of the taking of the garden-city itself. She is in the thick of his council. She and she only, save an interpreter, is present at the momentous interviews of the King with Abhulhamalec, the nephew and envoy of Zian, the Moorish King of Valencia. James "goes to her" and "tells her" continually all that he withholds from his army. She assures him that "no one had so great an interest in my honour and welfare as herself; if God loved me, and gave me honour, she thanked Him for it, for her hopes were all centred in me." She "thought secrecy good beyond everything, till I was sure of taking the city." And her counsel brought him triumphantly to that moment of exultation in his life; Violante was surely somewhere at his side when the Christian King beheld his standard hoisted on the towers of Valencia, and seeing his long dream of conquest thus fulfilled, he "dismounted, turned himself towards the east, and wept with his eyes, kissing the ground, for the great mercy that had been done to him."

It had been fortunate for her husband's kingdom and for his eldest son if Violante had always used her in-

fluence over the King to such good purpose as before the walls of Valencia. To her restless ambition for her own children, of whom she bore ten to her consort, may be plainly traced those successive wills in their favour, to the detriment of her stepson, which must eventually have wrought untold internecine trouble in Aragon, had not the death of Alfonso solved the piteous problem. Violante was not the woman to be content with a mere pleasure-house for her children, such as Villareal, which King James built for them, while the son of another woman lorded it over his father's dominions. Her eldest son, Pedro, must have Valencia, which she had helped by her counsels to win, the Balearics and Montpellier, Roussillon, Conflant, Cerdagne, and Valespir, at the death of Count Nuno. A few years later, her maternal greed obtains from her pliant husband Catalonia for Pedro, Valencia for Don Jaime, six towns for Ferdinand, her third son, while her youngest son, Sancho, afterwards Archbishop of Toledo, was enriched with numerous benefices. And as though not yet feeling their future secure, we hear of a secret treaty at Huesca in 1250, between the King and certain of his grandees, whereby the latter pledged themselves to support and advance, by all means in their power, the interests of the Queen's sons. For her daughter, Violante, a crown had been secured by her betrothal, on November 26, 1246, to Alfonso, heir-apparent to the throne of Castile. The bride was then ten years old, and the marriage was not solemnized until January 29, 1249. Her sister, Isabella, became the wife, eleven years after her mother's death, of Philip III of France. A third, Constanza, became the wife of Manuel, brother of her brother-in-law, Alfonso of Castile, while two, Leonor and Maria, died unmarried; a third, Sancha, went on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, where she died, after many years' devoted service as a nurse in the Hospital of St. John.

Turning aside for the moment from Violante the *diplomate* and stepmother, it is possible to reconstruct in much of its brilliant detail that setting of the Court

life of her times in which she queened it over her husband's capitals of Zaragoza and Barcelona. The pomp and luxury of that environment had not, perhaps, reached the plenitude which it was to attain in later reigns; but the colours were vivid enough. The Conqueror, master of Valencia, the Balearics, and Murcia, which he had successively wrested from the Moors, looked abroad on a vast and flourishing kingdom, knowing all that he had dreamed of as a gallant boy the undisputed and inalienable prize of his maturer manhood; while his victories had assured to his people that leisure in which alone the arts and commerce can come to their full perfection in any nation. More especially was this the case with Barcelona, that "joyous and crowning city" of mediaeval Spain, a Tyre of the Middle Ages, "whose merchants were princes, whose traffickers were the honourable of the earth." Hither flocked Lombards, Florentines, Sienese, and silk merchants of Lucca, laden with the glittering spoils of Adriatic looms, cendal, samite, scarlet, gold, and purple, while mystic odours of the East were borne upon the air that blew across the orchard-gardens of the Elect City, cargoes of incense, cinnamon, and allspice. Nearer at hand, in ideal conditions such as no worker before or since has known, Moorish craftsmen, walled round by groves of orange, fig, and pomegranate, wove their precious stuffs for the clothing of Christian Infantas and Queens. Thus were Violante and her daughters clothed. If they grew weary of Italian cendal and samite, it was no far cry to the kingdom of Jaen, of whose myriad looms their Moorish slaves would be quick to sing the praises. From these alien tirewomen, also, the Queen and the noble ladies of her Court would learn how to don the *caramiello*, or mitred head-dress of the Arab woman, while Moorish caskets of exquisite workmanship would be eagerly sought after to hold their necklaces of gold and pearl, their earrings, rings, and pendants. To the skilled jewel-workers of Barcelona, however, it would suffice to entrust the fashioning of the belts and girdles,

inlaid and embroidered with precious stones and pearls, which held together the sweeping folds of the trailing robes of the period. Eastern, also, it may be said in passing, were the gauzy veils, known as *algrinales*, or *alquivales*, which shared the favour of the ladies of Aragon as head-dresses, in conjunction with that form of coif called *impla*, from the fabric, made at Jativa, of which it was composed. Two pieces of *impla* of Jativa figure in a bridal trousseau of mediaeval times in Spain, another being *impla* of Jaca, and a third, *impla romana*. The magnificence of the ladies' dresses of this era may be gathered from the following items, extracted from the same document, which were presented by the bridegroom to his bride on the occasion of their betrothal, as was customary: dress lengths of green and crimson velvet brocade, tawny, green, grey, and black damask, black satin, fine scarlet Florentine cloth, cloths of Courtrai, Lille, and Rouen; the lengths ranging from four to thirty-three yards. There are also pieces of linen, of silk, and cotton fabrics; six gauze veils, while such items as a piece of benzoin, a sachet of Alexandrian powder, a horn of civet, a sachet of musk, and a casket of ambergris, remind us of the mediaeval passion for perfumes and cosmetics.

No less multifarious were the purchases for the royal wardrobe of Doña Violante and her children. Scarlet cloth was used both for hose and for rain-cloaks, while the shoes were royal indeed, made as they were now of silk, now of leather, richly embroidered with gold and gems. Peacocks' feathers were fashioned into fans for royal hands to wave languidly to and fro, while the jewels of both the Queen and the Infantas were of priceless value and beauty.

For short journeys, or on great occasions, such as coronation or marriage processions, queens and great ladies rode on palfreys, gaily caparisoned, the colours of their trappings frequently harmonizing with the costumes of their fair riders. Longer journeys were made in the eighth, ninth, and tenth centuries, in litters, *sedendarios*,

and *basternas* (the state carriage of the Merovingian period, only used by ladies of high rank); the mule, however, had been from time immemorial the favourite means of locomotion, these hardy animals being more suitable than horses to the mountainous roads of Spain. The sumpter-mule, not yet vanished from modern Spain, was a feature of mediæval life, figuring even in religious processions, covered with scarlet saddle-cloths, as bearers of sacred relics when thus carried on the occasion of translations, etc. The *sella de barda* was the pack-saddle used for the transport of luggage, merchandise, of similar burdens. Sumptuary legislation was frequently and sharply directed against the *suera*, a kind of side-saddle, lined with cloth, embroidered with gold thread, the saddle-bow often painted in colours. At one period, it was forbidden to women to use, even on their wedding-day, *sueras* of any but plain cloth, without any ornamentation.

It was customary to cut the tails and manes of mules in sign of family mourning.

The closing years of Violante's life were shadowed by the ascendancy which Teresa de Vidaura usurped over the heart and mind of her faithless husband. Much that concerns this later amour of the Conqueror's must be left in uncertainty. It is known that she bore two sons, Pedro and Jaime, to her royal lover, and that he bestowed upon his mistress the town and castle of Exerica in Valencia, with all its revenues, a very important barony, says one of the Spanish historians. But the precise date of her relations with the King is disputed, certain authorities maintaining that the liaison preceded his marriage with Violante, and that it was resumed after the death of the Queen, others supposing that she actually became his wife. In either case, she was probably concerned with that dark episode in the life of King James, the tearing out of the tongue of the Bishop of Gerona, who had dared to reprove the licentiousness of his royal master, or, as some assert, who had informed the Pope of the King's solemn

promise to marry Teresa, a promise which he refused to fulfil. Again, it is said that the Bishop suffered his terrible punishment as a champion of the cause of Violante, whom the King desired to divorce. Thanks to Papal intervention, however, she kept her place as Queen of Aragon to the close of her life.

The circumstances of her death, which took place in October, 1251, were marked by much pathos. She was about to follow the King, who had set out for Valencia, when she fell ill of a slow fever. Forbidden by her physicians to undertake the journey, she succumbed to her illness at Santa Maria de las Calas. In spite of the brave soul in the weak body, her health had been undermined by the hardships she had shared with her consort in the early years of their married life, and by the dangers and discomforts amid which she had given birth, in fifteen years, to her nine children, many of whom came into the world in the midst of camps, and within sound of drum and trumpet. Doña Violante was buried, at her own request, in the Cistercian Monastery of Vallbona, near the Altar of Our Lady. Her faithful knight, Count Dionysius, and the Countess Margaret, his wife, were specially commended in her will, made a few days before her death, to the King. Their sons, Amor and Gabriel, served the Royal House of Aragon as faithfully as their parents had served Queen Violante. Many years after, we find King James recording in his Chronicle the death of his daughter, Maria, and that "it was my wish that she should be buried with her mother at Vallbona, but the Zaragozans, in spite of the barons and knights (who were ready to fulfil my commands), buried her in Saint Saviour's, at Zaragoza. When I knew they had buried her, I stayed in the kingdom of Valencia," where the news of her death had been brought to him. From the MS. of Gondino de Lobera, who was archbishop's chaplain in this reign, we learn that the Infanta's tomb was on the Gospel side of the presbytery of La Seo. The same authority tells us that he held a chaplaincy in the cathedral of the value of 500 ducats per annum

from this Infanta. She died in Daroca, but her remains were brought to Zaragoza. She was a woman grown, and is thus depicted, with a gold crown on her head, on her effigy, clothed, as so many royal dead elected to be robed at the moment of their demise, in the religious habit. She was very beautiful, says the chaplain, and resembled her father. The Infanta's will was brought to James at Valencia by her executors, Don Sancho Martinez de Oblites, Bishop of Zaragoza, and Don Sancho Baldoivi, and read to him. The Princess bequeathed 1000 marks for discharging debts and damages, and for distribution amongst her women servants and persons of her household whom she wished to assist. To meet this sum, however, there was nothing but her jewels. Whereupon the King consigned to her executors Daroca, Barbastro, and Roda, from the revenues of which they were to pay the 1000 marks, the King keeping the jewels. In softened mood—for this daughter who so much resembled him was possibly her father's favourite child—James goes to hear his son, Sancho, newly made Archbishop of Toledo, say mass in his cathedral at Christmas, "recognizing the claim he had on me, as his father, he having always been a loving and dutiful son."

The royal sensualist, however, was soon quit of his softened mood of mourning for his dead Queen, to whom many ladies succeeded in his affections. Besides Teresa Gil de Vidaura, we hear of Berenguela Alfonso, who actually died while his companion on a journey into France, and "our well-beloved lady, Guillerma de Cabrera," though it is a certain "Doña Sibilia de Saga" whom he commends to his son on his death-bed.

RÉSUMÉ OF CHAPTER V

The accession, boyhood, and first marriage of Don Jaime the Conqueror, 1214-1221.

Doña Leonor of Castile, her character, and failure to hold the King. Divorced, 1229. Retires to a convent. Her son Alfonso dies, 1260.

Second marriage of the King to Doña Violante of Hungary, 1236.
Campaign of Valencia.

Influence of Doña Violante in her husband's disposal of his dominions.
Her daughter, Doña Violante, betrothed to the heir of Castile, 1246,
and married, 1249.

Manners and customs of the reign of Doña Violante.

Her death, 1251. Her will. Her successors in the King's affections.

CHAPTER VI

DOÑA CONSTANZA OF SICILY

ON July 28, 1260, a marriage contract was signed at Barcelona which was to prove one of the most noteworthy documents in the archives of Aragon. For the bridegroom was the Infante Pedro, now become, by the death of his luckless half-brother Alfonso (without issue), heir to their father's dominions, while the bride was Constance, daughter of Manfred, King of Sicily, and his Queen, Beatrice of Savoy ; and their union was the first cast of the shuttle whereby the fortunes of Aragon and Sicily were long to be inextricably interwoven. The projected alliance met with rooted opposition from Rome, where Manfred was regarded as a rebel and usurper, and its very possibility threatened for a time to wreck the second matrimonial project with which King Jaime was concerned at the same time, namely, the betrothal of his daughter, the Infanta Isabella, to the Dauphin, afterwards Philip the Bold, of France. Undeterred, however, by Papal thunders, the Sicilian and Aragonese monarchs went forward with their negotiations. The ambassadors of the former, Guiroldo de Posta, Majoro de Luenazo, and Jacobo Mostacio, were despatched to Barcelona, and there, as stated above, the marriage contract was signed. The dowry of the youthful Princess, who had barely attained the age of twelve years, was fixed at 50,000 ounces of gold, besides precious stones. It was a dower worthy of the splendid Court from which the bride was to take her departure two years later. Muntaner tells us that the lavish expenditure and princely state of that Court had

much to do with the King of Aragon's choice of a bride for his heir. But the old knight does not omit to add, gallantly, at the same time, that the Princess was "the most beautiful, discreet, and honourable maiden one could find." Two years elapsed between her betrothal and the solemnization of her marriage. In June, 1262, the King then holding his Court at Montpellier, the bride of fourteen was brought to that city, escorted by her great-uncle, Bonafacio de Anglano, Count of Montalvan, and by a noble train of Neapolitan and Sicilian "gentlemen, knights, citizens, prelates, dames, and demoiselles." Still a child herself, she brought with her also to the new country of her adoption the child-companions with whom she had been brought up, Roger de Lauria and Corral Llança, and the latter's sister. Glory and romance were to wait upon all three in the land whither they followed the fortunes of their illustrious girl-mistress; for the squadrons of the great Admiral de Lauria were to sweep the seas between Catalonia and Sicily in the years to come, while Corral, skilled in all courtly arts, handsome in face and graceful in body, fair-spoken and well-informed, was to prove one of the chief ornaments of the Court of his adoption, to which he paid the high compliment of learning to speak the Catalan tongue more perfectly than his own. Comrades at Court, the two noble youths were eventually brothers-in-law, the sister of Corral becoming the wife of Roger de Lauria.

The young people had a wise and watchful duenna in the person of Donna Bella de Lauria, the bride's governess, who had brought her up, and from whom her marriage was not to separate her, for we are told she lived at the Court of Aragon for the rest of her life at the King's expense.

The marriage of Constanza and the Infante Pedro took place on June 13, 1262, in the Church of Our Lady of the Tables, memorable in the earliest dawning of the Conqueror's life. The bride's dowry consisted of the Countships of Roussillon and Cerdaña, and Conflans, and Valespir, with the Countship of Besalu, and Prades,

and the towns of Caldes and Lagostera. A month later, on July 4, the marriage of the bridegroom's sister, the Infanta Isabella, brought to a happy conclusion despite all threats of Papal displeasure, took place at Clermont in Auvergne. The Aragonese Princess lived to ascend the throne at her husband's side on the death of his father, St. Louis, but died shortly after, from the effects of a fall from her horse. Her sister-in-law, the Sicilian Princess, was reserved for the singular destiny of spending the latter part of her married life at a distance from her husband's kingdom, in the island of her birth. There was, however, much of domestic interest and royal happenings to precede that tocsin of the Sicilian Vespers which was to be the signal for her recall.

She was a bride of but a few months when eye-witness of the dissensions which broke out immediately on the return of the Court from Montpellier to Barcelona between her husband and his brother, the Infante Jaime, her part, however, being merely that of a passive onlooker, although the towns forming her own dower figured hotly in the dispute. If her married life was to be somewhat less intimately concerned with the clash of arms than that of her mother-in-law, Violante, who bore the greater number of her large family almost literally in the thick of battle and the shadow of besieged cities, and cradled them in camps, a daughter-in-law of the Conqueror might not be altogether immune from contact with wars and rumours of wars. In his old age, Don Jaime was as much the keen soldier and the man of strong passions as he had ever been in his voluptuous, if laurel-crowned youth. The flash of his magic sword and the lure of his dragon-winged helmet still beckoned the army that adored him to fresh victories for the Faith and Aragon against the Moors. Such a commander spared none of his troops, his son least of all. We hear of the Infante Pedro winning glory in his father's service at the head of noble and knightly citizens, seamen, and almogarves, of Catalonia, Aragon, and Valencia, striking terror, with fire and sword,

into the infidel hosts, and sending, in token of his successes, to his father at Barcelona, rich spoils of men and beasts, "a thousand head of great cattle, twenty thousand small and one thousand male and female Moorish slaves." The latter were distributed, we learn, amongst the Pope, his Cardinals, the Emperor Frederic, the King of France, the counts and barons of Aragon and Catalonia, and the King's personal friends. The women captives were divided in like manner amongst the young Dauphiness of France, the countesses and other distinguished ladies of the kingdom, including, doubtless, the Infanta Constanza, domiciled, it would appear, throughout the prolonged campaign which her husband organized against the Moors, at Valencia. Here, it is probable, the greater number of her children were born, the four Infantes, Alfonso, Jaime, Fadrique, and Pedro, and the two Infantas, Yolande, who became the wife of Robert, Duke of Calabria, and Isabel, afterwards Queen of Dionysius, King of Portugal, and a Saint of the Roman calendar. Her position as wife of the heir-apparent, her father-in-law being a widower, gave Constanza a prominent place at the numerous and brilliant festivities which characterized this reign. Thus, she would certainly have acted as hostess in 1263, on the occasion of the visit of the King and Queen of Castile, the latter being Violante, eldest daughter of the King of Aragon, when the hospitality offered to the royal guests was on a truly princely scale, the King of Aragon giving orders that everything in the way of provisions was to be provided free of cost for them and their suite. Couriers who preceded them received from the townspeople whole sheep, kids, beef, bread, wine, capons, rabbits, partridges, and every other kind of provisions, which were purchased at such high prices on behalf of the King that for the whole time of the visit, which extended over two months, the country-folk lived almost for nothing. Neither the King of Castile nor a single member of his numerous retinue was allowed to spend a *denier* of his own, luxuries and

entertainments, as well as necessaries, being included in the lavish expenditure. The entertainments especially were on the usual profuse and ingenious scale, comprising dancing, tourneys, and performances by mimes, mummers, marionettes, and acrobats. Doña Constanza was amongst the royal witnesses of the marriage, in 1269, at Burgos, of the Infante Ferdinand, grandson of the Conqueror, and Blanche, daughter of St. Louis of France, the other princely guests including, beside the immediate relatives of the bride and bridegroom, a Moorish King and a Greek Empress. Two years later, Doña Constanza gave birth, at Zaragoza (though Barcelona disputes the honour with the capital of Aragon), to a daughter, afterwards to be known as St. Isabel of Portugal. The year 1275 witnessed the betrothal, at Perpignan, of Doña Constanza's second son, Don Jaime, to Esclarmonde, sister of Count Roger-Bernard II of Foix, and the following year saw his mother and her husband called to the throne of Aragon by the death of the Conqueror. Doña Constanza was the first Queen of Aragon whose coronation is recorded by Blancas, the ceremony taking place in Zaragoza on November 17, 1276.

The birth of her four sons and two daughters excepted—all of whom first saw the light on Aragonese or Catalonian soil—the life of this Queen belongs almost entirely to Sicilian history. It was to be her extraordinary destiny, at a period when royal brides seldom or never revisited the land of their birth after their marriage, to return, as the representative of the country of her adoption, to that of her childhood's home, only quitting it for the second time to pass a few brief years, at the close of her life, in retirement at Barcelona. "The troubles and glories of the life of Peter III," as Mr. Burke has well said in his *History of Spain*, "came alike from across the sea"; and in both troubles and glories his Queen bore her full share. The period of Aragon's history was that in which, her protracted struggle with the infidel for ever ended, the hardy and restless spirit of

her Catalan soldiery burned for new fields of conquest. The Sicilian ancestry of their Queen was to prove their opportunity. To Aragon, Doña Constanza was the heroine of "one of the most complicated and romantic chapters in the history of mediæval Italy—when popes strove with emperors, and Frenchmen with Italians, and Guelphs with Ghibellines; when crowns were flung about like tennis balls, and excommunications flew as thick as javelins—the great struggle of the thirteenth century for the possession of the ancient and famous island of Sicily."

Not once, but many times, in history, a glove has played a romantic or a tragic part. No glove in history is steeped with deeper pathos or darker tragedy than that which was carried from the foot of the scaffold where it had been flung by Conradin of Suabia, murdered by Charles of Anjou, the usurper of Sicily, in 1268, and borne across the sea to the dead boy's aunt, Doña Constanza of Aragon. "Fourteen long and dreadful years" were to pass, however, before the challenge was to be taken up, years in which the Sicilians, held in bitter bondage by their French tyrants, must often have turned, with hopeless and despairing gaze, to where the silence of their rightful Lady and her Lord of Aragon seemed to mock their agony. The story of the Sicilian Vespers, that terrific outburst of popular fury which drove the French from Sicily in 1282, has been told many a time in song and story; it was the tocsin call which pierced to the heart of the daughter of Manfred. Sicily summoned her to give it lasting peace. Moved by her entreaties, Don Pedro could no longer afford to stand aloof from those who had indeed been his subjects, in right of his wife, from the fall of Manfred in battle in 1266. In the autumn of 1282, the fleet and army of Aragon set sail to relieve Messina, hotly invested by Charles of Anjou.

From its ill-starred beginnings to its scarcely less disastrous close, the enmity between the Houses of Aragon and Anjou, born of their struggle for the

sovereignty of Sicily, was indeed a man's quarrel, but at the same time the woman's influence, whether open or veiled, was never far to seek. More than one historian of repute assigns the origin of the French domination in the island to the following episode. The saintly Louis IX of France and his brother, Charles, Comte d'Anjou, had married sisters, daughters of the Comte de Provence, a near kinsman of Pedro of Aragon. Shortly after St. Louis's marriage, his Queen, Marguerite, extended a cordial invitation to her sister and brother-in-law to visit her in Paris. A brilliant Court was assembled to do them honour, but the Countess of Anjou, deeply offended by the fact that a chair of state had not been placed for her beside and on an equal level with the Queen's, haughtily withdrew from the august assembly, and retired to her apartment. There, her husband, who was tenderly attached to her, followed, to find her "weeping bitterly." Her trouble was soon told. That she, the sister-in-law of the King of France, and sister of his Queen—their two other sisters being also Queens, the one of England, and the other of the Romans—should have received so cruel an affront as had been put upon her! That, instead of being seated beside her sister, she should have been assigned the cushion of a Countess at that sister's feet!

Let them instantly return to their own lordships, for she refused to remain another day at Court. The Count entreated his wife, as she wept in his arms, to dismiss all question of affront from her mind. It was the French custom that no lady, save another Queen, might sit at the Queen's side. Therefore, it was a crown she was asking of him, and that crown, he swore, before Holy Church, and by the love he bore her, should be hers. With his lips on hers he took this oath, whereby "the Countess was in part consoled." The next day, they announced their imminent departure from Paris, and four days later, they started for Anjou, much to the regret of the King and Queen. From Provence, the Count set speedy sail for Italy, escorted by five galleys,

in quest of the crown he had so lightly promised to his vain and ambitious wife. But the days were those when crowns galore were in the gift of the Papacy, and the moment of his coming was opportune. Manfred, son of the Emperor Frederic II, had inherited the Papal censure which had rested so heavily on his father. In the light of his disfavour at the Court of Clement V, the crown of Sicily was no longer his. The arrival at that Court of Charles of Anjou was that of a successor to Manfred's forfeited throne. The Count of Provence and Anjou left the consistory, says Muntaner, with one crown on his head, and another in his hand—it was that which he had promised, with a kiss, to his Countess. A Cardinal, specially delegated by the Pope to place that coveted circlet on her head, accompanied the new King on his return to France. Once more, the now royal couple were the guests of the King and Queen of France in Paris; on this occasion the two Queens sat side by side. Charles of Anjou had kept his promise. His wife's ambition gratified, the King of Sicily and Naples, as he was now styled, proceeded to take possession of his new kingdom. King Manfred fell, fighting valiantly in a lost cause; his nephew, Conradin, who had hastened to his help, was beheaded at Naples, his death transmitting to Constanza, Queen of Aragon, the rights of inheritance of the island kingdom which had been her dowry. Although the tragic succession of events plunged the Court of Aragon into mourning, and the heart of the Queen into deepest grief, it would seem that Pedro III was not at once disposed to enter on the task, of which he must fully have foreseen the difficulties, of taking possession, in his wife's name, of her undoubtedly lawful inheritance. It was necessary, first of all, to be assured of the friendship of the King of France, who was the brother of the usurping King of Sicily. With this end in view, he set out for the French Court, where he was received with every mark of honour and with splendid festivities, St. Louis, ever on the side of peace, making every effort, though

in vain, to effect a reconciliation between Aragon and Anjou.

The 30th of March, 1282, a date marked in history by the tragic episode of the Sicilian Vespers, marks also the entry of Aragon upon the costly enterprise of her Sicilian policy. The island kingdom, having thrown off the hated yoke of Charles of Anjou, summoned, with one voice, the husband of Manfred's daughter to be their King and saviour. The election of Pedro—devoid of all sacerdotal semblance of a coronation, for the Archbishop of Palermo and the Archbishop of Monreal, who should have performed the ceremony, were both French, and were absent at Rome—took place at Palermo, September 2, 1282. For three years, he ruled a distracted kingdom, harassed by the dispossessed Charles of Anjou, who, secure in the friendship of the French Pope, Martin IV, was not to be lightly evicted from his throne. Aragon and its King were laid under an interdict, and a crusade preached against the latter. Those who joined it, taking a stone in their hand, dashed it on the ground, exclaiming: "I cast this stone against Peter of Aragon, that I may thereby gain the indulgence" (promised to all who took arms against the excommunicated King). But thanks to the valour of his Admiral, Roger de Lauria, Pedro could afford to snap his fingers at the Papacy, at the House of Anjou, as well as at the fanatic seekers after plenary indulgences.

At the end of three years, he left behind him a safe and sure inheritance when, to the great joy of his people, he returned to Aragon. In Zaragoza, he was joyfully received, as he had been anxiously awaited, by his Queen and their children. But reunion was to prove, for the former at least, merely the brief prelude to a still longer separation. Following on the popular rejoicings at his return, came the graver business of the Cortes, which were immediately convoked at Zaragoza. Therein, the King made public his intention to send the Queen, with two of her sons, to represent him in Sicily ;

and this for two reasons : first, because he was well assured that the people of the island would gladly receive a daughter of King Manfred in their midst, and that thus the ties between Aragon and Sicily would be drawn more closely ; and secondly, because he thought that this decision would give the Queen pleasure. The Cortes heartily concurring, preparations were at once begun for the journey, of which Muntaner in his Chronicle has left us a vivid and intimate picture.

The Queen and her children having returned to Barcelona, the city was *en fête* for a week, during which nothing was thought of but dancing and amusements of all kinds. The King then charged Don Ramon Marquet and Don Berenger Mallol to prepare the good ship *La Bonne Aventure*, four galleys, two vessels, and two barques, to form a flotilla of escort for the illustrious travellers. In addition to the hundred picked men who were to man the *Bonne Aventure*, there were to be five hundred archers, five hundred sergeants, and one hundred knights over and above the ordinary members of the household of the Queen and the Infantes. Men and provisions being aboard, word was sent to the King and Queen in the Palace that all was ready for sailing. The parting between the royal couple took place in the privacy of their apartments, Constanza only consoled by the hope—which was destined to remain unrealized—of a speedy reunion with her husband. The young Infantes, Don Jaime and Don Fadrique, took leave of their father kneeling, while the King tenderly embraced and blessed them. Four hours passed before the Queen emerged from the Palace, hours which were spent by husband and wife alone with their children. From the Palace, the Queen passed, escorted by the King of Majorca, and a number of knights, prelates, and townspeople, to the Cathedral, where prayers were offered by the Archbishop of Tarragona for her safe voyage, and the protection of St. Eulalie and St. Leger invoked.

The Queen, attended by the King of Majorca, then mounted her horse, and rode, followed by more than

fifty gentlemen of Aragon and Catalonia, together with the Consuls of Barcelona and several of the chief citizens, to the water's edge. A weeping crowd of men, women, and children testified to the love which Constanza had won from her husband's people during her twenty years' sojourn amongst them. She and her children were conveyed in a coracle to the waiting ship, and all the suite having been duly embarked, the signal for departure was given, amid the farewell greetings of the people assembled on the quay and along the shore.

Muntaner next transports us to Palermo, where the Queen and her children, their voyage safely accomplished, as if, like the Three Wise Men, to whom he compares the illustrious travellers, they had been guided by a star, were received with every outward expression of delirious joy by the inhabitants. To Constanza, the moment was one of intense emotion. Confronted as she was by the acclaiming welcome of a populace who regarded her as a guardian angel, the harbinger of a new era of hope and peace for their distracted island, she could not but remember that, home-coming as this hour was, it was empty of the presence and embraces of all from whom she had parted twenty years before. Kindly faces pressed upon her, but they were the faces of strangers. The veil of death or of captivity had fallen over those other faces—father, mother, uncle, nephew, sister—for which she looked in vain among the surging crowds that hurried to the quayside to bid her welcome. Touched as she must have been by the popular demonstrations of affection which greeted Manfred's daughter, her first action, at the moment when her feet trod the soil of Sicily once more, was that of a woman saddened by the thought of all that twenty years had taken from her, rather than that of a proud and triumphant Regent. "The Queen, on landing," says Muntaner, "made the sign of the Cross, raised her eyes to Heaven, kissed the ground, weeping, and entered the Church of St. George, where she prayed, together with the Infantes." On emerging into the crowded

streets, more than five hundred mounts awaited her and her retinue. A handsome white palfrey, on which were placed her own trappings, enblazoned with the arms of Aragon and Sicily, was the gift of Palermo to the Queen; two other palfreys, also richly caparisoned, had been brought from Barcelona for the use of the two young Princes, who rode one on either side of the Queen in the procession to the palace. Following these, came the ladies in attendance on the Queen, mounted on twenty-six mules and palfreys, gaily caparisoned, and fifty gentlemen on fine Spanish horses. Trumpets, cymbals, and horns mingled their music with the cries of joy and welcome which resounded on all sides, all the chivalry, the youth, and beauty of Palermo pressing round the Queen to kiss her hands and feet. A *détour* was made for a halt at the Cathedral, where the Queen, dismounting, accompanied only by her children and two of her ladies, offered a brief thanksgiving before the altar of the Virgin, a pious act which was repeated a few minutes later, in the private chapel of the Palace, on the arrival of the cavalcade. The weary travellers then sought a brief repose in their apartments, whence they descended, gorgeously attired, at the sound of the trumpets which announced that dinner was served. From the royal table food was sent to the ships and galleys in such abundance that the supply lasted for a week. During the whole seven days, not only Palermo, but the whole of Sicily, gave itself up to rejoicing. At the end of this time, the commanders of the Catalonian ships which had brought the Queen to Palermo, took leave of their royal mistress, and returned to Barcelona. The last link with Aragon seemed broken. It was now time for Constanza, recovered from the fatigues of her voyage, to address herself to the serious business which had brought her to Sicily. Taking counsel with Jean de Procida, whose powerful support of the House of Aragon against that of Anjou had been rewarded by Don Pedro with the high office of Chancellor of the Kingdom of Sicily, the Queen summoned the grandees,

syndics, and other notables of Sicily to meet her in Cortes at Palermo. A chair of state having been placed in the great hall of the Palace for the Regent and the Infantes, all other persons, with the exception of grandees and knights, seated themselves on carpets spread on the floor. When all were assembled, the Queen, rising, deputed Jean de Procida to announce to all present, as her proxy, the will of the King of Aragon concerning his faithful subjects in Sicily, and to read to them the letter in which he set forth that will.

This the Chancellor did in "a very fine speech," Muntaner tells us. The Parliament, having heard him to the end, kissed the Queen's hand, and swore allegiance to her and her children, in the King's place. And so, "every man returned, well pleased, to his home." The Queen and the Infantes then proceeded by easy stages to Messina, their journey being attended by universal popular demonstrations of rejoicing. Their escort consisted of five hundred crossbowmen, the same number of friendly almogarves, and all the knights of their household. Messina surpassed Palermo, we are told, in the splendour and duration of the fêtes which signalized the royal visit. For a fortnight, "no work was done," save that Parliament was summoned to meet the Queen and her children, Jean de Procida again acting as the Regent's spokesman. Within the island kingdom all was well indeed, but the fleet of Charles of Anjou continued to threaten the coasts, while the unbending attitude of the Pope towards the King of Aragon darkened the outlook for the future for one who was so devoted a daughter of the Church as Constanza. Suddenly, however, the aspect brightened, thanks to the valour of that great seaman, Roger de Lauria, who gained a notable victory over the galleys of the enemy, which had rashly ventured out of the port of Naples, destroying or capturing thirty-seven sail. A frantic welcome awaited the victorious Admiral at Messina, where his mother, Madame Bella, in attendance on the Queen, in a delirium of joy, embraced her heroic

son, Muntaner tells us, " more than ten times," " holding him so closely that it was impossible to separate them," until the Queen " rose and did so." The gallant Admiral had the happiness, a few months later, of restoring to his royal mistress her sister, daughter of the dead Manfred, who had been kept a close prisoner, since her father's death, in the Castle of dell Uovo, together with her household of two widow ladies and four demoiselles. The release of the Princess was the price exacted by the triumphant de Lauria from the eldest son of Charles d'Anjou, himself a prisoner in the hands of the Aragonese commander. At Messina, she was happily reunited to her sister, who, in her joy, saved the life of the Prince of Anjou from the Sicilians, who were clamouring for his death.

Before taking her final leave of the island to which she had been bound by so many ties of kinship and sovereignty, Constanza witnessed in Sicily the coronation at Palermo of her son, Fadrique, as third king of that name. The young Prince, who had accompanied his mother and elder brothers to Sicily on her assumption of its Regency, had grown to manhood amongst the people by whom he had been unanimously summoned, on their abandonment by Jaime II, to reign over them. On March 25, 1296, he received crown, orb, and sceptre in the Cathedral of Palermo, afterwards riding, in royal robes, amid the acclamations of his subjects, to the Palace, where he kept open house, after the custom of the Kings of Aragon, for a fortnight, the city, meanwhile, giving itself up to dancing, feasting, and other amusements. The occasion was one of peculiar significance for the mother of the new King. Over it, she could rejoice not only as the mother of a King, but as a devout daughter of the Church, since, thanks to the long-delayed reconciliation between the Pope and the King of Aragon, the Queen Dowager and her household had received the Papal absolution. We hear little of Constanza taking part in the Coronation festivities at Palermo ; it is before the altar, daily, that we find her

kneeling, hearing mass. Her work in and for Sicily was over. There remained for her but to take leave of her son, giving him her parting benediction, "as a good mother should," and then to set out—attended by Jean de Procida, who, faithful alike in peace and storm, "never left her side"—on a pilgrimage to Rome. There, she was received with royal honours by the Pope, who granted her abundantly, we are told, from his treasury of indulgences. She remained long enough in Rome to contribute to and ratify by her presence the final conclusion of peace between Naples and Sicily. It was not until 1302, however, that that peace was finally assured by the marriage of King Fadrique to Leonor, third daughter of Charles III of Naples, a Princess who merits, no less than her sister, Queen Blanche of Aragon, the title of Lady of Holy Peace. She was married at Messina, in the Church of Santa Maria la Novella, her wedding-day being also that of the removal of the interdict from Sicily, and of the Papal remission of all sins committed by the Sicilians during the wars. From Rome, Queen Constanza returned, after an absence of many years, to Catalonia, where she took up her residence at Barcelona, passing the remainder of her life in prayer and charity. She died, clothed in the habit of a sister of the Order of the Friars Minor, and was buried in their Church. By her will, she left to her son, Fadrique, whom she styles Infante, her two small estates in Sicily, on condition of his making his full peace with Holy Church. Her son, Don Jaime, she appointed universal legatee of all her other property. She was followed to the grave within a few months by her daughter, Violante, Duchess of Calabria, the Peacemaker, who died at Taormina, to the great grief of her husband and the people of Sicily, to whom, like her brother, Fadrique, she had greatly endeared herself. Beautiful in person, and noble in character, she was one of the most illustrious daughters of the House of Aragon. Seven years after her death, her husband married the Infanta Doña Sancha, daughter of King Jaime of Majorca.

THE CORONATION OF THE QUEENS OF ARAGON

“Whereas, as it is written in Holy Scripture, the Lord God ordained and deputed Eve to be the companion of Adam, so are the Queens of Aragon companions of the Kings; and so shall they rejoice in whatsoever spiritual graces, honours and prerogatives Holy Mother Church shall bestow upon the said Kings.”

Thus quaintly old Blancas, the chronicler of the coronations of the Kings and Queens of Aragon, introduces us to that page of ceremonial history which is amongst the most brilliant of any epoch.

Therefore, proceeds the narrator, as, among the other spiritual graces with which Holy Mother Church hath ennobled and exalted the Kings of Aragon is the Holy Sacrament of Unction, in that also she desires that the Queens of Aragon shall be partakers. Therefore it is ordained, that the Queens of Aragon shall be consecrated by the Archbishop of Zaragoza and crowned by the Kings of Aragon, even as of old King Ahasuerus crowned Queen Esther.

The Apostolic Bull which conferred upon the consorts of the Kings of Aragon the right to be crowned in all respects with ceremonial as solemn and as stately as their lords'—save only that they received their crown not from the hands of the Archbishop, but from those of the King—was granted by Pope Innocent III, that haughty and notable prelate who had much to say in his time in the matrimonial affairs of the crowned heads of Europe. It was not until the reign of Pedro IV, justly known as the Ceremonious, that the form of their consecration, “which is entitled ordination,” was definitely drawn up.

The Coronation ceremonies of the four Queens of Aragon, of whom it is expressly stated that this honour was conferred upon them, will be related in due course

in their proper place in the history of each. Here, it will be sufficient to describe the Order of the Ceremonial as it was scrupulously carried out in the case of every Queen.

During the week before the Sunday fixed, as that day always was, for the ceremony, the Queen took up her residence in the Palace of the Aljaferia, without the gates of Zaragoza. A fast of three days—Thursday, Friday, and Saturday—was imposed upon her, although if, for any cause, it could not be strictly kept, she was granted a dispensation for two days. On Saturday evening, the Queen took a bath. (In the case of the King, the royal ablutions on the eve of his Coronation were to be made “privately”; a proviso which in the Queen’s case is taken for granted.) Rising early on the following morning she was to make her confession, and then to receive, “with the utmost humility and devotion,” the Body of Our Lord Jesus Christ. On emerging from the Holy Place, she was to change all her clothes for new ones. Not until the hour of Compline was she to set forth from the Palace for La Seo, the Cathedral Church of Zaragoza, where the Kings and Queens of Aragon were crowned from 1119, the year of the recovery of their capital from the Moors. The robes in which she was to make her solemn entry into the city were to be white; she was to wear her usual head-covering, save that she was to have neither crown nor garland on her head. She was to ride a white horse, not led. And thus, preceded by torches and other lights, and with every sign of joy and gladness, she was to go on her way to San Salvador, and entering the church, she was to kneel in prayer before the altar, and, her devotions ended, she was to retire to rest, “in some appointed place, near to and convenient for the church.” (The Kings of Aragon passed the night before their Coronation in the sacristy of La Seo.) The next morning, the Queen was to rise very early, and wearing the same garments as the previous evening, she was to enter San Salvador. At the chief door of the church,

she was to be met by the Archbishop, the Bishops, and the other prelates, vested in full pontificals. And all the other clergy in the procession, fully vested also, were to bear before her the Holy Gospel, with two crosses and with lights and incense. And at the said door of the Cathedral, the Bishop of highest rank was to offer the following prayer :—

“ Almighty and Eternal God, Fountain and Origin of all goodness, Who didst by no means turn away in reprobation from the fragile estate of woman, but rather, by choosing it didst show Thy approbation thereof, Who didst determine by choosing the weak things of the world to confound the strong, that are mighty, Who also didst will to grant the triumph of Thy glory and virtue over a most hostile and hateful people by the hand of Judith, a woman of ancient Israel, regard, we beseech Thee, our humble petitions, and upon this Thy servant, our Queen, who by devout supplication has been called to be Queen, graciously multiply the gifts of which Thou hast spoken, and always and everywhere surround her with the power of Thy Right Hand, that being stedfastly aided in all places by Thy Divine Gift, she may have strength to subdue triumphantly the visible and invisible hosts of evil, and together with Sarah and Rebecca, Leah and Rachel, those blessed and revered women, may be worthy to be fruitful and to rejoice in the fruit of her womb to the glory of the whole kingdom, and to the government and protection of the state of God’s Holy Church. Through Christ Our Lord, Who didst deign to be born of the undefiled womb of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and thus to visit and renew the world, who with Thee liveth and is glorified, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, world without end.”

Then the Queen, walking between two Bishops, was to proceed to the High Altar, and there take her seat on a royal throne, covered with cloth of gold, placed



[Hauser y Menet, Madrid

LA SEO, ZARAGOZA

near the altar, on the Gospel side. And the Archbishop was to offer the following prayer :—

“ O God, Who alone hast immortality, Who dwellest in inaccessible light, Whose never-failing Providence ordereth all things, Who didst make those things which are yet to be, and dost call things which are not as though they were, Who by Thy just governance dost cast down the proud from their height, and graciously exalt the humble on high, we humbly beseech Thine ineffable mercy that as Thou didst cause Queen Esther, for the sake of the preservation of Israel, to be loosed from the chain of her captivity, and to pass to the bridal chamber of King Ahasuerus, and to become the consort of his kingdom, so Thou wouldest mercifully grant that our Queen, for the sake of the preservation of a Christian people, may pass by the blessing of Thy condescension to this honourable and exalted union with our King, and become partaker of his kingdom ; and that always remaining true to the marriage bond of her Royal Spouse, she may be able to hold fast that palm which is second only to the palm of Virginity ; and may seek perpetually to please Thee, the Living and True God, in all things and above all things, and by Thy inspiration may perform with all her heart those things which are well pleasing to Thee. Through Jesus Christ Our Lord.”

At the conclusion of this prayer, the Queen was to retire to the sacristy, where she was to lay aside the robes in which she had made her entrance into the Cathedral, and assume those sacerdotal vestments in which both she and the King were to receive the Sacrament of Unction and their crowns.

These vestments were three in number, that known as the *camisa romana*, or *rochet*, made of linen, with the opening buttoned at the top behind, a chemise of white silk being worn over it ; the *maniple*, worn on the left arm ; and over all, the *dalmatic*, peculiar for many

centuries to deacons, and typical, according to Durandus, "because of its large and broad sleeves," of "an immaculate life, or of bountifulness towards the poor." The Coronation vestments of the Kings of Aragon included, in addition to the rochet, maniple, and dalmatic, the stole, the latter, however, having been apparently adopted at a later date by their consorts also. The material of the dalmatic was to be white velvet, frizado, embroidered with pearls and precious stones. Having assumed her robes, her hair was to be unbound by the lady of highest rank amongst those in attendance upon the Queen.

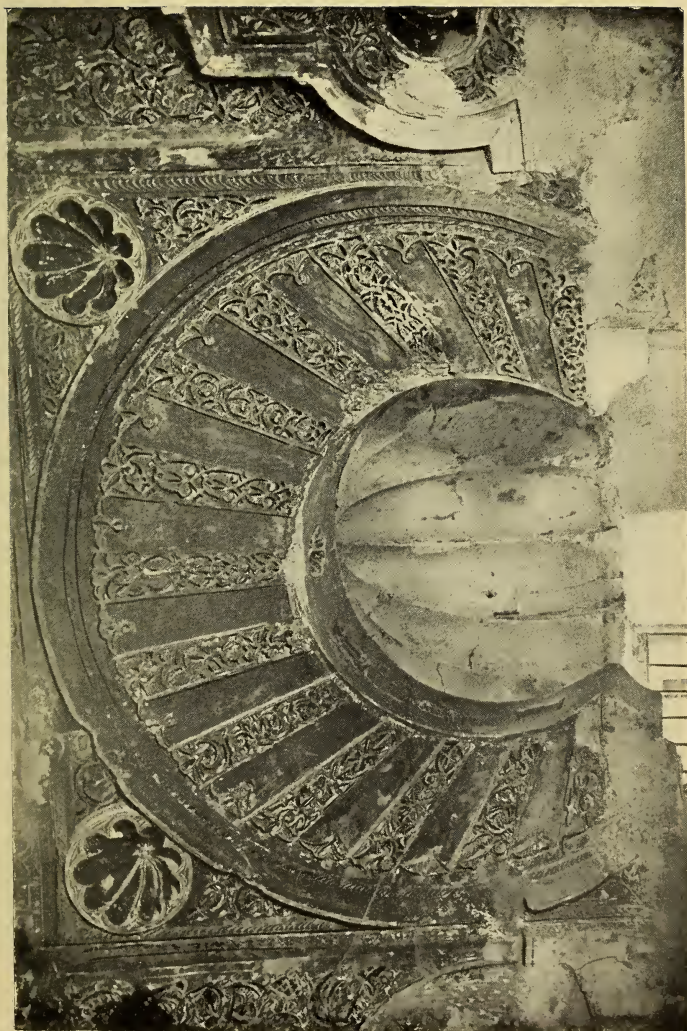
When Katherine of Aragon was crowned, she wore her hair hanging down her back, "of a very great length, beautiful and goodly to behold, and on her head a coronal set with very rich Orient stones."

At this point, the royal insignia were to be delivered to the ladies appointed to bear them before the Queen, the first to issue from the sacristy being those who carried the Sceptre, walking on the right of the Queen, and the Orb, walking on the left. Next came another lady, carrying on a silver dish the Crown with which the Queen was shortly to be crowned. This lady was to be more honourable than any of the rest. And after these came the Queen, with her hair unbound, wearing neither veil nor chaplet on her head, and she was to walk alone. Proceeding with her attendant ladies to the High Altar, the royal insignia were to be solemnly received and placed thereon by the several Bishops thereto appointed. The Queen meanwhile, attended by two of her ladies of the highest rank, was to kneel on a cushion before the altar while the following Litany was said:—

"That Thou wouldest vouchsafe to bless and sanctify Thy present servant N.

That Thou wouldest vouchsafe to bless and to crown Thy servant N. our Queen. We beseech Thee to hear us.

The Lord's Prayer.



[J. Laurent y Cia., Madrid

THE ALJAFERIA, ZARAGOZA. INTERIOR OF THE MOSQUE

Save Thy handmaid,
 Who putteth her trust in Thee, O my God.
 Be to her a tower of strength,
 From the face of the enemy.
 Let the enemy have no advantage of her,
 Nor the son of wickedness approach to hurt her."

And next, in a low voice, the following Preface :—

"For ever and ever, Amen. The Lord be with you. And with thy spirit, Amen. Holy Lord, Almighty Father, Eternal God, the author and distributor of all good things, bountiful bestower of all blessings, bestow upon Thy servant our Queen the abundance of Thy blessing, and may the bestowal of Thy heavenly election and blessing accumulate upon her whom our human choice rejoices to set over us. Grant to her, O Lord, with the authority of her rule an abundance of counsel, wisdom and prudence, and with the abundance of knowledge, grant her the guardianship of religion and piety, that she may deserve to be blessed, and to be increased in fame, even as Sarah was ; to be visited and to be fruitful as Rebecca was ; to be opposed to all ugly vices (lit. the monsters of all vices, especially sins against chastity), as Judith was ; to be chosen to share the government of the kingdom, as Esther was. And fill her whom we in our human weakness beseech Thee to bless, with the heavenly inpouring of the inmost dew of Thy blessing, and may she whom we bless as our Queen deserve to obtain from Thee an eternal reward. And as by men she is exalted to bear a great name, so may she be exalted by Thee in faith out of works. Pour also upon her the dew of Thy wisdom which blessed David in promise and Solomon his son in rich abundance received. Be to her, O Lord, a breastplate against the blows of all her enemies, a helmet in adversities, wisdom in prosperity, and an eternal shield for her protection. May she follow peace, may she love charity, may she keep herself from all impiety ;

may she speak justly ; may she guard the truth ; may she cultivate justice and piety, may she love religion, and flourish through Thy present blessing for many years in this life and in the life to come for eternity without end. Through all ages—

Lord, hear my prayer.
And let my cry come unto Thee.
The Lord be with you.
And with thy spirit.”

At the conclusion of the Litany, the following prayers were recited :—

“ Stretch forth, we beseech Thee, O Lord, the Right Hand of Thy Heavenly Aid, over Thy servant, N. our Queen, that she may be worthy to obtain such things as she seeks with her whole heart, and may rightly require. Prevent us, O Lord, we beseech Thee, in all our actions with Thy most gracious favour, and further us with Thy continual help, that all our prayers and works may be begun, continued, and ended in Thee, Through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

“ Almighty and Eternal God, sanctify this Thy servant N. whom Thou hast chosen to be the helpmate of the King, with Thy heavenly blessing ; may Thy wisdom always teach and strengthen her, and may Thy Church always acknowledge her as a faithful servant, Through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

The Archbishop should then proceed to administer the Sacrament of Holy Unction, applying the Holy Oil to the head, the breast, and the shoulders of the Queen. And afterwards, he was to wipe off the oil with a piece of fine linen. During the Unction, the following prayers were to be recited :—

“ May God, Father of Eternal glory, be thy Helper and Protector, and may the Omnipotent bless thee !

May He hear thy prayers ! May He fill thy life full with length of days ! May He continually confirm thy blessing, and preserve thee with all thy people to eternity ! May He clothe thine enemies with confusion ! May the sanctification of Christ be upon thee, and may the outpouring of this oil make thee flourish, that He Who gives thee His blessing on earth, may Himself confer on thee the reward of the angels in Heaven. May He bless thee and keep thee to life eternal ! Amen.”

“ May the grace of the Holy Spirit through our humble office copiously descend on thee, that as by our hands, though unworthy, thou art anointed outwardly with visible oil, so thou mayest be worthy to be anointed inwardly with His invisible unguents, and having been imbued always most perfectly with His spiritual unction, mayest learn with all thy heart and be able to turn away from and despise unlawful things ; and mayest be able to meditate on things profitable to thy soul, perfectly to choose and to perform such things, by the help of Our Lord Jesus Christ.”

At this point in the ceremony, the King appears to have made his entrance, wearing his royal robes and bearing all his royal insignia. Having been conducted to the throne prepared for him on the other side of the altar, he proceeds to crown the Queen with the Crown which had reposed till then upon the altar, the Archbishop meanwhile saying the following Prayer of the Crown :—

“ Receive the Crown of the Glory of the Kingdom, that thou mayest know how to be the consort of the kingdom ; mayest thou always counsel prosperously the people of God ; and the more thou art exalted, so much the more mayest thou love and keep humility in Christ Jesus our Lord. Since thou hast been solemnly blessed as Queen by our dignified office, receive the Crown of royal excellence, which by royal hands is placed upon

thy head, that as thou dost shine resplendent with gold and enriched with gems, so mayest thou strive to be adorned inwardly with the gold of wisdom and the gems of virtues. So that after the end of this age, together with the prudent virgins, thou mayest honourably and worthily meet the Eternal Spouse, Our Lord Jesus Christ, and mayest be worthy to enter the Royal Gate of the Heavenly Palace by the aid of Our Lord Jesus Christ."

While the Archbishop recited the following Prayer of the Sceptre, the King placed the Sceptre in the right hand of the Queen :—

"Receive the Rod of virtue and equity, and be merciful and kind to the poor : show the most assiduous care towards widows and orphans, that Almighty God may increase His grace towards thee. Who liveth and reigneth God for ever."

The Orb having been placed in the left hand of the Queen, the following prayer was said :—

"Receive the Orb of dignity, and recognize in it the sign of the Catholic Faith in thee, because as to-day thou art ordained Queen and chief Lady of the kingdom, so continue stedfastly to be the author and upholder of Christianity and the Faith, that happy in thy work and rich in faith thou mayest be glorified with the King of kings. Through Him, to Whom be glory, etc."

Next followed the Prayer of the Ring, during the recital of which the King placed a Ring on the fourth finger of the Queen's right hand :—

"Receive the Ring of royal dignity, and recognize in it the sign of the Catholic faith in thee, that as to-day thou art ordained Queen of the people and chief Lady of the kingdom, so continue stedfastly to be the author

and upholder of Christianity and the Faith, that happy in thy work and rich in faith, thou mayest be glorified with the King of kings. Through Him, to Whom be glory, etc.”

A solemn Te Deum was then ordained to be sung. At its close, the Benediction was to be pronounced, and Mass was then to be said. During the singing of the Offertory, the Queen, supported by two Bishops, was to offer seven golden florins, typical of the Seven Cardinal Virtues. The Queen, having returned to her royal throne, the Mass was to proceed to the close. The Queen was then to mount her white horse once more, and, holding the Sceptre in her right hand and the Orb in her left, wearing her crown on her head, and her dalmatic and all the other royal insignia, she was to proceed to the King's Palace. And before her, all who took part in the procession were to go on foot, the Queen only riding. On her arrival at the Palace, she was to retire to her apartments, and there lay aside her sacerdotal vestments. Clad in a gardacorps and mantle of cloth of gold, with a smaller crown on her head, and carrying her Sceptre and Orb, she was to descend to the dining-hall of the Palace, where she was to dine in public, at a table high enough for her to be seen by all in the hall. Her chair of state was to be covered with a cloth of gold and crimson velvet covering, embroidered with her arms and those of the King, and over her head was to be a canopy to match. And the walls of the apartment were to be hung with the most costly hangings. The Archbishop who had consecrated her was to say grace, and the Queen was then to sit down, the Sceptre being laid on the table at her right, and the Orb at her left.

The Queen was to dine alone, her ladies and other invited guests being accommodated at surrounding tables placed on the floor below the dais on which stood the Queen's table. At the conclusion of the repast, the Queen, grace having been said, was to rise from the

table, carrying the Sceptre and Orb, and to proceed to the great hall where a chair of state was to be prepared for her, still more richly covered than that in the dining-hall. And the walls of the apartment, like the other, were to be hung with the richest hangings. The Queen was then to hand the Sceptre and the Orb to two of her ladies, and was to be served with wine. To the rest of the company comfits and spices¹ were to be offered, and afterwards the Queen was to retire to her apartments. For this occasion her bed was to be covered with a rich counterpane, and the walls of the room richly hung, the floor being spread with the most magnificent carpets obtainable. For two days the Queen was to keep open house, neither riding nor going abroad. And for these two days she was to be served by the Infantes and grandees, the elder of the former acting as Majordomo, and the others filling the offices of Chamberlain, Cupbearer, Pantler, Butler, and Carver.

In Aragon, as in England, in mediaeval times, a Coronation was the occasion for the display of all those "certain devices and marvels," those "marvellous cunning" and "gentlemanlie pageauntes," of which who runs may read in the Chronicles alike of Blancas and Fabyan. In both countries, we hear of castles with towers, bearing aloft their graceful garrison of white-robed damsels, erected in the streets through which the royal procession was to pass, while fountains rained rose-water and comfits on the crowd. For every Queen of Aragon, as she passed from her richly tapestried apartments in the Aljaferia, to the great door of the Palace, where her white palfrey awaited her, and thence along the ancient streets of Zaragoza, lit by countless torches and tapers, through a jostling and joyous crowd, there were, no less than for Elizabeth of York, Queen of Henry VII, many a quaint conceit, "to do her Hyghness sport and pleasure with."

¹ Wafers and hippocras, spices and comfits, were served at the Coronation of Anne Boleyn.

RÉSUMÉ OF CHAPTER VI

Marriage contract between Doña Constanza of Sicily and Don Pedro eldest son and heir of Don Jaime I, signed at Barcelona, 1260.

Marriage of the royal pair, at Montpellier, 1262. The bride's chaperon and companions.

Notable visit of the King and Queen of Castile to Aragon.

Wars with the Moors.

Murder of Conradin of Sicily ; his glove sent to his aunt, the Queen of Aragon.

Coronation of Doña Constanza, 1276.

The Sicilian Vespers, 1282, and the Coronation of Don Pedro as King Sicily.

Doña Constanza as Regent in Sicily, 1283-1296.

Death of the Queen.

Order of the Ceremonial of the Coronation of the Queens of Aragon.

CHAPTER VII

DOÑA BLANCA OF ANJOU

IN June, 1291, the city of Barcelona, Cervantes' "home of courtesy, asylum of strangers, shelter of the poor, land of the brave, refuge of offenders, common centre of all that is sincere in friendship, a city unequalled for situation and beauty," famous in the history of Aragon as a port of coming and going of illustrious travellers, talked of nothing but the coming of the Princess Eleanor of England, daughter of Edward I, the affianced bride, since 1286, of the young King, Alfonso III. It was a city made for bridal welcomes. "All here," wrote a voyager as late as 1844, "is picture and romance. Still the orange, citron, fig, and pomegranate bloom around the country-houses set in gardens gay with fountains and flowers." And the description might stand also for Barcelona in the dim distance of mediaeval times. Five years had elapsed since that memorable meeting, at Oléron, of the English and Aragonese Kings, when the betrothal of the latter to the daughter of the former had been solemnized amid a brilliant gathering of knights; and the memory of the tourneys, the banquets, and mimic combats, which had then been furnished by the King of England as entertainment for his distinguished guest and future son-in-law, still lingered with those who had been privileged to witness them; they were to be repeated, upon a more magnificent scale, in honour of the royal bride, of whom rumour spoke so truly, as "the loveliest and sweetest creature in the world." Peace came before her, through the intervention of the Pope, between King Alfonso and

Charles of Anjou; but she, alas, was not to follow in the steps of her herald. Ambassadors had been despatched to escort her, with fitting ceremony, to her future kingdom; the King busied himself arranging tournaments in her honour; *tabladeros* and *bordonadores* practised their skilful throwing of darts. The first-named of these, it may be mentioned in passing, were probably those who used staves instead of lances to fling at the swinging-board. Philippe de Commines speaks of "bourdonasses," or Italian lances, hollow and light, weighing no more than a javelin, and finely painted. "It is probable," says Blancas, "that staves were more used than lances in Aragon, as in royal processions there were usually three hundred *bordonadores* to one hundred *tiradores*."

Suddenly, the city of flowers was turned into a city of mourning. The bridal journey of the Princess Eleanor was cruelly frustrated by the death of King Alfonso from a glandular swelling in the thigh which he had neglected in order to take part in the knightly exercises in which he was so proficient. Muntaner, describing his Christian end, adds that "he never cared for any other woman" save the bride whom he was never to welcome to his throne.

There is a shadowy little figure of a child-bride who, if we are to credit the account of Zurita, the most painstaking of all the historians of Aragon, bore the title of Queen of Aragon for several years at the beginning of the reign of Don Jaime II. This little Princess was Isabel, daughter of Sancho, King of Castile, and his wife, Maria de Molina, afterwards to be justly styled the Great, one of the most notable Regents of Spain, so rich at all times in its history in noble Queens-regent. Muntaner indeed is silent as to her existence, although his Chronicle narrates at length the visit of the Castilian sovereigns to Aragon, on which occasion the marriage contract was signed, according to Zurita. But Muntaner, discursive and loquacious as he can be when occasion offers, knows how to be silent when speech would serve

the House of Aragon badly, or paint them in an unfavourable light. So it is when he writes of his idol, the Conqueror. So we should expect it to be when he has to gloss over the broken faith of the Conqueror's grandson with his girl-betrothed. For broken faith it was undoubtedly, notwithstanding the usual plea of consanguinity.

The alliance with Castile, proffered as it was at the moment of his accession to the throne, and carrying with it the promise of peace for Aragon—indispensable to the fortunate pursuit of its foreign policy in Sicily—presented itself to the young monarch as a bargain that could not be bettered. The marriage contract was signed at Montagudo, November 29, 1291, the bride being then nine years of age, the King of Castile taking a solemn oath to assist his son-in-law at all times with men and money, to be the friend of his friends, and the enemy of his enemies. At Soria, on Sunday, December 1, in the presence of the King and Queen of Castile, the King of Aragon took their daughter as his wife, taking for granted at the same time the Papal dispensation which was undoubtedly necessary in their case, being related, as they were, in the third degree. Don Jaime placed in the hands of his father-in-law ten castles, as a pledge of his future fulfilment of his marital obligations, solemnly vowing never to put her away for consanguinity, or for any cause whatsoever, but to live faithfully with her as his wife. Faithfulness, however, was too hard a test for the grandson of Jaime I. Huesca, Gerona, and the hill-country of Prades, together with Calatayud, Algeciras, Morella, and Cervera, with all their rights and revenues, were assigned to the little Queen as her dower. In Calatayud, where the royal pair were entertained with the customary displays of jousting and feasting, King Sancho and his Queen took leave of their son-in-law, leaving their daughter at the Court over which she was eventually to reign. The King of Aragon, we may believe, was no more concerned with the child-bride thus left, a stranger in a

strange land, in his charge, than any other Prince of his time would have been with a similar responsibility. She would be served and cared for as befitted her rank ; it was as much as any mediaeval bride could ask of a husband whose hands were full, at home, with difficult feudal problems, and abroad with the ever-threatening shadow of Anjou on Sicily. The little Queen emerges from the seclusion of her life at her husband's Court two years after their marriage to take her place at his side in their royal progress to meet her parents at Logrono, whither they came attended, not only by the customary royal retinue, but by a numerous armed escort. Over the exact details of this visit, Spanish historians draw a veil of reserve. It is supposed that, during their interviews, the younger King began to suspect, whether rightly or not, that his father-in-law had conceived the treacherous project of betraying him into the hands of his arch-enemy, Charles of Anjou. Certain it is that from that time there was withdrawn from the little Infanta that outward state which she had hitherto enjoyed as future consort of the Aragonese sovereign. Not she, but another, was to bring peace to Aragon.

With the accession of Boniface VIII to the Papal throne, that peace was well in sight. Its outward and gracious expression was the offer—in token of reconciliation between the Houses of Aragon and Anjou—of the hand of Blanche—known in Spanish history as “The Lady Blanche of Holy Peace”—eldest of the fourteen children of Charles II, son of the ancient foe of Aragon in Sicily, and Marie, daughter of Stephen V of Hungary. The announcement of this flattering alliance, which involved the surrender by the King of Aragon of all his rights to Sicily, receiving in exchange from the Papacy Sardinia and Corsica, coincided with that of the death of Sancho of Castile. The way of negotiating a delicate matter was thus open to Don Jaime. It was a matter which it would be easier to discuss with a woman, weighed down as Maria de Molina now found herself with the cares of a regency, than with a father-

in-law such as the dead Sancho. It was necessary, in short, to acquaint the widowed Queen of Castile with the change of circumstances which had arisen since the betrothal of Soria, and to prepare her for the return of her young daughter to Castile, since it was now the Princess Blanche of Anjou who was to be Queen of Aragon. A certain Dominican friar and one Simon de Azlor were chosen as the King's ambassadors, charged to convey to the Queen of Castile the final refusal of the Pope to grant the dispensation for his marriage with Isabel, and to arrange for the restoration to the King of Aragon of the castles held by Castile as security for the fulfilment of Don Jaime's now broken betrothal promises to the Infanta, as well as for the return of the Princess to her own country. At the beginning of October, the Bishop of Lerida, Don Ruy Ximenez de Luna, Don Atho de Foces, and Don Lope French de Luna, were commanded by the King to hold themselves in readiness to act as escort to the Infanta from Tortosa, where it is apparent she was then residing, to Daroca, and thence to Castile. On December 17, however, the Princess was still in Aragon, much correspondence with regard to the broken engagement and the restitution of the Aragonese castles passing between the Queen-regent of Castile and Don Jaime. It was finally suggested that the Princess should be met by her mother between Daroca and Molina, on the frontier between Aragon and Castile, the Infanta being attended, in addition to the prelate and knights appointed by the King of Aragon, by her governess, Doña Maria Fernandez, and all her household. Fresh delays seem to have arisen, however, even after this agreement had been come to, for King Jaime kept Christmas and the New Year at Zaragoza, where his Queen was crowned with a great outburst of popular rejoicing, and the Infanta Isabel was still at Daroca. It was shortly after the Coronation of Queen Blanche that, all the necessary discharges having been effected, the Princess took a lasting leave of Aragon. Little is known of her after-history, except

that she became the wife of Jean, Duc de Bretagne, and died childless.

Calling in the good company of Ramon Muntaner as our guide, we retrace our steps, having sped the parting guest across the Castilian borders, to the coming of Blanche of Anjou. Accompanied by her father, and by the Papal Legate, the Cardinal de San Clemente, with a splendid company of Neapolitan and Provençal nobles, the Princess was brought from Montpellier to Perpignan, where she was to await the arrival of the envoys of the King of Aragon, who, meanwhile, was travelling, by easy stages, from Barcelona to Gerona, accompanied by his brother, Don Pedro, and all his Court. From Gerona, he despatched his trusty councillor and confidant, Don Berenger de Lauria, to Perpignan, with full powers to confirm and ratify the treaty of peace and the marriage contract, provided that he was favourably impressed by the bride-elect. Having seen her, we are told, "he was very well satisfied," and having handed in this encouraging report to his royal master, the latter at once resumed his journey, taking with him the brothers of his future Queen, and all the other hostages, who had been in captivity in Catalonia, together with a Court—that of his betrothed bride—comprising the noblest dames and demoiselles in the kingdom. From Gerona the travellers proceeded to Figueras, the bride's train, meanwhile, advancing to Peralade. From the Monastery of St. Feliu, between Peralade and Cabanes, where the King of Aragon took up his lodging, he sent on in advance, in charge of the Infante Don Pedro, the Princes of Anjou and their fellow-hostages. Their arrival at Peralade was an occasion of great rejoicing, not only to the King and Princess, now reunited to their sons and brothers, but to others of their suite, who also welcomed back their sons after a long separation. The royal bridegroom, following fast upon this graceful outward expression of his sentiments towards his new connections, was assured of a princely welcome. If

Muntaner is to be believed, Don Jaime fell in love with the bride whom policy had assigned to him at first sight. At their first interview, "he placed a crown upon her head, the richest and finest ever borne upon the head of any queen; from that moment, she was styled the Queen of Aragon." After a mutual exchange of magnificent gifts, it was arranged that the marriage should be celebrated at the Monastery of Villa Beltran. To accommodate the immense company, the King gave orders that a noble structure of wood should be built adjacent to the monastery, although it was as commodious as it was stately. The splendour and stateliness of the festivities lingered long in the memories of the people of the countryside, while the impression made upon the heart of the bride by those days of brilliance and idyllic happiness was never effaced to the last hour of her life.

All historians are agreed that the House of Anjou—which gave to that of Aragon, once its hereditary foe, no less than three brides, the sisters of Queen Blanche, Marie and Eléonore, becoming the wives of Sancho, King of Majorca, and Fadrique, King of Sicily—gave of its best to Don Jaime II. Not only beautiful in person, but also in mind, discreet and pious, she was, says Muntaner, "a fount of grace and goodness," worthy in all respects of her sweet title of honour, "the saintly Queen, the White Lady of Holy Peace." At the conclusion of the marriage festivities, which lasted eight days, the bride's relatives took leave of her and returned to Perpignan, where they were hospitably entertained by the King of Majorca, whose son, Don Jaime, and Monseigneur Louis, brother of Queen Blanche, entered into a solemn pact of friendship binding themselves at the same time to renounce their respective inheritances, and to enter the Order of St. Francis. This vow was fulfilled in due course, the French Prince becoming Bishop of Toulouse, and dying in the odour of sanctity, the Majorcan Prince, no less spiritually-minded than his friend, never



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THE CLOISTERS OF SANTAS CREUS. INTERIOR VIEW

advancing beyond the rank of brother minor in the Order.

Thus, it must have seemed to the young bride, as she went on their royal progress at her husband's side, that the seal of a spiritual benediction had been set upon their marriage, giving birth, as the occasion had done, to the flower of such an ideal and heavenly minded friendship. In the midst of her own happiness, the young Queen was not unmindful of others. Muntaner tells how, while the royal couple were making a honeymoon journey through their dominions, Blanche demanded of the King that he should take thought for his brother, Don Pedro, who was constantly in attendance upon the Queen, and bestow upon him a household worthy of his rank, and a bride according to his worth. The latter was found for him among one of the most illustrious families in Spain in Doña Guilelmina de Moncada, daughter of Gaston de Béarn, who was richly dowered with castles, towns, and other places, together with a following of three hundred knights. The marriage was celebrated with scarcely less éclat than that of the King and Queen themselves, who attended the ceremony accompanied by a brilliant Court. At its conclusion, the Infante and his bride accompanied the King and Queen on their continued journey through Aragon. The married life of the young couple was of short duration. Don Pedro, who was a noble Prince and brave soldier, died in 1297, at the siege of Leon, "making a good and Christian end, and desiring that his obsequies should be deferred until the return of the army to Aragon, where he desired that he might be buried." It was his last wish that a certain knight, Don Ramon de Anglesola (David, as it would seem, to his Jonathan), who had also died during the siege, should be buried at his feet ("since in life and death he had been so good a comrade").

The Lady Blanche of Holy Peace died at Barcelona, where the Court was in residence for the greater part of the winter of that year, October 14, 1310. She had

borne ten children to King Jaime II, five sons and five daughters. Her second son, the Infante Alfonso, succeeded to the throne renounced by his gross-minded and eccentric elder brother, the Infante Jaime. The Infante Don Juan became Archbishop of Toledo, and afterwards of Tarragona, and Patriarch of Alexandria; his two younger brothers being the Infantes Don Pedro and Don Ramon Berenger. Queen Blanche's five daughters were: the Infanta Maria, who married the Infante Don Pedro of Castile, and afterwards embraced the religious life in the Convent of Sigena; the Infanta Constanza, who married the Infante Don Juan, son of the Infante Don Manuel of Castile; the Infanta Isabel, who married Frederic, Duke of Austria, afterwards King of the Romans; the Infanta Blanca, afterwards Prioress of the Convent of Sigena; and the Infanta Violante, who married, first, Philip, Despot of Romania, son of the Prince of Tarento, and secondly, the illustrious Don Lope de Luna, Seigneur of the city of Segorbe, who, says Zurita, was the first of the grandees of Aragon to marry the legitimate daughter of a reigning sovereign. In a later reign, this House, which gave a Pope to the Chair of St. Peter, gave also a Queen-consort to Aragon.

Queen Blanche was buried, by her own desire, in the Monastery of Santas Creus. Her children, as would appear from contemporary evidence, were taken charge of, after her death, by the daughters of a notable personage, near of kin to the House of Aragon, Doña Constanza, Empress of Constantinople, as she was styled, a natural daughter of Frederic II, King of Sicily, and, consequently, paternal aunt of Constance, Queen of Pedro III, and mother of Don Jaime II. After the death of her husband, John Ducas Vatazzo, Emperor of Nicea, in 1255, and the accession of her stepson, Theodore Lascaris II, to his throne, and later, the usurpation of Miguel Paleologus, Doña Constanza took refuge at Naples, whence she followed her sister-in-law, the widowed Queen of Manfred, into exile, eventually

finding an honourable asylum at the Court of Aragon, receiving from Pedro III, her nephew by marriage, an estate in Valencia, and several other royal favours. Her two daughters, or granddaughters, the Infantas Lascara and Vataca, played a somewhat important part as political agents and confidantes of the Royal Family in both this and the succeeding reigns. Zurita states that one at least of the daughters of Queen Blanche, namely Violante was brought up by the Empress of Constantinople at Valencia, but although the exact date of Doña Constanza's death is in dispute, it seems probable that she died two or three years before the Queen, and that her daughters, especially Yolande, or Violante, married to Don Pedro de Ayerbe, from whom she was subsequently divorced, were actually in charge of the royal children. It was an office which Doña Vataca filled in Castile, having been given charge by Constanza, Queen of Ferdinand IV, of her son the Infante Alfonso.

Doña Blanca and Doña Maria were both inmates of Sigena for some years, the former as Prioress, but the royal sisters in turn abandoned their residence there, owing to the unhealthiness of the site, of which there were continuous complaints throughout its history. Although the Prioress renounced her office, yet her convent was affectionately remembered in her will, with a legacy of 24,000 sueldos. Both of the Infantas were present in Zaragoza at the Coronation of their nephew, Don Pedro III.

DOÑA MARIA DE LUSIGNAN

In spite of the idyllic quality of his first marriage, Don Jaime II did not long remain a disconsolate widower. His second choice of a Queen—impelled, it is not unreasonable to suppose, by reports brought to Barcelona by Catalonian traders with Cyprus—was from the illustrious House of Lusignan, sovereign lords at

that time of the Mediterranean island. Commercial relations between Cyprus and Barcelona had been of long standing, the maritime records of the latter port abounding in mediaeval references to the trade carried on with the former. Merchants of Barcelona had branches of their business in Famagusta, the exports shipped to Cyprus consisting of cloths of various colours, saffron, coral, jars of honey, and pipes of oil. From Cyprus, it is probable that the wardrobes of the great ladies of Aragon had been replenished, even before the coming of a Cypriote Queen, with specimens of that sumptuous gold embroidery on silk for which the women of Cyprus were famous in the Middle Ages. The ties of commerce were now to be strengthened by more romantic bonds. Scarcely a widower for a year, Don Jaime despatched to the Court of Henry de Lusignan an embassy consisting of Mateo de Licha, Knight-Commander of the Order of the Hospitallers of Barcelona, and his brother, Juan, Knight and Prior of the Convent of St. John of Rhodes, charged with the mission of asking of the King of Cyprus and of his mother, Queen Isabel, the hand of one of the two daughters of the latter, Maria or Heloise. At the moment of the arrival of the Aragonese ambassadors, the rebellious and dissolute conduct of Amalric, brother to the King and ultimate heir to his throne, was giving such concern to the latter, that it was proposed to substitute for Amalric and his children in the line of succession the two Princesses, his sisters, as co-heiresses. The ambassadors of the King of Aragon, who had been joined by Foulques de Vilarcto, Grand Master of the Order of St. John of Rhodes, boldly demanded the hand of the younger Princess, with Cyprus as her marriage-portion, for their master. To this request, however, King Henry replied that neither he nor his notables could consent to depriving the elder Princess of her prior claim upon the crown, although he was willing that Don Jaime should marry her, lawful heiress as she was, not only to Cyprus, but to Jerusalem. She

was not only beautiful, and of suitable age, but so wise and discreet that the King, her brother, did nothing without consulting her. This alliance being arranged, it was further proposed that King Henry's younger sister, Heloise, should be betrothed to Don Jaime's second son, the Infante Alfonso, her dowry, like that of her sister, making her a fit match for the greatest prince in Christendom, and that the King of Cyprus himself should take for his Queen the Infante Violante, daughter of Don Jaime, then being brought up at Valencia by the Empress of Constantinople, kinswoman and confidante of the House of Aragon. Both of these matrimonial projects, however, miscarried.

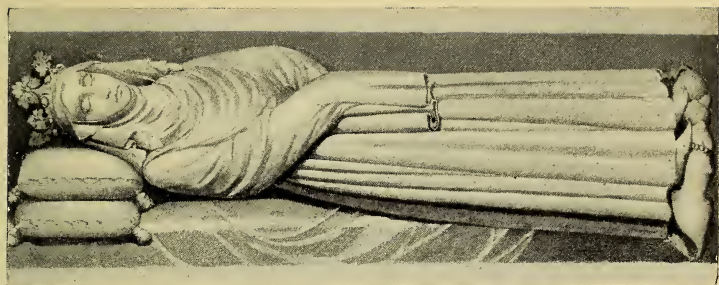
Numerous marriages in his own immediate family circle took precedence of the solemnization of Don Jaime's marriage with the Princess Maria. The year 1312 witnessed the marriage, at Calatayud, of the Infante Don Pedro of Castile with the Infanta Maria, daughter of the King of Aragon by his first wife, Blanche of Anjou. Don Miguel Perez de Arbe, knight of the royal household of Castile, had been charged on November 20, 1311, with the twofold mission of arranging the date of this marriage, and also of escorting to Aragon the little Infanta, Leonor, daughter of the King of Castile, betrothed to the Infante Don Jaime, son of the King of Aragon, in order that she might be brought up, as was the custom, at the Court over which she was eventually to rule. It was by devious ways, it may be added, that this Infanta attained at length to Queenship of Aragon, as the later pages of this volume will show. The marriage of Don Pedro with the Aragonese Princess and the arrival of her brother's three-year-old betrothed took place at Christmastide, 1311. In February of the following year, at Teruel, Don Jaime received the ambassadors of Frederic, Duke of Austria, son of Albert, King of the Romans, who sought the hand of the Infanta Isabel, the King's daughter, for their royal master. The bridegroom of twenty-three was as handsome as he was noble, both by birth and in

mind, while his chosen bride was at least his equal in beauty of face and in "excellent virtues." In June of the following year, the Duke's envoys arrived in Barcelona to conclude the marriage, the dowry of the Infanta being fixed at 15,000 silver marks. On October 14, the Princess was married by proxy, Rudolph of Lichtenstein acting as the Duke's representative. A month later, the bride, attended by the Bishop of Gerona and Don Felipe de Saluces, travelled by way of Perpignan, Avignon, and Savoy, to the Tyrol, where she was met by the disquieting news that, owing to the dissensions which had arisen in Germany regarding the Imperial inheritance of the Emperor Henry, the consummation of the marriage must be postponed. It was not until February of the following year that Frederic, now elected King of the Romans, placed the Imperial crown on the brow of his bride in the city of Basilea.

In the spring of 1314, the marriage contract between Don Jaime of Aragon and the Princess Maria of Cyprus was signed at Valencia, the King's witnesses being his brother, Don Sancho, Simon de Azlor, and Pedro Soler, those of the Princess being Bishop Nimioceus, Friar Americo, and Hugo de Beduinis, Cypriote notables. The dowry of the Princess was 300,000 bezants of silver of Cyprus, 50,000 bezants being her mother's gift and the remainder her brother's. On August 21, Martin Perez de Oros, Admiral of the Order of St. John and Lieutenant of the Master of the Order in the Castellany of Amposta, "a famous and valiant knight," was deputed by the King to proceed to Cyprus, in order to attend upon the bride-elect on her voyage to Aragon. Don Martin was also the bearer of a ring sent by Don Jaime to the Princess in token of his affiancement. This was placed upon the bride's finger by Peter, Bishop of Rhodes, Legate and Patriarch of Jerusalem, in the presence of all the Bishops of Cyprus and the brilliant Court of the Palace of Nicosia, the ceremony being followed by a princely banquet, at whose glories we

may faintly guess, the state of the House of Lusignan in their island kingdom having been the peer of any in Western Christendom. Stephen the Monk, of that House, has painted for us alike its splendours and the odorous and idyllic beauty of its setting, Cyprus then, as now, being truly an "Island of Enchantment." The betrothed of the King of Aragon was to journey to her new home as a king's daughter. Four galleys were fitted out by order of the King of Cyprus; on one of these his sister embarked about the middle of September, the suite in attendance comprising Baldwin, Bishop of Famagusta, Nicholas of St. Bertino, Governor of the city of Paphos, and Robert Ardia, chief senator of the Kingdom of Cyprus, besides a great company of noble knights. Thus escorted, as befitted the sister and the bride of kings, Maria of Cyprus bade farewell to her island home for ever. She was accompanied by a kinswoman, the daughter of Felipe d'Ibelin, Seneschal of Cyprus, herself a betrothed bride, her future husband being Don Fernando, Infante of Majorca, and kinsman of Don Jaime of Aragon, by whom she was met at Chiarenza, where the marriage was solemnized with great rejoicings and a banquet, which also served by way of courteous greeting to the royal bride on the part of her husband's kinsman. The itinerary of the Cypriote Princess's journey shows her voyage to have been an unduly protracted one, even for those days of leisurely navigation. After leaving the Morean port, the galleys proceeded to Palermo, where they arrived on September 5. The city offered a cordial welcome to the illustrious traveller, who rested at Castellamare for two days. Calling next at Sardinia, she was hospitably entertained by Mariano, Justiciar of Arborea, before continuing her voyage to the Balearic Isles. On emerging from the port of Mahon, the flotilla was compelled, by stress of weather encountered thereafter, to take shelter at Marseilles. Word having been sent thence to the King that the bride was greatly fatigued by her long voyage, Don Jaime gave orders

that the remainder of the journey should be accomplished by land. On November 17, Ponce, Bishop of Barcelona, and Vidal de Vilanova, were commanded to proceed to Roussillon; on the 27th, the bride with her escort arrived at Gerona, where she was met by the King, to whom she was married in that city, with great rejoicings, afterwards receiving the crown of Queen-consort, although no details of her Coronation are to be found in the pages of the history of her adopted country. We know, at least, that loneliness was not long in overtaking her; nor was it to be wondered at, since she had exchanged one of the most luxurious Courts of the Middle Ages for that of Aragon, chiefly concerned with the ceaseless tumult and turmoil of war. In the fortress-palaces of her husband's kingdom how often she must have pined for the garden-isle of her birth, for its groves of orange, pomegranate, citron, mulberry, acacia, olive, and palm, for the vision of the happy valley of Makaria, across whose far-famed loveliness she was to gaze no more from the casements of her brother's palace at Nicosia! How she would pine to hear once more the merry laughter and the jingling bells of the hunting-train—sport made ideal in that land of “the richest and most generous lords in Christendom” of their day, one of whom, the Count of Jaffa, alone, kept no less than five hundred hunting dogs. Memories of scented waters—rose, jasmine, and many another of which the secret has long been lost to the distiller—would be wafted to her with the lifting of every lid of her cypress-wood coffers, with their metal inlaying, with every breath of her perfumed “oiselets de Chypre”—that favourite toy of the mediaeval boudoir which she was probably the first to introduce into Aragon. These pomanders of scented paste, generally moulded into the shape of a bird—hence their name—were hung in the apartments of great ladies, in cages or similar receptacles, to serve the double purpose of purifying as well as of perfuming the room. A heavy and disappointed heart beat, we may be sure, beneath the



DOÑA BLANCA OF ANJOU (*from her effigy*)



DOÑA ELISENDA DE MONCADA (*from her effigy*)

royal robes, thick with "ors de Chypre," of Maria of Aragon; heavy, because of its homesickness, disappointed, because of her childlessness. Her sumptuous wardrobe itself would grow to be a weariness, since she might not wear it in that Cypriote setting which alone might have fitly framed it. In the records of Aragon we search in vain for any outward semblance of this Queen. If we are to picture the long-dead lady in the fashion of her day, we must turn to the ancient tombs in the Church of the Armenians in Nicosia, where the lords and ladies of the House of Lusignan sleep their last sleep, in rich armour and graceful dress. Did this daughter of their race, we wonder, wear the double jupe and tightly buttoned and fitting sleeve, the coil of plaited hair, framing the oval face, of that Marie de Bessau, who, as her tomb attests, departed this life in the year 1322, at the age of eighteen? Or, are we to clothe her in memory with the queenly *brial* or regal *garnacha* of her sister sovereigns, with flowing, gold-hemmed veil sweeping from beneath her jewelled crown? It shall be as we will, for the true portrait was never painted.

There is abundant evidence that Don Jaime, pre-occupied though he was with affairs of State, was not altogether unmindful of his consort's happiness, as may be gathered from an incident recorded in the royal correspondence of 1316. On January 5 of that year we find him writing to Doña Violante de Ayerbe, or Violante of Greece, as she is sometimes styled in similar documents, daughter of the Empress of Constantinople, to whose charge of the children of the late Queen, Blanche, she had, apparently, succeeded at this date, to bring the little Infanta, Violante, from Huesca, where she was residing, to Tortosa, where the Court was in residence, that she "might be company for the Queen." In addition to Doña Violante de Ayerbe, the Infanta was to be attended, the King directs, by Juana de Almoravit, Elisenda de Guanechs, Blanche de Vilaregut, her nurse, a waiting-woman, and

the noble Don Artal de Azlor. Besides her little step-daughter, whose coming doubtless created the new interest in the Queen's life for which her husband had designed it, there was another young Infanta at Court, the Princess Leonor of Castile, the betrothed bride of the Infante Don Jaime, the King's eldest son. In 1319, this coarse-minded hypochondriac, dragged to the foot of the altar to fulfil his solemn vow to take the Princess for his wife, repudiated her at the conclusion of the nuptial Mass, and, taking flight from the Court, assumed the monastic habit, resigning his rights to the throne to his next brother, Don Alfonso.

The Infanta Leonor was immediately sent back to Castile; she was to return to Aragon, as we shall see, as Queen, after all.

At Barcelona, in 1315, Queen Maria had held in her arms—doubtless with all the never-to-be-satisfied yearning of a childless woman's heart—a tiny traveller, *en route* for Perpignan, in the care of that trusty servant of the House of Aragon, Ramon Muntaner, who has left us an intimate and touching picture of his voyage from Sicily with his precious charge. The child in question was the Infante Jaime, born of the first marriage of Don Fernando, Infante of Majorca, with that lovely young creature, Isabelle of Morea, "most white, most rose, most shapely," as Muntaner paints her. She had died, in the flush of her youth and wedded happiness, a month after the birth of her son, and on his second marriage with the Queen of Aragon's kinswoman, Don Fernando had sent the child to be brought up by his grandmother, Queen Sancha, then residing at Perpignan. To assist him in his responsible mission, Muntaner made shrewd choice of a mother of twenty-two children, Dame Agnes d'Adri, besides the nurse, and several other ladies. All of them suffered so severely from seasickness on their voyage to Barcelona, that Muntaner "never had the child out of his arms day nor night." At Barcelona, as we have said, the little Infante was warmly welcomed by his royal kinsfolk, "the King

desiring to see, to embrace, and to bless him." The journey to Perpignan was made in the worst of weather, wind and rain beating pitilessly on the litter in which the Infante rode with his nurse, which was covered with waxed cloth, cosy with red woollen curtains, and was borne on the shoulders of twenty men. A compensating welcome, however, awaited the baby at his journey's close, and Muntaner, having relinquished his charge into the arms of his royal grandmother, prolonged his stay at Perpignan for a fortnight, going twice daily to the Palace, to see the little Prince.

The life of Maria de Lusignan in Aragon closed stormily. In April, 1321, the King being absent from Barcelona, certain Jews of the city came into conflict with the servants of the Queen's household, maltreating them and insulting them. This gave great offence to the Queen, the city refusing to punish the delinquents until the return of the King. His consort, however, was well-nigh done with worldly concerns. She had sickened at Tortosa at the end of March of an illness which was to prove mortal. She died in that city at Easter, desiring to be buried in the Monastery of the Preaching Friars, in the habit of the Order. A year later, the King married Doña Elisenda de Moncada, "a lady of great lineage," daughter of Don Pedro de Moncada, and his wife, Doña Elisenda de Piños, and sister of Don Ot de Moncada, the intimate friend and valiant servant of the House of Aragon in peace and war, whom we find standing sponsor for the first-born son of the Infante Alfonso and his consort, Doña Teresa de Entenza.

All that we know of the fourth Queen of Jaime II, slight though it be, is in her favour. She was almost certainly brought up at the Court over which she was eventually herself to preside, and was doubtless one of the ladies of her predecessor, Queen Maria of Cyprus. Her marriage with the King took place at Tarragona, where the Court kept the Christmas of 1322, the wedding-day being signalized by the raising

of the standard of the Infante Alfonso at Barcelona, prior to his departure for Sardinia. In striking and happy contrast to other stepmothers in the history of the royal House of Aragon, the influence of this Queen was ever on the side of peace and harmony in her adoptive family. When the interest of her husband's eldest son is jeopardized by the King's open favouritism of his second son, Don Pedro, it is Queen Elisenda, affectionately attached to both Don Alfonso and his young wife, who proves their literal friend at Court. Her deeply religious instinct found outward expression in the foundation, in 1325, of the Convent of Santa Maria de Pedralhas, where she was afterwards to find sepulture. Widowed in 1327, the veil of retirement which was either imposed upon the Queens of Aragon on the death of their consorts, or which they willingly assumed, falls upon Queen Elisenda, lifting once more as she takes her place in that long, illustrious procession of two Kings, three Queens, four Infantes, two Princesses, one Cardinal, seven Bishops, twelve mitred Abbots, and a great train of magnates, knights, and nobles, which attended the translation of the relics of St. Eulalia, patroness of Barcelona, to her Cathedral shrine in 1338. Then the veil falls for the second time, to lift again, upon her stately effigy, in every line a Queen, in the shadow of her Convent-Palace.

It is one of the most noble monuments in the roll of Spanish iconography, rescued from oblivion and immortalized for us by the indefatigable labours of Señor de Carderera y Solano among the royal tombs of his native land. The recumbent statue speaks eloquently of one who, as one writer says, buried in the cloister her youth and beauty, but not her goodness and piety. For thirty-seven years of solitude she gave herself up to succouring widows and needy gentlewomen, and ransoming captives; to a life, in short, of most fervent piety and most marvellous charity. Recluse, but yet a Queen—it is thus that her marble image portrays her.

Her rich crown holds in place the floating veil, brocaded with golden palms in groups of three. The ungirdled robe falls in gracious folds to the feet that rest upon two dogs, symbols of fidelity. The mantle, clasped upon the breast by the familiar lozenge-shaped *agrafe*, is enriched with a design of flowers and lions, and edged with pearls and precious stones, the fabric Eastern in origin. Form, features, and dress, all speak to us of one of the noblest and most saintly of all the Queens of Aragon. If we are to seek her epitaph, Bernat Metge, that prince of courtly satirists whom we are to meet at a later Court of Aragon, has composed it for us. Reviewing the Queens of his native land, he confers a double crown upon Elisenda de Moncada, Queen of Aragon, and Queen of Pedralhas, "full of goodness, always interceding for the people, never refusing her generous liberality to the poor. After the King's death, she completed the Convent of Pedralhas, begun in his lifetime, and ended her days there, in the odour of sanctity."

Jaime II, himself credited with the composition of a hymn to the Blessed Virgin, was the patron, as Pedro III had been before him, of the noble troubadour, Amanieu Des-Escas, or de Secas (St. Martin-des-Escas, near La Réole), author of two love epistles and the same number of "Instructions" ("ensenhamens") (one addressed to a page or young gentleman at Court, and the other to a young lady in the same position), who kept, it is supposed, a brilliant Court at the castle to which he owed his patronymic, Escas being the name of a place in the Countship of Urgel. It is possible that the "doncella" who, as he tells us, broke in upon his reverie as he walked one day in the month of May, "when little birds make merry and sing among the groves," thinking of his beloved, was one of the household of Blanche, the Lady of Holy Peace, the first Queen of his royal patron. To what more expert master of manners and deportment, skilled in all the intricacies of Court etiquette and

knightly behaviour, could the anxious young aspirant for her royal mistress's commendation betake herself when in doubt as to the right fulfilment of her duties?

Promptly and punctiliously, Des-Escas proceeds to instruct the timid novice in all those manifold offices which the customs of the times exacted even from the noblest *damoiselle* in attendance upon queen or countess. She is to rise at dawn, wash, and afterwards, tightly button her sleeves, never omitting to clean her teeth every morning! Care of the nails, of the whole body, and, above all, of the head, which is most in evidence, are strictly enjoined upon the "doncella"! To this end, an undimmed mirror is essential. Having completed her own toilette, she is now ready to attend upon her lady, as soon as the latter rises. She is to take care, however, not to enter the apartment of the latter until the lord has left it. Besides the set of garments for the day, the "doncella" must have at hand a needle, silk, thread, a comb, and all else that may be necessary for dressing her lady's hair. As soon as she rises, the "doncella" must hold her mirror while she dresses, in order that she may see that there is nothing amiss with strings, knots, or ornaments. She then fetches water and a towel, and, the lady's ablutions finished, the "doncella" must pass her costume in review, in order that nothing unseemly or awry may be detected by critical eyes therein. The "doncella" must not be loquacious, and should be careful how she comports herself when hearing Mass in a monastery, never lifting her eyes from the ground, or removing them from the altar; nor must she make that holy place an opportunity for conversation or consultation, although, on leaving the church, she may join her young companions at recreation, provided always that the fun does not become too boisterous, rude jests being unbecoming in a "doncella." She must look well to the mending and darning of her garments, and take care never to be seen with any rent therein. Hints for table manners follow the instruction in boudoir and

churchgoing deportment. She is to drink watered wine, to wash her hands before eating, to take a lower seat than her lady's, and to be always polite and courteous in speech to all.

RÉSUMÉ OF CHAPTER VII

Betrothal of Alfonso III to the Princess Eleanor of England, and death of the King on the eve of his marriage, 1291.

Accession of Don Jaime II, his betrothal to Doña Isabel of Castile, 1291.

Marriage of Don Jaime and Doña Blanca of Anjou.

Their children.

Death of the Queen, 1310.

The King betrothed to the Princess Maria de Lusignan, of Cyprus, 1314.

Journey to Aragon. Her marriage and home-sickness.

Death of Doña Maria, 1321.

Don Jaime marries Doña Elisenda de Moncada, 1322.

Doña Elisenda founds the Convent of Santa Maria de las Pedralhas, 1325.

Death of Doña Elisenda.

"Instructions" to *doncellas*.

CHAPTER VIII

DOÑA TERESA DE ENTENZA

HERE and there, the stately ranks of those who actually attained to the wearing of the crown of Queen of Aragon are broken, as we pass them in review, by the shadowy shapes of those from whose hold it vanished when well within their grasp. Of more than one it may be whispered above the uncrowned head, long laid in dust: "How well she would have worn it!" At the tomb of none of them all may such a tribute be more fitly offered than at the grave of Teresa de Entenza. If the title of Queen of Aragon cannot be withheld—as indeed it never has been—from those Princesses who bore it in right of their betrothal only, it is a title which can scarcely be denied to one of the noblest and most devoted of the consorts of the heirs to the throne of Aragon.

The House of Entenza, one of the most ancient and honourable in Spain, Lords of the Countship of Urgel, more than one member of whom had covered themselves with glory in the conquests of Valencia, Majorca, and Sardinia, closed a chapter in its history with the death, in 1312, of Sancho de Entenza, who, dying childless, had made a shrewd disposition of his possessions and of the hand of his young heiress, Doña Teresa, daughter of his brother, Don Gombau de Entenza. On payment of the sum of £100,000 (of Jaca), Urgel was to pass to the Crown; for its youthful Countess, King Jaime, in accordance with the will of her uncle, devised a high destiny. On November 10, 1312, at Lerida, in the presence of the Aragonese Court, her hand was bestowed



[J. Laurent y Cia., Madrid

THE ALJAFERIA, ZARAGOZA. ENTRANCE OF THE MOSQUE

upon the Infante Alfonso, then twelve years of age. It was a diplomatic as well as a fortunate alliance. If, by the betrothal of his eldest son, Don Jaime (who had not yet disgraced his order and insulted his affianced bride by his desertion of her at the altar steps and his voluntary renunciation of his inheritance and assumption of the monastic habit), to the Infanta Leonor of Castile, the King had secured to Aragon a powerful ally without, that of his second son to "the richest heiress in Spain who was not a king's daughter" would prove no less politic within its borders. Her countships and baronies, towns and castles, over and above the charming personality which was hers by nature—"she was," says Muntaner, "one of the best ladies in the world, and one could make a volume of the many instances of her goodness"—made her a fit mate for a king's son. Had Don Alfonso died before the consummation of the marriage, it was stipulated that Doña Teresa should become the wife of his younger brother, Don Pedro, while, in the event of the death of the little bride before the princely young couple had set up housekeeping on their own account, her younger sister, Doña Urraca (afterwards married to Don Arnaldo Roger, Count of Pallars, son of Hugo de Mataplana), was to take her place. None of these untoward events came to pass, and six years after her marriage, on September 5, 1319, in her own city of Balaguer, the Infanta Teresa gave birth to her eldest son, a weakly infant, who was not expected to survive many hours, but who was afterwards to reign, for fifty years, as Pedro the Ceremonious, over the Kingdom of Aragon. Three years later, the young Countess of Urgel, of whom we hear meanwhile exercising feudal rights, coining money, and signing documents, in her countship, was called to leave her child and home to embark upon a distant and distasteful journey. The call indeed was to her husband, but this faithful wife does not seem to have hesitated for an instant in the obedience which she was no less ready to yield. On his father's third

wedding-day, the Infante Alfonso, charged by the King with the conquest of Sardinia, ceded to Aragon by the Popes, but disputed by the Pisans, set up his standard at Barcelona. Preparations for the expedition were a year in progress, during which time the Infante travelled throughout the length and breadth of the kingdom, and gathered around him the brilliant army with which he finally embarked at Potfangos, June 1, 1322, numbering twenty thousand men, aboard seventy galleys and twenty-four armed ships. The heroic Infanta, attended by a numerous suite of ladies, sailed in the "coca" of Arnaldo and Bernardo Ballester, citizens of Barcelona.

The Aragonese expedition to Sardinia forms one of the most tragic episodes in the external policy of that kingdom in the fourteenth century. Victory indeed waited on the Infante's arms; the island-jewel of Sardinia was firmly set, ere the campaign closed, in the crown which Alfonso himself was destined to wear; but at what a cost! Of all that brilliant army, all that gay and gallant train, which followed in the wake of the Infante and his noble wife, more than two-thirds were to find a grave in exile. Epidemic sickness in its most virulent form, engendered by the pestilential miasma rising from the swampy ground, decimated the investing army of Aragon. Death stalked triumphant even through the royal residence, snatching from the Infanta's side all her ladies save two, and only relinquishing its grasp upon both husband and wife when both had been brought to the verge of the grave. Even the enchanted orchards and gardens of Iglesias, musical with the song of its famous nightingales, were powerless to lift the shadow of depression from those sick souls, to whom strangers ministered, in lieu of those familiar faces that had kept the remembrance of Aragon sweet and constant before them. How often must the young mother have rejoiced that prudence, prevailing over mother-love, had left her delicate little son, the Infante Don Pedro, behind her, in the charge of Don Pedro de Luna, Arch-

bishop of Zaragoza! Her separation from her child lasted for two years. On July 8, 1324, the princely pair set sail for Barcelona, which they reached on August 8. Their welcome was that of returning conquerors, though it is said that King Jaime refused to embrace his son until he had changed for a Catalan costume the Sardinian dress in which he had elected to appear before the Court.

It is probable that Doña Teresa's constitution had been irrecoverably shattered by that fatal island-sojourn. The upas-seed sown in Sardinia was to bear the flower of death for her also, no less than for those whom she had unwittingly taken to a land of no return. She was the mother of three living children, Don Pedro, Don Jaime, and Doña Constanza—afterwards Queen of Majorca—a son, Alfonso, and a daughter, Isabel, having predeceased her—when, in October, 1327, she gave birth, at Zaragoza, to her youngest child, Sancho, whose brief life of a few days cost that of his mother. She was laid to rest, October 29, 1327, being the Feast of Saints Simon and Jude, in the Church of the Franciscan Friars Minor; "God in His goodness keep her soul, holy and blessed lady as she was!" prays the knight, Muntaner, adding: "She made her Last Communion, confessed, and was shriven, like the good Catholic she was, pleasing to God and to the world; and God desired her in His kingdom while still in her youth; and in the city of Zaragoza she was much regretted and much wept for. She ended her days in the service of God, even as He had ordained."

It remained for conjugal love to raise over the beloved and worthy dead such a monument as should be an attestation in stone not only of her virtues but of her rank. So that, on her tomb of "cunning workmanship" was set, round about her sleeping effigy—robed in the habit of the Religious of St. Clare, with sandalled feet—not only groups of mourning figures, mutely testifying to the sorrow of her husband and his people, but the crown she never wore, and the arms of Entenza—the black and golden chequers—mingled with those of

Aragon. She made her grave with her children gone before her—Don Sancho and Doña Isabel—the former effigy that of a little boy with flowing hair, and a garland of flowers on his brow.

Like many another illustrious lady of mediaeval Aragon, the will of Doña Teresa lets in upon the character of the testatrix a flood of enlightenment. The long list of her bequests prove her to have been a grateful and remembering soul, mindful, to the last hour of her life, of the claims of all those who were bound to her by ties of kinship or service. She provides for her old and faithful nurse, Toda Martinez, who had also been nurse to the Infante Don Pedro, with a pension of 1000 sueldos per annum, so that she might not end her days in want. To Geraldona, who seems to have succeeded Toda in the care of the little Infante, and who was also nurse to Doña Constanza, their mother bequeathed 2000 sueldos a year. To Ana de Podiatís, Geraldona de Monsonís, Francisca de Morello, and Sibilia de Otgero, her waiting-women, their mistress leaves 1000 sueldos as dowry. Garcia Rodriguez de Boxadores is remembered in practical fashion for his "great services rendered to her" with a legacy of 3000 sueldos per annum. To her kinswoman, and namesake, Teresa de Entenza, betrothed to Ramon de Boil, there is a bequest of 60,000 sueldos, Don Ramon receiving 10,000 sueldos. A sister of Teresa's, named Berenguerona, is also named in the will. Toda de Peralta is dowered with 40,000 sueldos. Yet another Teresa, who married Francisco de Morello, citizen of Balaguer, received from the Infanta's husband, then Alfonso IV, on the occasion of her marriage, March 1, 1330, a grant of 3000 sueldos for her trousseau, in fulfilment, it may be, of an old promise to his dead wife. To her natural brother, Ponce Hugo de Entenza, Doña Teresa bequeathed a sum of 15,000 sueldos. Had she lived but five days longer, the consort of Alfonso IV would have been Queen of Aragon, her father-in-law, Don Jaime, passing away at Barcelona, November 2, 1327, at the

age of sixty-six, after a long illness. The remains of the dead monarch were temporarily deposited in the Church of the Friars Minor at Barcelona, pending the return of the new King from Zaragoza, where he was attending the funeral of his consort. On his arrival at Barcelona, the body of his predecessor was solemnly removed to Santa Cruz, where it was interred beside his first wife, Blanche of Naples.

As with ordinary men, so with kings, the best of the man's life is often buried in his wife's grave; none the less surely because her place must needs be speedily filled, now because the sting of loneliness is well-nigh insupportable, now because of reasons of state. So it was with Alfonso IV of Aragon, called from the funeral bier of an adored and noble wife to ascend the "lonely splendour" of his throne. Had the dead wife lived but five days longer! Aragon, and her children, too, saw the golden "hopes of unaccomplished years" go down into the dust with her who should have been one of the most illustrious of its Queens. It was the cruellest irony that snatched her from her husband's side at the very moment when he stood most in need of her. She was the strong, loving woman he had needed all his life; never more than at the threshold of his kingship. If she had been indispensable to the royal lieutenant of Sardinia, whom she had followed at the call of duty into the jaws of death, she was a thousandfold more so to the King, confronted with the heavy burden of sovereignty. With her, passed, too, from the children to whom she had been a tender and devoted mother, the sunshine which her love had shed upon the royal family, a sunshine destined to be darkly eclipsed by the shadow of a stepmother. There were, however, two years of respite for father and children. The early days of his twofold mourning—for wife and father—found the new King in the retirement of Monblanch, whence he passed to keep the Christmas of that year of sadness at Barcelona, with none of the customary marks of seasonable rejoicing. But a king's mourning

must not last too long. At Easter, it was announced, the ceremony of the deferred Coronation would take place at Zaragoza. This solemnity was, historians assure us, one of the most splendid ever witnessed in the Cathedral-city. Not only from sister cities throughout the length and breadth of Spain flocked the flower of knighthood, princes of the Church, gentle and simple, to do honour to their King. Castile, Navarre, Bohemia, Granada, Sardinia, Gascony, Provence, all sent their ambassadors. Such an Easter had never been kept in Zaragoza. Noble chiefs of the great feudal families of Aragon thronged the streets of the city, each attended by a glittering cavalcade of retainers. Ramon Muntaner, one of the six deputies chosen by the city of Valencia to represent its citizens, came bravely to the front, with his company of one hundred and twelve persons. Before them rode, in royal livery, with banners borne aloft, players on the flute, kettle-drum, and trumpet ; beside them went their sons and nephews, all in tourney dress. Valencia had furnished her embassy with one hundred and fifty flambeaux, each weighing twelve pounds, painted green, and bearing the royal escutcheon. From the day of their arrival until that of their departure, the good knight and his fellows kept open house for all who cared to partake of their generous hospitality, while for the Court jongleurs there were princely gifts of garments of cloth of gold. To these fortunate persons, besides, the newly made knights, to the number of two hundred and fifty-six, gave the surcoats of cloth of gold and green velvet in which they had received the accolade, donning in their stead, over robes of red stuff, mantles of green velvet furred with ermine. The procession of the new knights to the Aljaferia, whence they were to escort their sovereign to La Seo, was only exceeded by that of the King himself in pomp and glory of display. Mounted on superb horses, each preceded by a son or brother, on horseback, who bore the new knight's sword, and followed by a near kinsman, bearing his arms, all around them the

air trembled with the sound of trumpets, flutes, cymbals, and drums. In the streets, dancers, jongleurs, and itinerant players, disguised as savages, made merry while the procession passed. It was but the prelude to the greater event of the Coronation. On Easter Eve, the King and his people, laying aside all mourning for the late monarch, prepared to celebrate the crowning of his successor. To the details of that gorgeous spectacle Muntaner devotes many pages of his piquant Chronicle. Through his eyes, we watch once more the lonely central figure of the procession passing from his palace to La Seo, there to receive his crown, itself a jewel fit for fairy-tale or fable—"all of gold, set with precious stones, rubies, balases, sapphires, turquoises, emeralds, and pearls as big as pigeons' eggs; sixteen carbuncles in the front; the whole, with fourteen fleurets, valued at £50,000 of Barcelona currency." The sceptre was no less a thing of beauty, three *pans* in length, tipped with a ruby, "the finest ever seen," as large as a hen's egg. The orb of gold was surmounted by a golden flower set with precious stones, and a cross, also richly jewelled, above it. After the Coronation, the King returned to the Aljaferia through crowds of his acclaiming subjects, the streets lit with thousands of torches, and clamorous with music-making. At the feast which followed the return to the Palace, the King's eldest son, Don Pedro, acted as majordomo, his younger brother, Don Ramon Berenger, being cupbearer, the offices of carver and waiters being filled by other notable personages. With each course, fresh dancers and gleemen appeared before the King, who presented to each, in turn, the surcoat and mantle of cloth of gold bordered with ermine and embroidered with pearls, which he assumed at intervals throughout the banquet. As many as ten sets of garments were thus bestowed upon the performers.

This graceful and costly method of recompensing the jongleur was in vogue throughout Europe in his day.

Robe de vair et erminettes,
De conin et de violettes,
D'escarlate, de draps de soie,

were the customary rewards of his art. A young gentleman of rank is advised—

Comme tu vendras en hautz lieux,
Aux heraux et aux menestreaux,
Ou qui vendront ou tu seras,
Dons convenables leurs feras,
De robes d'or ou de monnaie.

We read, in romances of the period, of mantles heaped at the feet of the popular entertainer by the guests whom he has delighted with his performance. A writer of the times of Philip-Augustus speaks, with undisguised contempt, of “princes, who, after having spent twenty or thirty marks on garments which were veritable works of art, marvellously embroidered with flowers, give them away, a week later, to some jongleurs, those ministers of the devil, as soon as they open their mouths.” At other Courts, the tale is repeated; royal guests, on their arrival at the banquet, remove their mantles, which are immediately bestowed upon the jongleurs present; more than seven thousand, it is said, were thus bestowed at the marriage of Beatrice d'Este and Galeozzo of Milan.

At the conclusion of the repast, a jongleur named Romaset recited before the King and his guests a *sirvente* composed by Don Pedro in honour of the occasion, being followed by Don Novellet, another jongleur, who recited seven hundred rhymed verses, another composition of the Infante.

DOÑA LEONOR OF CASTILE

Although the succession to his throne was fully secured, political prudence counselled Alfonso to contract a second marriage with a Princess to whom his House owed some show of reparation for an old affront. To his own and his children's great misfortune, the

widower King was married at Tarragona, in February, 1329, to Doña Leonor, once the betrothed bride of his elder brother, Don Jaime, sister of the King of Castile. Her influence was to prove disastrous, alike for the political and domestic sphere of Alfonso's reign.

There was, however, little of foreboding, unless in the hearts of his children and in those of a few, Castilian as well as Aragonese, who knew the temper of the bride-elect, in the splendid ceremonies attendant upon the arrival upon the soil of Aragon, for the second time, of one who had endured the humiliation of being sent back from the marriage-altar itself to her own people, a repudiated and insulted bride. Child though she was, the insult had never been forgotten or forgiven. In her recall to the destiny of which she had once been cheated, she saw neither recompense nor reparation. It would seem, indeed, as though her conduct towards her stepson, Don Pedro, was dictated by the smart of her ever-rankling, ancient wrong, which the pressure of the crown relenting fate had at length set upon her brow was powerless to eradicate from her vindictive memory. If we seek for some loophole of excuse for the character of the second wife of Alfonso IV, may we not find it, besides, in the fact that she was very early deprived of a mother's tender care and guidance? She was still a very little child, her brother, afterwards Alfonso of Castile, a baby of two years of age, when their mother, Constance, widow of Ferdinand of Castile, and daughter of St. Isabel of Portugal, died of a broken heart at Sahagun, in great grief and sorrow at her son, then King, by the death of his father, being taken from her and committed to the tutelage of his grandmother, Maria de Molina, and the Infantes Pedro and Juan. So poor was the unhappy Queen at the moment of her death, that her jewels and other effects, which were sold for the purpose, were not enough to pay her debts. No happy memories mingled, therefore, with that regal cortège which, headed by the King and Queen of Castile, Alfonso and Maria of Portugal, escorted their

sister to Tarragona in the early days of February, 1329. At Calahorra, the bridal train had been met by the Archbishop of Zaragoza, Don Pedro de Luna, the bearer of "many precious gifts, jewels, and other adornments," from the King. After the marriage, the royal couple lodged, we are told, at the Monastery of the Friars Minor, where, a few days later, a marriage was agreed upon between Doña Blanca, cousin of the Queen of Castile and kinswoman of the King of Aragon, and the Infante Don Pedro, heir to the throne of Portugal. The betrothed bride returned with the Queen of Castile, *en route* for her future home.

The stern business of war, ever sentinel on the very bridal thresholds of the Kings and Queens of Aragon, filled the greater part of the first year of Don Alfonso's and Doña Leonor's wedded life; a campaign against the King of Granada, rebellion in Sardinia, hostilities between Genoese and Catalans. In the closing days of December, 1329, the Queen gave birth, at Valencia, to her eldest son, Don Fernando. This event in the Royal Family was followed, in the month of April, by signal victories of the allied Castilian and Aragonese forces over those of the Moorish King. With the birth of her own child, Doña Leonor seems to have thrown aside the mask which, until then, had veiled her secret attitude towards her eldest stepson. Thenceforward the Court was a seething-pot of machinations and intrigues fomented by the Queen's jealousy and hatred of the boy who stood between her son and a throne. The King, whose failing health, undermined by his stay in Sardinia, deepened the cloud of melancholy which crept over him in the latter part of his life, was a mere puppet in the hands of his imperious and unscrupulous Queen, herself as completely governed by Doña Sancha de Carrillo, wife of a certain Don Sancho Sanchez de Velasco, confidential servant in the employ of Doña Leonor's father, King Ferdinand, and who had succeeded Doña Violante of Greece as governess to the Castilian Princess, whom she had accompanied to Aragon

on her marriage. This busybody and mischief-maker, as Zurita aptly styles her, was the evil genius of Doña Leonor's life; ever at her royal mistress's side to instil into her too-receptive mind deeper and darker hatred of the stepson who stood between her own son and a throne. Happily for himself, the thirteen-year-old boy, who already gave proof of the shrewd sense and inflexible will which were to characterize him in after-life, was more than a match for a weak father, a vindictive stepmother, and a malicious and secret enemy. Not without fearless protest was he compelled to stand by and see the richest fiefs of the crown alienated from his inheritance and bestowed, together with the highest titles, upon his two half-brothers, Don Fernando and Don Juan. Tortosa, indeed, which had been assigned as Marquisate to the elder of Doña Leonor's sons, vigorously refused to be thus torn from its ancient attachment, but the citizens were forced, by bribe and threat, to submit to their unwilling allegiance. City after city, thereafter, was added to the inheritance which Doña Leonor wrested from her husband for her son. Only Ot de Moncada, mindful of the spiritual tie which had bound him to the young Don Pedro at the font, could not be prevailed upon to swerve from his devotion and loyalty to the royal lad. More donations of cities filched from the royal patrimony at Doña Leonor's insatiable demand gave insolent proof of her power over her puppet lord. Valencia, exasperated, flew to arms, the whole realm, thereupon, showing itself disposed to follow the example. The King, plainly advised that, unless the donations made to Don Fernando were immediately revoked, none could answer for the safety of the Royal Family, found himself forced to yield to the will of his people, throwing all the blame of his unpopular actions upon the Queen. "Had such seditious fellows been subjects of my brother, the King of Castile," cried the furious Doña Leonor, while the armed mob growled and thundered at the Palace gates, "he would have ordered their instant execution!" "Queen," was the

King's reply—as recorded in the Chronicle of his son, Don Pedro—"ours is a free people, and not in such subjection as that of Castile; for our subjects hold us in reverence, as their lord; while we, for our part, count them our worthy vassals and good comrades." And so saying, Don Pedro signed the decree of revocation. It was the signal for the Queen's merciless vengeance to fall upon all who had ranged themselves upon the side of justice and her stepson. One by one, all who stood high in the King's favour, or were known to be devoted to Don Pedro, were banished from the Court. The list was a lengthy one, comprising Don Miguel de Gurrea, the Prince's tutor, who exercised, in his name, the office of Governor-General of the kingdom, his brother, Don Ximeno de Gurrea, Abbot of Montearagon, "Mossen" Miguel Perez Zapata, "the good and valorous knight," Garcia de Loriz (specially odious in the Queen's eyes as having been majordomo to Doña Teresa de Entenza), and the King's secretary, Lope de Concut, for whom the darkest fate of all was reserved. By travesty of justice, these loyal servants of the crown were declared guilty of high treason, and summoned to appear before the King to answer the serious charge. Behind their subjugated sovereign, however, these innocent criminals discerned the hand of his vengeful consort, and accordingly turned a deaf ear to the summons. Lope de Concut, protected by the King's express assurance that he had nothing to fear, deemed himself safe at a distance from the Court in a little hamlet near Teruel; but pursued into exile by the implacable hate of the Queen, he was dragged to trial at Valencia, "to please the Queen"—and deserted by the royal master whom he had always served with loyal faith, he was put to death on the absurd charge of having bewitched the Queen, so that she could not bear children.

Don Pedro's position at Court, where he could no longer look upon the faces of those who were ready to lay down their lives for him, but was surrounded by

creatures of his stepmother's will, prepared to do her darkest bidding, was a perilous one. The danger of which the brave boy was unconscious, or which perhaps he laughed to scorn, grew to be a very vivid and ever-present reality to those who stood nearest to him outside the undependable defences of his blood relations. Thus it was that, taking counsel with the Archbishop of Zaragoza, Don Pedro de Luna, his sometime guardian during the absence of his parents in Sardinia, the de Gurreas, Zapata, and Garcia de Loriz obtained that prelate's permission to remove the Prince from his father's Court to the mountains of Jaca, where he would be in safety, amongst friends, and whence it would be easy to convey him, should need arise, into France. The hurried journey was happily accomplished, but the Prince's sojourn at Jaca was brief. He emerged from his retirement to take up the reins of government which were fast slipping from his father's weakening hold. The eyes of the nation turned, as if with one consent, away from that pitiable and humiliating spectacle in the Palace of Barcelona, of a dying sovereign who might, had his health permitted, been the equal of Jaime the Conqueror, captive, soul and body, of his wife's caprice and cruelty, to take comfort in the thought that there stood ready to assume his kingship a strong man, though still a stripling. Meanwhile, Don Pedro, emancipated from tutelage, was Governor-General of the kingdom in more than name. Men felt that his grip upon the sword of State was already no weakling's. Offenders against the law, no matter what their rank, trembled before the sharpness of that sword, as they had never trembled before his father. One solemn act of justice, which the memory of Lope de Concut demanded of the future sovereign of Aragon, in whose cause he had virtually laid down his life, was the banishment of Doña Sancha de Carrillo from the Court and kingdom in which she had worked so much havoc. Backed by the will of the people, such a decree was executed as soon as made. There was none to say it

nay. Escorted by Don Ramon de Cornel, Doña Sancha passed, with all the burden of her evil instigations dark and heavy upon her, from the stage upon which she had played so sinister a rôle. She was followed on her journey by the execrations of a howling mob. Vengeful cries of "Away with the wicked old woman! Away with her! Let her not dare to enter Zaragoza!" met her at the gates of the Cathedral-city. The mistress whose worst friend she had proved herself was not long in following her evil genius back to Castile. Assured by the attendant physicians, that there was no hope of the King's recovery, the Queen's one thought was to secure her own and her children's safety. She knew best how much she and they had to fear from Don Alfonso's successor. Her first concern was to give orders for the castles of Verdejo and Somet, on the Castilian frontier, to be given up to agents of the King of Castile, in order that she and her sons might have a place of impregnable refuge at the moment of her imminent widowhood. But the vigilance of her stepson frustrated this, as he had frustrated all her machinations against him. There remained for the defeated and disappointed Queen but one way of escape from the hated stepson who had baffled and beaten her all along the line. There was no time for hesitation. In the early dawn of January 14, 1336, while memories of the wife of his youth, the noble and loving Teresa de Entenza, flitted through the clouding brain of the dying King, the wife who had wrought such ill to his house and kingdom, unmindful of the lonely man who had great need of a tender touch on his closing eyelids, a tender clasp of his clammy hand, fled, with a great train of sumpter-mules laden with jewels, plate, and money, along the road to Castile, eluding the spies of the new King, who sought to overtake her. Like her duenna of hated memory, she had done with Aragon for ever. She was indeed to stretch from her place of refuge in her native land grasping hands towards the inheritance which she persisted in claiming for her

sons, but her plea fell on politely unheeding ears, and drew forth but ambiguous and unsatisfying response from one who was from first to last a master of statecraft.

Driven by unconquerable ambition and injudicious maternal passion, the widowed Queen, from the moment of her return to Castile, entered upon a path of fatality along which she was to drag to ultimate ruin and violent death all who were most closely connected with her. It was her misfortune that the throne of Castile should have been occupied, at the moment of her return, by that prince of bloodthirsty monsters, Pedro the Cruel. She was present at his marriage with the ill-fated and beautiful Blanche de Bourbon, riding in the wedding procession on a white mule, robed in regal robes of cloth of gold, little dreaming of the day when she was to share the fate of that unhappy bride. A few short years of restless intrigues and unceasing endeavours to win at all costs temporal aggrandizement for her sons, and both mother and sons had fallen victims to their kinsman's insatiable thirst for blood. It was while she was residing at the castle of Roa, together with her daughter-in-law, Isabel Nunez de Lara, wife of her younger son, Don Juan, both in ignorance of the murder of the latter at Bilbao by Don Pedro's orders, that Doña Leonor was removed, in the custody of Don Juan Fernandez de Hinestrosa, to the Castle of Castro Xeriz, where, in 1359, she was put to death by Moorish slaves, no Christian in all Castile being found willing to lift his hand against this daughter and wife of kings. Her ill-fated daughter-in-law, Doña Isabel, died a few weeks later, poisoned, it is said, by Don Pedro's orders. There can be little doubt that the murders of those unhappy ladies was the price paid by their executioner for alliance with Aragon, whose friendship had become necessary to him with the growing pretensions of Henry of Trastamare. But of the secret springs which actuated the tragedy, Pedro IV of Aragon gives no hint in his Chronicle, where he briefly records that

“our stepmother, the Queen, Leonor, was put to death by Don Pedro of Castile.”

RÉSUMÉ OF CHAPTER VIII

Marriage of Doña Teresa de Entenza and Don Alfonso of Aragon, 1312.

Birth of their son, afterwards Pedro IV, at Balaguer, 1319.

Doña Teresa sailed with her husband for Sardinia, 1322.

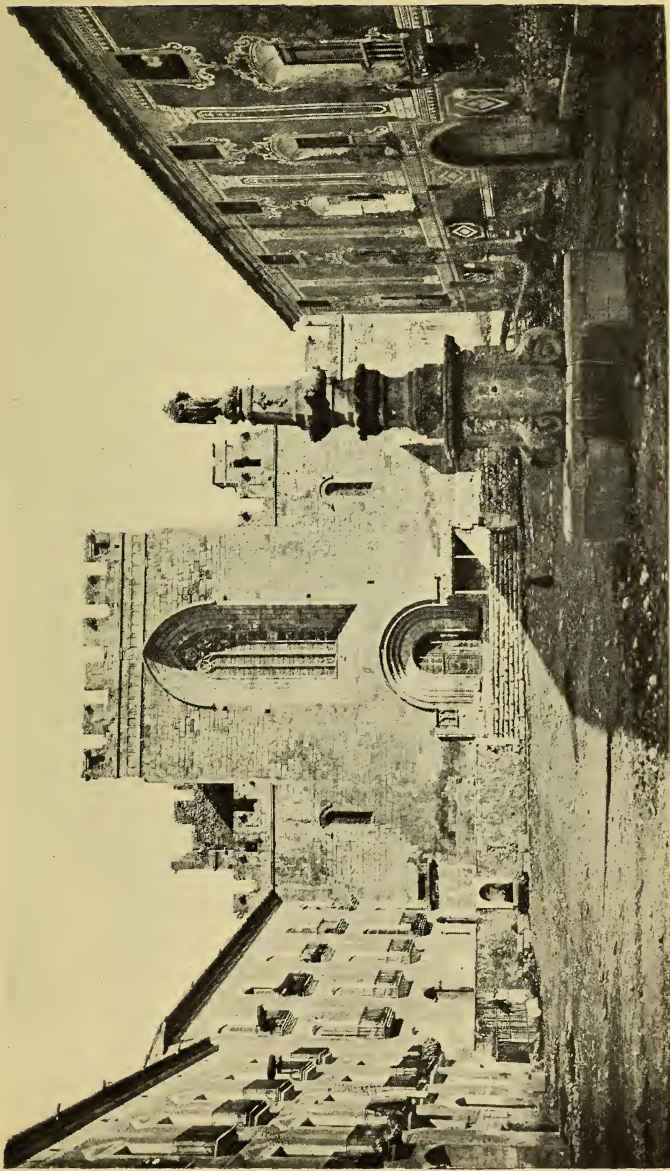
Return of the Infante and his wife, 1324.

Birth of the Infante Don Sancho and death of Doña Teresa, 1327.

Don Alfonso marries Doña Leonor of Castile. Birth of their son, Don Fernando, 1329.

Death of King Alfonso, 1336.

Doña Leonor murdered by order of Pedro the Cruel of Castile, 1359.



J. Laurent y Cia., Madrid

GENERAL VIEW OF THE CHURCH OF THE MONASTERY OF SANTAS CREUS

CHAPTER IX

DOÑA MARIA OF NAVARRE

DURING the lifetime of Alfonso IV, a marriage had been arranged between his eldest son, the Infante Pedro, afterwards to be known as Pedro the Ceremonious, and the Princess Juana, eldest daughter of Philip, King of Navarre, and his Queen, Jeanne d'Evreux. The alliance had been sought by the father of the proposed bride as a means of securing a powerful ally in his prolonged warfare with Castile touching their ancient quarrel concerning the definition of their boundaries. The Archbishop, Don Pedro de Luna, and Don Enrique, Lord of Gualiaco, Governor of Navarre, represented, respectively, the House of Aragon and that of Navarre, in the marriage negotiations, which were concluded at Daroca, where the King of Aragon was then residing, on January 23, 1334, with the customary exchange of castles and hostages for the fulfilment of the bridal contract, the dowry of the Princess being 100,000 sanchetes (money of Navarre, equal in value to *livres tournois*). Three years later, Don Pedro having succeeded his father as Pedro IV, it was proposed that an exchange of brides should take place, the Infanta Maria, younger sister of the Princess Juana, who was nearer in age to the King, superseding the latter as Queen of Aragon. By the new contract, necessitated by this change of front on the part of Don Pedro, it was stipulated that, in the event of the failure of heirs male to the throne of Navarre, the succession should pass, not to the elder, but to the younger daughter. The Princess Juana afterwards embraced the religious life in the Franciscan Convent of Longchamps.

The first marriage of Pedro IV of Aragon was solemnized by proxy, at the Castle of Aneto, where the King and Queen of Navarre were then in residence, October 17, 1337. The bride's dowry was 70,000 sanchetes, and 150,000 Barcelonese sueldos for her household expenses, the towns of Tarragona, Jaca, and Teruel being conveyed to her as *arras*. Her representatives received from the authorities of Jaca, in 1339, their solemn oath to recognize Doña Maria as their Lady throughout her life, and to pay to her duly the revenue secured to her by the King on the said town. The quaint ceremony was gone through of the two proxies putting their two hands into each other's, and "instead of and in the person of the Queen kissing each other with their own mouths." The bride had not yet attained the age of twelve years at the time of her betrothal. It had been arranged that the marriage should be solemnized on the Feast of the Trinity in the year following, but the King of Navarre, when the time came, found himself detained by the war between France and England. In June, accompanied by her uncle, Philip, Bishop of Chalons, and other notables, the Princess set out for Aragon, but was taken ill at Alagon, where the King hastened to visit her. There, the marriage was celebrated on St. James's Day, the bridal pair proceeding immediately to Zaragoza, where Doña Maria was received with all the traditional rejoicings.

In the following year, with equal ceremony, Barcelona offered its loyal welcome to the young Queen, whose entry into the city, under a canopy of gold brocade, coincided with the Translation of the relics of St. Eulalia. A gift of plate—six tall dishes of silver-gilt, enamelled, two silver basins, two silver pitchers, and one gilt cup—was presented by the citizens, the Countess of Ampurias, wife of the Infante Don Ramon Berenger, receiving at the same time a handsome cup. From Barcelona the Court removed to Lerida, where the marriage was solemnized of the Infanta Doña Violante, the King's aunt, widow of the Despot of Romania,

with her second husband, Don Lope de Luna. For this notable occasion, there were great purchases of cendal, brocade, camlet, and "filigranes" of every hue, veils, pearls, "with an emerald," for the Countess of Ampurias and for Doña Elisen Sacort, the Infanta's nurse, and others in the royal entourage. The period was that when the King was already shaping, in that fastidious and secretive mind which was concerned equally with statecraft and sumptuary laws, the Royal Ordinances which have won for him the title of the Ceremonious.

With the wife of his youth, whom Pedro IV dismisses from the pages of his Chronicle with curt praise of her saintliness and goodness of life, the Ceremonious King had doubtless little in common. She was a docile partner and a pious woman. For nine years, indeed, she disappointed her lord by presenting him with daughters only. But when at length she gave him the long-desired son—a "guest who tarried but a day"—she paid with her own life for her ultimate failure. It was, possibly, somewhat against her will that she was imperiously summoned by her consort to keep the Christmas of 1345 at Perpignan in the Château of the Kings of Majorca, whose kingdom had been brutally snatched from the last sovereign, the luckless Jaime II, by his treacherous kinsman, King Pedro. It may well have been repugnant to his Queen to hold her Court where Esclarmonde de Foix and Sancha of Anjou had queened it before her; but her part was to submit, no less than the citizens of Perpignan had submitted, to the rule of their new master. He who was, as Zurita reminds us, Ceremonious by nature, knew well how to appeal to the passion of his new subjects for display and merry-making. It was with great pomp, the same authority assures us, that he entered the city, surrounded by all his Court, and wearing all his royal insignia, still further to impress the crowd who, gazing on such splendours, forgot their dispossessed and exiled sovereigns of yesterday. The rain, we are told, somewhat damped their ardour, and the procession, in which

the King rode with the chief consuls and nobles of the city holding his horse's reins as was the custom, returned in haste to the Château. For the reception of the Queen and her two daughters, the Infantas Constanza and Juana, the latter of whom had been born at Barcelona, November 7, 1344, a special entertainment was arranged, in which the town's joglars and dancers greatly distinguished themselves. After Vespers, the merry company repaired to the Château, where they gave an exhibition of their skill in the courtyard. With characteristic diplomacy, the King himself went down and mingled with the performers, to the delirious delight of the populace. At the conclusion of the entertainment, wines and sweetmeats were served, by the royal command, and "then all went home to bed."

The life of the Queen of Aragon in that ancient stronghold of kings which so perfectly represented the civil, the military, and the religious aspect of their lives, differed but little, we may suppose, from that of those Queens who had preceded her within its massive walls. Like them, Queen Maria would have at her command, as at Barcelona, her majordomo, her lords and esquires-in-waiting, her almoner and sub-almoner, besides her train of ladies, with whom she would walk, when summer came, in the cool of the evenings, in the "Verger"—an enclosure attached to the Château full of fruit trees and shady bowers. Or the ladies would troop to the royal menagerie, to see the lions kept there, in charge of one or other of the family of Domenech, who had held the office for centuries; or visit the parrot's chamber, where the birds were kept for the amusement of the Court. On wet days, there were chess, and dice, and dancing; often the minstrels and dancers would be summoned to give a concert in the Queen's apartments. Flourish of trumpets would summon the Royal Family to dinners for which Perpignan proved an overflowing larder. Rabbit and venison were regularly despatched by couriers from the city to Barcelona, when the Court was in residence there, while abundance of fish—

sturgeon, mackerel, dab, lamprey, tunny, mullet, and dog-fish—made the keeping of fast-days an epicurean festival. The people must be kept in good humour, so there were jousts and tourneys, with all the outward glories of chivalry, nodding plumes, and fluttering pennons, and emblazoned armour, for their delighting. And yet, amid all the shifting of colour and song, there was a moment when tragedy stalked very close to Queen Maria and her little daughters. But for a plot to enter the Château with false keys, and to seize and put to death the entire Royal Family, being frustrated, their sojourn at Perpignan might have ended with terrible swiftness. In the two succeeding years, it is probable that the Queen revisited Perpignan more than once, but of those visits we have no record.

It was not until 1347, when the dissensions between the King, his brother, the Infante Don Jaime, and the Cortes, were still raging around the vexed question of the succession to the throne—claimed by the King for the Infanta Constanza, his eldest daughter, and opposed by her uncle and the Cortes, basing their opposition upon the will of Queen Petronilla, which had, as we have seen, debarred women from ascending the throne of Aragon—it was at this moment, when solution had never been more imperatively needful, that, to the great joy of the King and his people, the Queen at length gave birth to the long-desired heir to his father's throne, the child immediately receiving the name of Pedro. The joy which had greeted his advent was, however, of cruelly brief duration, his little life lasting but one day. Five days later, he was followed to the grave by the mother who had given her life in vain to bring peace to her husband's distracted kingdom. Zurita thus records her virtues: "This Queen was a most excellent Princess, and a devout servant of God." She was buried in the Monastery of San Vicente, in the city of Valencia, contrary to her express desire to be interred at Poblet, leaving her rights to the throne of

Navarre to the son whom she was about to bring into the world, had he survived her, and failing her son, to her daughters. These Infantas were three in number—Doña Constanza, Doña Juana, and Doña Maria, who died young.

Within a year, the King, still confronted with the problem of the succession, was a suitor for the hand of the Infanta Leonor, daughter of Alfonso and Beatrix, King and Queen of Portugal. Prior negotiations had been pending for the marriage of the Princess with Don Fernando, brother of the King of Castile, who promptly lodged a protest against the "dishonest" conduct of the Portuguese sovereign. Powerful family influences, however, were on the side of the King of Aragon at the Portuguese Court—the Infante Don Juan Manuel, his daughter, the Infanta Constanza, wife of the Infante Don Pedro of Portugal, Doña Maria Ximenez Cornel, sister of Don Ximeno Cornel, Countess of Brazelos, wife of the Count Don Pedro of Portugal, son of King Dionysius and the Infanta St. Isabel, daughter of Pedro III of Aragon and Constance of Sicily. The marriage was also favoured by most of the nobles of Portugal. The envoys of Don Pedro were, therefore, assured beforehand of the welcome which awaited them at Santarem, where they were received, June 4, 1347, by the King and Queen of Portugal and by their daughter-in-law, Doña Constanza. The question of the dowry threatened, however, to break off the negotiations when they had hardly been entered upon. It was not the custom, argued the Portuguese Court officials, for the Princesses of Portugal to bring or to exact dowry on the occasion of their marriage. To this, the Aragonese ambassadors replied that no bride had ever been received into the Royal Family of Aragon without her dower. The King of Portugal thereupon suggested the sum of 2500 golden livres, the envoys requiring 150,000, which the Portuguese monarch deemed excessive. The envoys, unable to come to terms, were about to take their leave, when the Infanta Doña

Constanza, who had set her heart, says Zurita, on the accomplishment of the marriage, intervened, and induced the King of Portugal to bestow upon his daughter a dowry of £37,000 of Barcelonese money, the Queen bringing up the total to £50,000. Thereupon, the marriage contract was duly signed, to the great displeasure of the King of Castile and his brother, not merely, Zurita assures us, because of the honour done to the House of Aragon, but because of the great beauty, gentle disposition, and stately air of the Princess. That the parents and future husband of the Infanta had good cause to suspect the designs of the Castilian Princes is shown by the fact that, "in order to avoid the danger which she might run, if she travelled by way of Castile, it was agreed that the journey to Barcelona should be made by sea." In August, the King of Aragon received, at Monzon, the announcement that the Infanta, his betrothed, had started on her voyage. His uncles, the Infantes Don Pedro and Don Ramon Berenger, Hugo, Viscount of Cardona, Don Ramon Roger, Count of Pallars, the Admiral Don Pedro de Moncada, Don Pedro de Fenollet, Viscount of Illa, Don Pedro de Queralte, and Don Ramon de Anglesola, received the royal commands to proceed to Barcelona, to receive the bride, and to attend her to the place selected for the celebration of the marriage. To his Chancellor, the Bishop of Vich, and to the Bishops of Tortosa, Lerida, and the Abbots of Ripoll and Santa Creus, as well as to the citizens of Catalonia, Roussillon, and Majorca, the King sent embassies, announcing the forthcoming festivities, and requesting them to send representatives to be his guests thereat. A tragic incident, however, interposed, to curtail all the customary rejoicings, an incident which, descending darkly, as it did, upon the very day of the bride's arrival at Barcelona, may well have seemed prophetic of the almost equally tragic fate which awaited the young Princess in Aragon. The Infante Don Jaime, long on bad terms with his brother, the King, who had excused himself

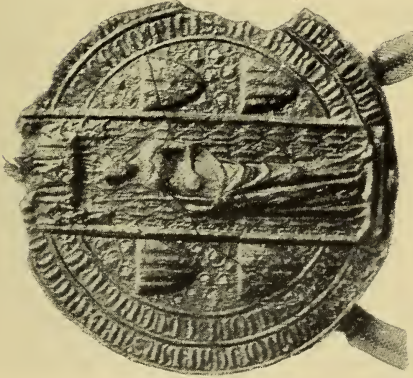
from considering a petition presented by the former on the pretext that he was about to proceed to Barcelona for his marriage, died suddenly, not without grave suspicion of poison, though the King's own account of the matter was, that the Infante, passing through the streets of Barcelona to receive his brother, was tripped up by a rope on which an itinerant acrobat was performing,¹ and falling heavily to the ground, received mortal injuries, from which he died a few days later, and was buried in the Church of the Friars Minor of Barcelona.

"The disturbed state of the kingdom," and not the mourning in the Royal Family, was given as the cause for the "poor show of rejoicing" over the King's second marriage. From the bridal chamber the King passed directly to conflict touching the Union with his subjects of Valencia, a conflict embittered by the mysterious death of the Infante Jaime, who had been so powerful a partisan of the insurgents, and which soon lit the flames of civil war in the kingdom. Peace was only restored by the King's reluctant consent to sign the Union, and this was immediately followed by the armed protest of certain cities of the kingdom against "the great dishonour and prejudice" done to the rest of the realm by the royal concessions to Valencia. The King and Queen and the whole of the Court being in residence at the Palace in Morviedro, the rebels closed the gates of the town, and kept the King and his household prisoners in the Palace. From Morviedro the Court was finally permitted to pass to Valencia, under armed escort, the reception offered to the Queen, we are told, being the most splendid ever offered to any Queen of Aragon on her first visit to the city. In the midst of the festivities, however, a quarrel between one of the royal household and the townsmen of Valencia, during the rehearsal of the dances and games which were to be performed on the following morning before the Palace, quickly assumed the proportions of a popular *émeute*,

¹ It was an Aragonese, we remember, who at the Coronation of Edward VI "played pretty toys on a cable stretched across the street."



SEAL OF DON PEDRO IV
(THE CEREMONIOUS)



SEAL OF DOÑA LEONOR
OF SICILY



SEAL OF DOÑA MARIA
OF NAVARRE

the rioters' threatening attitude as they stormed the gates of the Palace and broke down the doors, which had been closed against them, striking terror into the hearts of the royal household. The apartments of the Palace were quickly filled with an infuriated mob, swarming from room to room, swords in hand, which they thrust into and under the beds, in their search for Don Bernardo de Cabrera, Don Berenger de Abella, and the other nobles of Roussillon, belonging to the royal household, who were particularly obnoxious to them. The King, issuing from his apartments to find the Palace in possession of the rioters, first took thought for the safety of the Queen, whom he confided to the care of Don Pedro de Moncada and Don Juan Fernandez de Heredia, Castellan of Amposta, and then proceeded, girt with his sword, to the staircase of the building, in spite of the advice of the two knights that he and the Queen should seek safety by instant and secret flight. With kingly courage, attended only by two ushers, a knight, a page, and his standard-bearer, Don Pedro, mace in hand, descended into the thick of the fray, his appearance turning the tide of the tumult as suddenly as it had burst forth. Loud cries of "Long live the King!" resounded on all sides. A richly caparisoned horse was brought to the foot of the staircase, and the King, mounting, rode forth in triumph. By evening, tranquillity had been restored. The populace now insisted on the programme of dances, as previously arranged, being carried out before the Palace, the excitement reaching to such a pitch of enthusiasm that the King and Queen were forced, in response to the insistence of the crowd, to go down among the dancers and to take part in their rude merriment, a barber of the town, who was leader of the revels, placing himself between the royal pair, singing meanwhile a "cancion," the burden of which was as follows: "Evil be to him who parts us!" Similar proceedings are recorded as having attended the marriage of the King of Majorca at Perpignan, although they can scarcely have been viewed with composure by

the proud Portuguese Princess. Doña Leonor, however, did not live long enough to take her revenge, even if she had desired it. The Court remained in residence at Valencia until June, 1348, a period aptly characterized, together with its predecessor, by Don José Pella y Forgas, in his *History of Ampurdan*, as "apocalyptic years." The author in question, quoting from the manuscript records preserved in the Cathedral of Gerona, and also from the Chronicle of an anonymous monk of Ulla, tells us of the "signs and wonders" in heaven and earth which ushered in the terrible scourge of the Black Death, which, passing from Italy to Sicily, thence to Majorca, made its appearance in Spain in the spring of 1348. Noxious vapours, issuing from cracks in the parched soil of Catalonia, poisoned, not only all vegetation, but even birds on the wing. The river Ter, changing its normal character, flowed sluggishly and darkly, "like a river of death," popular superstition accusing the Jews, as in certain towns of France, of having poisoned its waters. From the middle of May to the middle of June, no less than three hundred persons died daily in Valencia. Panic-stricken, the Court removed to Zaragoza, where the King had convoked the Cortes. The august assembly was now ordered to transfer itself to Teruel, which had so far escaped the plague. On the journey from Zaragoza, however, the Queen sickened, while two knights of the royal household, Pardo de la Casta and Rodrigo Diaz, died after a few days' illness. In a futile attempt to save Doña Leonor's life, she was removed from Teruel to Exerica, but the fatal disease carried her off in the latter city. Don Pedro at once proceeding to Segorbe, which was free from infection. Two-thirds of the whole population of Catalonia perished from the same epidemic which proved fatal to Doña Leonor, the mortality being such that, in some cases, legal documents had to be drawn up without the assistance of a notary, all such functionaries having fallen victims to the plague. Yet, terrible as was this visitation, and those of famine and earth-

quake, which accompanied it, they were but mutterings of the storm which followed, slowly, indeed, but surely, in their wake, that of the great social upheaval which corresponded, in Spain, to the Peasant Revolt of the fourteenth-century in England, and which is known in Catalonian history as the war of the *pagesos de remensa*, or manumitted serfs.

DOÑA LEONOR OF SICILY

Of the four wives of Don Pedro IV, Doña Leonor of Sicily was probably the one who had the most influence over him, not even excepting Doña Sibilia de Forcia, the siren of his old age. She was a girl of spirit when, in June, 1349, the ambassadors of Aragon, Don Galceran de Anglesola, Señor of Belpuig, and the King's majordomo, together with Lope de Gurrea, his chamberlain, and Matheo Mercer, captain of the galleys of Don Pedro, presented their credentials at the Court of Doña Isabel of Carinthia, Queen-mother of Sicily, then in residence at Messina with her family, the young King Louis, and his sisters, the Infantes Leonor, Euphemia, Blanca, and Violante. The mission of the Aragonese envoys was the flattering one of the offer of the crown of Queen-consort of Aragon to Doña Leonor. Her acceptance was prompt; but it was matched by that of the Sicilian faction of Count Matheo de Palici and the powerful family of the Claramontes, who immediately lodged a protest against the proposed alliance, unless the Princess first renounced, for her and for her heirs, all rights of succession to the throne of Sicily. It is evident that Doña Leonor did not yield without a struggle. To bring her to a better mind, she was lodged in the Convent of the Nuns Minoress of Messina, in the custody of the Abbess, her aunt, Doña Catalina. This high-handed action on the part of those who were the avowed enemies of Aragon only resulted in the immediate betrothal of Doña Leonor to its

King, and her indignant protest against the treatment to which she had been subjected. On July 3, 1349, escorted by the ambassadors of Aragon, the Infanta set sail for Spain, where her marriage was celebrated in the city of Valencia, "with great solemnity and festivities." The whole of the first year of her married life was spent in Valencia. An expedition against Sicily, under the command of Don Bernardo de Cabrera, the King's favourite—afterwards to come so tragically into conflict with his royal master's Sicilian bride—followed fast upon the arrival of Doña Leonor in Aragon. The sustained revolt of the House of Oria in Sardinia against the suzerainty of Don Pedro kept that island possession of his crown in continual ferment. Tentative advances on the part of Philip of France seemed to promise well for the future friendship between the two countries in the early days of the coming of Doña Leonor. Like other stepmothers, more especially those of the House of Aragon, the young Queen was by no means reluctant to forward, by every means in her power, the marriages of her husband's daughters by his first marriage. Thus, her influence would almost certainly have urged on the alliance proposed by Philip between his grandson, Charles, eldest son of Duke John of Normandy, and Doña Constanza, eldest daughter of the King of Aragon, a marriage which was, however, frustrated by the death of King Philip and the accession of his son. Death was busy at the Courts of Europe in this year, 1350, when not only France, but Castile and Navarre, were bereft of their sovereigns. At Zaragoza, with almost royal splendour, the marriage was solemnized at Easter, of Don Bernaldino, son of Bernardo de Cabrera, and Doña Margarita, daughter of the Viscount of Castalbo, of the illustrious House of de Luna, the King conferring upon the bridegroom as a marriage gift many rich fiefs in his dominions together with the title of Count of Osona.

On St. John's Day, 1351, in the city of Perpignan, Doña Leonor gave birth to the ardently desired heir to

the throne of Aragon, whose advent put an end to the unseemly dissensions which had raged around the vexed question of the succession. The Infante was baptized by the name of Juan, "in memory and devotion to the Feast on which he had been born"; and on January 21 following, the King conferred upon his infant heir the title of Duke of Gerona. A few days later, the important post of governor to the baby Prince was conferred upon Don Bernardo de Cabrera, "because in valour and prudence, and in all the natural gifts which such a charge required, this knight exceeded all others in the kingdom." The King now summoned the grandees of Aragon to take the oath of allegiance to the little heir in the city of his birth, pointing out that it had been the custom from time immemorial in the kingdom of Majorca and in the Countships of Roussillon and Cerdaña, for the heir-apparent to be thus acknowledged as such. Protest at once arose, however, from all the cities of the kingdom, Zaragoza leading the way, by taking its firm stand upon its ancient privilege of being the city where the oath in question had always been taken by the representatives of the other cities of the realm, whilst the Catalans, no less proud of their prerogatives, insisted that the ceremony should take place at Barcelona. In vain the King made his consort's health a laudable excuse for his unprecedented action, pointing out that she was not in a fit state to undertake the long and fatiguing journey to Zaragoza. But as usual, the will of the people triumphed, and, after consultation with his advisers, the King found himself compelled to take his Queen and their child first to Zaragoza, where the Aragonese duly took the oath, thence to Valencia, and lastly, to Barcelona, where the representatives of Roussillon, Sardinia, and Majorca, also complied with the customary formalities.

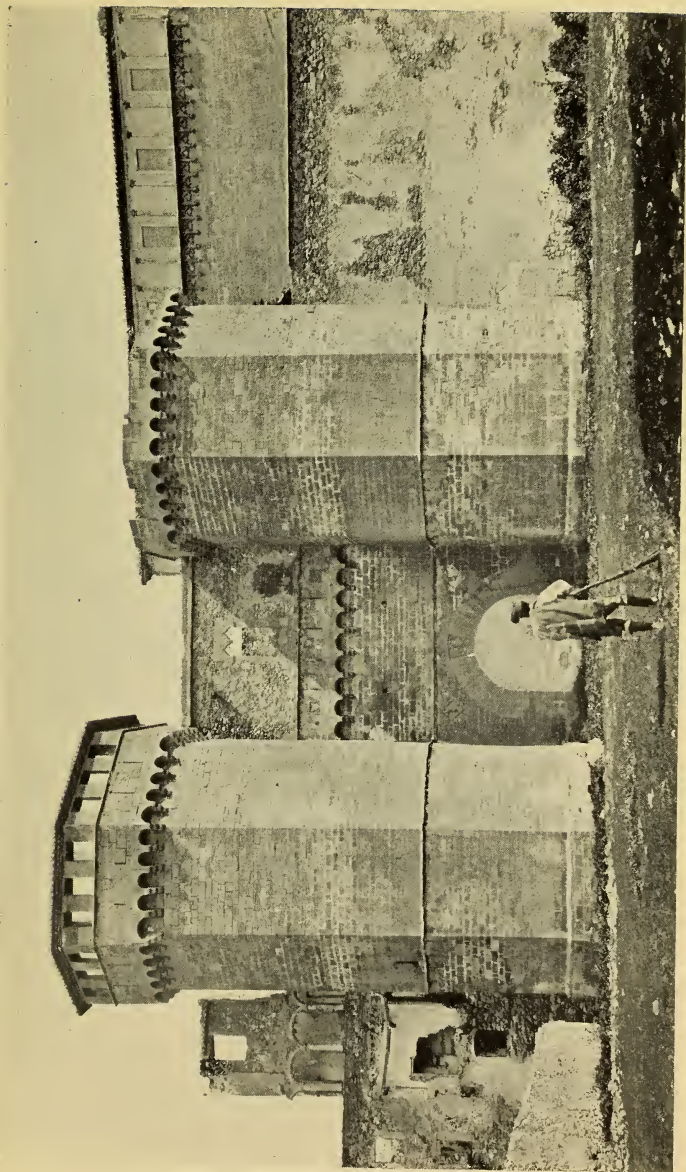
From the security thus ensured to the succession, the King's thoughts were now free to turn to the question of the marriages of his two daughters by his first marriage, that of the Infanta Constanza, for whom he

had at one time sought the crown of Aragon itself after his death, having, as we have seen, miscarried. There now remained only the hope of securing for her the crown of a Queen-consort. But the chance of such fortune seemed remote indeed. In 1351, moreover, she had seen her younger sister, the Infanta Juana's, name substituted for her own in the marriage contract which was actually signed in that year at Barcelona, the bride thus affianced to the grandson of Philip the Fair being only seven years of age. It was not until four years later that the death of Louis, King of Sicily, and the accession of his younger brother, Fadrique, to the throne under the tutelage of his eldest sister, the Infanta Euphemia, suggested to the new sovereign's sister, the Queen of Don Pedro IV of Aragon, a possible crown for her elder stepdaughter. Papal permission was sought and obtained for the projected alliance, Berenger Carbonel, Doña Leonor's secretary, being a prime mover in the affair, and accompanying the envoys of Aragon to the Papal Court in quest of the necessary dispensation. The consummation of the marriage was to be delayed, however, for some years yet. Although the young bride and bridegroom exchanged their solemn marriage vows, by proxy, at Perpignan on September 21, 1356, events in Sicily had simultaneously taken such a turn that it seemed for a time as though the Infanta was once more to have a crown snatched from her grasp. Queen Juana of Naples and her husband—by a curious irony, that very Louis of Anjou who had once been the designated bridegroom of Doña Constanza herself—landed in Sicily under pretext of quelling a rebellion, entered Messina, where they made the Infantas Violante and Blanche, the King's sisters, their prisoners, and, proceeding to Messina, were received by the fickle populace with acclamations. The young King, driven back upon his loyal city of Catania, and heartened by the courage and devotion of Count Artal de Alagon, who was eventually to win back his kingdom for him, was compelled to postpone to an indefinite date the

coming of his betrothed bride. It was not, indeed, until April 11, 1359, that the marriage was actually solemnized at Catania. From it sprang the heiress of Sicily, Doña Maria, who was destined to wear its crown, and to come within measurable distance of that of Aragon also. The birth of Doña Leonor's namesake daughter, who grew up to be a "most beautiful creature," as she is styled in her father's Chronicle, took place February 20, 1358, in the fortress of Santa Maria del Puig at Valencia. Her future husband, Don Juan of Castile, son of Don Enrique II, was born August 24 of the same year, at Epila. The autumn of that year also witnessed the marriage, while the Court was in residence at Barcelona, of the King's niece, Isabel, daughter of the King of Majorca, with Don Juan, Marquis of Montferrat, the bride's wedding gift from her uncle being 50,000 florins, conditional on her cession of all her rights in the Kingdom of Majorca, the Countships of Cerdaña and Roussillon, and the Lordship of Montpellier, which were hers in right of her father, the unhappy Jaime, King of Majorca. In return for Doña Isabel's surrender of these rights, Don Pedro provided her with a princely escort on her bridal journey, Francisco de Perellos being specially deputed to attend the King's niece. A month after the royal wedding, Don Pedro took the field against his neighbour of Castile, but his plans were seriously interfered with by the severity of the weather, and the heavy falls of snow, and he was compelled to pass Christmas at Almunia, which he only quitted to advance to the Castilian frontier, on January 22. With fire, and sword, and siege, the Aragonese armies continued to harass the frontier towns of Castile for more than two months, until the state of affairs demanded the embassy from Rome of a Papal Legate, Cardinal Guido of Bologna, charged with the mission of making peace between the belligerents. It is possible that at this time of military activity on the part of the King, his consort had the companionship at her Court of one or more of her sisters. For one of them, Doña Blanca,

she arranged a marriage, which took place five years later, with Don Juan, Count of Ampurias, son of the King's uncle, the Infante Don Ramon Berenger. The first Countess of Ampurias lived but a few years, and the match-making Queen was then able to effect a second marriage for the Count with her younger stepdaughter, the Infanta Juana, whose after-fate belongs to the reign of Doña Leonor's successor, Sibilía de Forcia. There had been, apparently, some previous question of marrying the Princess Blanca to a French nobleman, as well as her sisters, Doña Euphemia and Doña Violante, for in 1356 Francisco de Perellos, ambassador of Aragon at the Court of France, was charged to arrange such alliances, in addition to that which was the primary object of his mission, the betrothal of the Princess Jeanne de Valois, daughter of Philip of France, to Don Juan, Duke of Gerona. Only in the latter respect, however, did success crown the ambassador's efforts. The battle of Poitiers made shipwreck of yet another of Don Pedro's matrimonial projects, that of the marriage of his daughter, the Infanta Juana, and Louis, Comte d'Anjou, but the following year witnessed the departure of the Infanta Constanza for her Sicilian home. Doña Leonor had seen to it, before the bride's departure, that she had renounced all her rights to the succession of Navarre, inherited from her mother, to her stepbrother, Don Juan, Duke of Gerona.

As a spectator, and yet, one may almost certainly believe, not without strong partisanship, Doña Leonor viewed from the Aljaferia or the Palace at Barcelona the progress of those events in the history of her husband's reign which occupied the whole of her life as Queen of Aragon. Those events were: "the long struggle with Castile; the war against Peter the Cruel by land and by sea; the alliance of Henry of Trastámara; the support of France; the intrigues with Navarre, and the three invasions of Spain by the bold-spirited pretender, who at length reigned as Henry II of Castile"; events which belong no less to the separate



ROYAL GATEWAY OF THE CONVENT, POBLET

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history of Aragon than to that of Spain as a whole. It was from one of these events, "the intrigues with Navarre," that the dark shadow which rests upon the memory of Doña Leonor, her vindictive and relentless persecution of her husband's favourite and her son's governor, Don Bernardo de Cabrera, took its rise. History gives no clue to the origin of the enmity, which may possibly be assigned to a woman's unreasoning jealousy of his ascendancy over her husband and her son. It was not until 1364, however, that the fatal opportunity presented itself for Doña Leonor to range herself openly on the side of Don Bernardo's avowed and dangerous enemies, the King of Navarre, the Count of Trastamare, and the Count of Ribagorza, who suspected Don Bernardo of a friendly attitude towards Castile which would, in the long run, prove disastrous to their own plans. The adhesion of the Queen was a most valuable asset for the conspirators, as through her they could hope to gain the ear of the King, whom it was necessary to convince of the disloyalty of his favourite. The plan of campaign was probably discussed at Sos, the scene, in March, 1364, of the memorable interview between the Kings of Aragon and Castile, in order to discuss the terms of a solemn pact of friendship, an interview at which we know Doña Leonor was present. From Sos the Court removed to Almudevar, where the Kings spent Holy Week. At dead of night, on Maundy Thursday, warning was conveyed to Don Bernardo by a friendly knight that his enemies had so far succeeded in traducing him to the King, that his very life was already in danger. The night passed in fear of assassination. At dawn, Don Bernardo sent word to the King's lodging, requesting an audience, but the answer—behind which we can trace the influence of Doña Leonor—was returned that Don Pedro was indisposed. The interview, however, was merely postponed. A later message summoned Don Bernardo to the royal presence, and there, at his master's knees, he implored the King to lend no credence to the accusations of his

calumniators, but to believe in his loyalty at all times. This said, Don Bernardo kissed the royal hand, and withdrew. On Good Friday, as the two Kings were proceeding to church for the office of the day, the King of Navarre and the two Counts made a fresh accusation against Don Bernardo. This time, it was a charge of being privy to a plot against their lives. On the threshold of the church, the King sent word by one of his household, Guillen Doz, to Don Bernardo to appear immediately before him, in order that he might be confronted with his accusers. The messenger, however, excused himself, on the plea of indisposition, and his errand was thereupon passed on to a knight named Garcia Lopez de Sese. The latter returned to inform the King that the bird had flown. By command of the King, the gates of Carcastillo, where he sought to take refuge, were closed against him, and, in spite of his appeal to Don Pedro, dated, in moving language, from that town on Easter Eve, he was conveyed, under guard, to the Castle of Murillo. Beguiled by a safe conduct on the part of the King of Navarre, the prisoner trusted to the good faith of the latter, only to be cruelly deceived. From the captivity of Murillo, he passed to that of Novales, whence he was taken to Barcelona, where he was cited to appear before the Queen, then acting as her husband's lieutenant during his absence on his wars. The charge of high treason which was brought against him was based on the flimsiest of proof, but it sufficed to bring him to the scaffold, for the Queen was set upon his destruction. By a refinement of cruelty, the young Duke of Gerona, in his capacity of Procurator-General of the Kingdom, was compelled to pronounce sentence of death on his former tutor and friend. It only remained for Doña Leonor to hurry on the execution with all speed, lest the return of the King might, even now, snatch her victim from her grasp. Her action was that of a woman perfectly mistress of herself, confident that it would not be called in question by a husband over whom her empire would henceforth be undisputed.

Don Bernardo was executed at the Toledo gate of Barcelona, and interred the same day in the Monastery of the Friars Minor of the city. Eight years after, we find Doña Leonor, urged, as the historian tells us, by the pangs of conscience, exerting her influence with signal success, for the restoration to his father's honours and estates of the son of Don Bernardo.

In the spring of 1367, Spain being at that time overrun by the bands of adventurers known as the Free Companies, Doña Leonor was travelling, not without some fear of encountering them, with her husband. It was necessary for the King to write a reassuring letter, however, before the Queen could be persuaded to commit herself to the perils of roads thus infested. The royal progress was, as usual, fatiguing in the extreme; it was interrupted on September 21, at Pina, where Doña Leonor was seriously ill for several days. Vexation of mind aggravated the ills of the body. Negotiations had begun for the marriage of her little daughter, Doña Leonor, with the heir to the throne of Castile, a marriage which she strenuously opposed, and which, indeed, was not concluded until after her death. This took place in 1374, at Barcelona, in the Palace near the House of the Templars. By her last will and testament, made June 12, she gave directions for her remains to be interred at Poblet, and named her son, the Infante Martin, as her universal legatee. She made bequests to her daughter-in-law, the Infanta Matha, wife of the Duke of Gerona, to the Infanta Juana, who was at once her stepdaughter and her brother-in-law's second wife, to her namesake niece, Doña Leonor, the daughter of her sister, Doña Blanca, of Sicily; an annuity of 12,000 sueldos being left to Don Juan de Peralta and his wife, Doña Leonor, her nephew and first cousin, as well as to Don Antonio and Don Luis de Aragon, the illegitimate sons of her brother, King Louis of Sicily, for whom she had found places in her household.

The only portrait extant of the third wife of Don Pedro IV is that which appears upon her seal, made for

her, by direction of the King, October 1, 1349, in a letter to Bernardo de Puig, keeper of the Queen's Seal. Framed in her escutcheons of Aragon and Sicily, the regal figure stands, in royal robes, wearing her consort's crown, her sceptre in the right hand and the orb in her left, a not unworthy presentment of one who was, " by the grace of God, Queen of Aragon, Valencia, Majorca, Sardinia, and Countess of Barcelona, Roussillon, and Cerdaña."

DOÑA SIBILIA DE FORCIA

In 1375, the thrice-widowed King of Aragon received the flattering and urgent offer of the hand of the celebrated Queen Joanna of Naples, who was so anxious to secure the alliance of Aragon that, in default of the father, she proposed the son, the Duke of Gerona, also newly bereft of a consort, as bridegroom. The proposal came too late. The elderly King was already in the toils of Sibilia de Forcia, the young, pleasure-loving, ambitious widow of a Don Artal de Forcia. It was an empire, as some have hinted, begun in the lifetime of Queen Leonor ; from the moment of her death, it was openly flaunted before the eyes of the Court, the King's subjects, and the Royal Family. Long before she had wrested from her infatuated royal lover the crown for which she had schemed by all the arts known to an unscrupulous and beautiful woman, she was virtual Queen of Aragon. Through her, and through her alone, might the highest or the lowest of Don Pedro's subjects hope to have their petitions granted. To have " Madama Sibilia " on his side was to be a lucky suitor. Thus we shall see the pure and noble wife and mother, Doña Matha d'Armagnac, making her suit, on her faithful servitor's behalf, to her father-in-law's mistress. It was not until October, 1377, the precise date being uncertain, that the marriage so ardently desired by Sibilia

de Forcia actually took place. The State papers of the period are notably silent on the event, nor are we told of the usual summons to gentle and simple to attend the ceremony. To all intents and purposes, it was a private wedding. "La Reyna Forciana," as she is contemptuously styled, blossoms forth in all her new splendour, for the first time, in a document dated November 2, 1377, in which the King names her by the title of Queen. There is abundant evidence that the Royal Family held themselves strictly aloof, not only from the marriage ceremony, but from the Court of the new Queen. The King was compelled to threaten with dire penalties certain defaulting and obstinate ladies who refused to form her household. Thus, he "prays and commands" a certain Doña Constanza de Aragon, a kinswoman of the Royal House, to proceed immediately to Court in order to attend upon the Queen. This lady was the wife of the famous Sir Hugh Calverley, who, with several more English knights of the Black Prince, "acquitted himself right nobly" at the Battle of Najera. The matrimonial differences which had arisen between Doña Constanza and her husband, causing the former to take refuge in the household of the Duke and Duchess of Montblanch, the King's son and daughter-in-law, seem to have suggested to Don Pedro the likelihood of a wife in such straits eagerly complying with his commands. But the sequel seems to show that neither by fear nor force was Doña Constanza to be induced to repair to Court. For the post that should have been a coveted one was next offered to another lady of the household of Maria de Luna, Doña Beneita Carroz, by whom it was also promptly declined. The difficulty of finding suitable companionship for Queen Sibilía was to be curiously solved. The education of the beautiful and overbearing Queen had been sadly neglected. She did not even know her alphabet! In order to remove this blot from the scutcheon, the King appeals to the Prioress of Sigena. Taking this great lady into his confidence, as befitted

one who enjoyed notable privileges, assisted at Cortes, royal audiences and alliances, he entreats her to send him two religious of her convent, " middle-aged, good nuns, decorous and discreet, to be with the Queen, to teach her to read, and to converse with her." Irony indeed that the Court of a young and pleasure-loving Queen should be composed of two staid, elderly, cloistered duennas ! But we should be forming an estimate altogether wide of the mark if we supposed that the illiterate and frivolous Queen viewed the coming of the ladies from Sigena with any misgiving. The religious life of her day, if we are to believe the testimony of Friar Eximenez, imposed no vow of poverty, such as it has been interpreted by more austere generations of monks and nuns. The ladies upon whom the choice of the Prioress would fall would shed lustre rather than gloom upon the palace to which they were summoned. They would appear in rich robes, embroidered with gold and silver, bedecked with rings, rosaries of coral and amber, and richer jewels than any secular. They would come, these instructresses of a Queen, to dazzle Barcelona with their ostentation, stepping mincingly in their pointed *chapines*,¹ their silken, gold-hemmed veils floating around them with shimmering grace, their waists clasped with girdles of pearls, their delicate linen and trailing garments redolent of odour of violet, musk, and orange-flower. In their hands, encased in jewelled gloves, they would carry their embroidered-covered books, or perhaps one of these little dogs which were frequent convent pets. The luxury of a Court

¹ The *chapine* was now much in fashion amongst women. This was a kind of clog or patten, the term, however, being sometimes applied to a sandal lined with leather. They seem to have been known in Spain considerably earlier than in England, where they were introduced from the Venetians, who in turn are said to have imported them from the East, which was probably the source of their adoption by mediaeval Spanish *élégantes*. Coryat describes the *chapines* which he saw in Venice as "so common that no woman whatsoever goeth without, either in her house or abroad ; it is a thing made of wood, and covered with leather of sundry colours, some with white, some with red, some yellow. Many of them are curiously painted ; some also of them I have seen fairly gilt. It is called a *chapiney*, which they wear under their shoes."

would be neither surprise nor snare to them, passing, as they would, from luxury to luxury, from cells which were sumptuously furnished with paintings, softly cushioned beds, and rich hangings, to apartments in a palace which would scarcely rival those they had left behind.

History is silent as to the progress of the royal pupil, whose mind was possibly frequently distracted by the rankling thought of the persistent aloofness of her husband's sons and daughters-in-law, as well as by the delay in the solemn ceremonies of her Coronation. She was to attain her desire in the first of these obstacles to her perfect pride in her exalted position by the notorious matrimonial suit of Brianda de Luna, sister of the wife of Don Martin, the King's second son, who for many years sought at the hands of the Church release from her marriage with Don Lope Ximenes de Urrea, in order that she might become the wife of Don Luis Cornel. The high rank of the suitors, and the nearness of some of them to the throne, invested this fourteenth-century *cause célèbre* with more than ordinary interest. The necessity for securing the royal protection for Doña Brianda, who was his sister-in-law, compelled Don Martin to gratify his stepmother's vanity and salve her wounded pride, by doing, as his father exacted, tardy homage to Queen Sibia. Although his elder brother was approached at the same time to the like end, and although he commended the action of his junior, having regard always to his desire to serve his sister-in-law, there seems to be small proof of Don Juan and Doña Matha ever having complied with the King's request that they should imitate the good example of Don Martin. It is to this determined attitude of Don Juan that we probably trace the bitter hatred of Queen Sibia for her elder stepson. It was to Doña Brianda, again, with whose matrimonial affairs the Cortes convoked at Zaragoza in 1380 were much concerned, that Queen Sibia owed the opportunity to urge upon her subservient husband the matter of her Coronation.

The splendour which marked this long-deferred realization of Sibilía de Forcia's highest ambition was equal, says Zurita, to that which characterized the accession of the King and the ceremonies of his first marriage. She was the second Queen of Aragon to be crowned, as related by Geronimo Blancas. The actual ceremonial of her stately progress through the brilliantly lighted and gaily decorated streets of Zaragoza, of her reception in the sacred fane of La Seo of the sacerdotal vestments, holy unction, and royal crown, differed, we may suppose, in no way from the order as observed on similar occasions in the lives of her sister-queens. At the banquet which followed, the King appears as troubadour, a *coplas* written by him in honour of his Queen being carried in the beak of the royal peacock which was brought in at the close of the repast, on a dish garnished with cloth of gold and silver, and accompanied by knights and pages and many stringed instruments. "To you, my brave Lady!" runs the poet's tribute, "to you, on this day of your great honour, I sing, according to the worthy custom of the great Courts of England and France." The King's own uncle as well as himself cultivated the "Arte de Trobar." Don Pedro IV was a generous patron of joglars, and to Pedro Cahac, "Master of a company of joglars," apparently in the permanent employment of the King, we find him granting a safe-conduct for the purposes of a journey into France.

Sibilía de Forcia, now at the summit of her ambition, might well have been content to trust the sure hand of time to reconcile her stepsons to their father's marriage. But hers was not the nobility of soul which might have impelled her to play the rôle of an Elisenda de Moncada. She chose, rather, to adopt, to her own ultimate undoing, that of Leonor of Castile, Queen of Alfonso IV. History was to repeat itself in the fatal part which Sibilía de Forcia took in the events of the closing years of her husband's reign. All that he had suffered in his boyhood at the hands of a stepmother, his son was to

endure at those of his fourth wife. Utterly at the mercy of her caprices and her unreasoning hatreds, completely subjugated by her beauty, Don Pedro joined hands with his consort in the persecution of his son and heir, a persecution provoked, there is little reason to doubt, by the stubborn refusal of the Duke and Duchess of Gerona, as we have seen, to bend the knee in homage before the new Queen. In this persecution, all who were loyal to the Duke were the enemies of the King and Queen. The fiercest attacks of the royal displeasure were directed against the Count of Ampurias, close kinsman of the Royal House, his first wife having been a sister of the King's third wife, Leonor of Sicily, and his second wife the King's own daughter, Juana, the only child of his first marriage. This noble gentleman, for no other crime than his devotion to the person of the Duke of Gerona, and his attendance at Don Juan's quiet wedding at Montpellier, drew down upon himself the relentless enmity of Sibilía de Forcia, and, as a consequence, of his sovereign. The story of that enmity is that of the war in the Ampurdan, which grew out of the private quarrel between the Count and Bernardo Alemany de Orriols, a kinsman of Queen Sibilía's, thereby affording a pretext for the latter to induce her consort to order the intervention of the royal troops in the dispute. Taking their war into the enemy's camp, the royal pair journeyed, in the autumn of 1384, to Figueras, taking at the same time the precaution, when the Court removed to Peralada, to lodge outside the town, in a palace of the Rocaberti family. Here occurred a tragic incident. The Countess of Ampurias, braving her royal father's anger, ventured into his presence, and flinging herself at his knees, implored him to restore her husband to his lost favour. It needed but a word from her all-powerful stepmother for her pitiful petition to be granted. That word, as we know, was unspoken. The King's answer to the audacious plea was a box on the ears, given in the presence of the whole Court, from the effects of which the unhappy

Infanta is said to have died. Shortly after, the incursion of bands of Gascons and Armagnacs, members of the famous Free Companies, then overrunning France and Spain, put King, Queen, and Court to flight, popular indignation assigning as the cause of this shameful retreat the witchcraft of the Queen. This was the first murmur of the storm which was to break a few years later on the head of the Ampurdanese, as she was called.

The hand of Sibilía de Forcia, again, may be clearly discerned in the summary decree of banishment from the kingdom pronounced by Don Pedro against Doña Constanza de Perellos, the devoted friend and companion of the Duchess of Gerona and the governess of her children, the Bishop of Vich, the Viscounts of Illa and Rocaberti, and Don Pedro de Artes, all guiltless of any crime whatsoever, save in being adherents of the heir to the throne and members of his household. That Doña Violante, indeed, recognized the hand of her husband's stepmother in the royal mandate is plain, if we are to judge from the spirited reply which she returned to it. Sooner than permit Doña Constanza to leave her service and company, wrote one who was more than a match for Sibilía de Forcia, to the King, she herself would quit the realm. And, as though to attach the lady in question more closely to her side, the Duchess proceeded to bestow her hand upon the widower Count of Ampurias, who had been the husband of the unhappy Infanta Juana, and son-in-law of the King. The malevolence of "La Reyna Forciana" was by no means diverted by such a check as this. On the contrary, she continued to instil, day by day, into her puppet husband's mind the poisonous thoughts against his son whereby she hoped to work Don Juan's ultimate ruin. Injury and insult were so heaped against the unoffending Duke and Duchess, that the former was at length compelled to place his cause in the hands of that all-powerful functionary, the Justiciary of Aragon, against whose mighty protection

even the evil will of Sibia de Forcia might not prevail. We shall read, indeed, in the history of Violante of Bar, of the last, cruel arrow which her inveterate enemy was able to wing against her, but it proved ineffectual, as all the rest had been. Sibia de Forcia's own time of reckoning was at hand. No sooner had the Duke of Gerona been pronounced out of danger from the illness which seriously threatened his life a few weeks before his accession, than the aged Don Pedro's long reign came to an end on December 29, 1387, at Barcelona. The King was still in his death-agonies, when his Queen sought, as Leonor of Castile—her model in this, as in so much else—had sought before her, safety from the new order which she had good cause to fear. Accompanied by her brother, Don Bernardo de Forcia, Berenger de Abella, Bartholome de Linos, the Count of Pallars, and a few faithful servants, she fled secretly from the Palace, creeping, as a fugitive, under cover of the night, from the scenes of her brief, imperious queenship. From his sick-bed, or rather, as it would seem, from his lingering convalescence, the new King, or, as is more likely, his consort, acted with vigour and decision. The Duke of Montblanch, Don Martin, younger brother of Don Juan, was ordered to proceed, with all possible speed, in pursuit of the fugitives, and to bring them promptly to justice. There was little doubt what their accusation would be. It was an accusation which, even without that preliminary murmur of the storm in the campaign of the Ampurdan, would have come very naturally to the mind of her royal accuser, preoccupied with and well versed in the occult arts; one against which, in that age, not even a crown, or kinship with it, was proof. It was the age of Eleanor Cobham, Duchess of Gloucester, "arrested," as we may read in English history, "of certain points of treason, and condemned to dwell as an outlaw in the Isle of Man, under the ward of Sir Thomas Stanley, Knight, and soon after were arrested as aiders and counsellors of the aforesaid Duchess Master Thomas Southwell, a Canon of St.

Stephen's Chapel at Westminster, Master John Hun, a man expert in necromancy, and a woman named Margery Quatermaine, the Witch of Eye, beyond Winchester. These persons did devise an image of wax, like unto the King, the which image they dealt with so that by their devilish incantations and sorcery, they intended to bring out of life little by little the King's person as they little by little consumed the image." The crime of which Queen Sibia was accused, and for which others of her fellow-criminals were to suffer the extreme penalty of the law, was, in fact, the practice of what is known, in all ages of the world's superstition, as sympathetic magic. "If it is wished to kill a person by this method," says Professor Frazer in his *Golden Bough*, "an image of him is made and then destroyed; and it is believed that, through a certain physical sympathy between the person and his image, the man feels the injuries done to the image as if they had been done to his own body, and when it is destroyed he must simultaneously perish." In the horrible formula of mediaeval black magic, special efficacy was ascribed to wax mixed with some drops of the Holy Oils or a fragment of the consecrated Wafer, or, failing these, with the hair or nail-parings of the marked victim. In order to accelerate his death, the image was slowly melted before the fire, or pierced with needles. *Envoûtement* (the name given to this particular form of sorcery) was a favourite method of getting rid of highly placed personages in the Middle Ages. "Spain," says Lea in his *History of the Inquisition*, "had been exposed to a peculiarly active infection of occultism. The fatalistic belief of the Saracens naturally predisposed them to the arts of divination; they cultivated the occult sciences more zealously than any other race, and they were regarded throughout Europe as the most skilled teachers and practitioners of sorcery." A priest named Pepin, accused in the fourteenth century of enchanting the Bishop of Mende by the aid of a wax image, confessed at his trial that he had gained his

knowledge of the practice from certain books which he found on his travels in Spain at Toledo and Cervera, the former city enjoying such an unenviable reputation in this connection that "the science of Toledo" was equivalent to the occult science. A handbook of magic arts written by the King of Majorca was specially quoted at the trial above-mentioned.

The charge of witchcraft, then, was as inevitable as it was obvious in the case of Sibilia de Forcia. The new King's mysterious malady, the headaches from which he suffered, were now sufficiently accounted for. It was not the first time that he had suspected certain "wicked persons" of "making images of wood and copper in the shape of a man with a crown on his head"—hence the headaches—nor Don Juan the only one of the Royal Family to be seized with a panic. The Queen writes post-haste to the bailiff of Lerida bidding him send her without delay a certain book entitled *Cigonina*, written by the Bishop of Lerida, and treating of the means to defeat the spells of witches, of which she is in urgent need. For further safeguard, Doña Violante sends, with equal urgency, for two *metgesses* (female doctors, or, if the truth may be set down, witches), from Oriola and Monistrol, to be brought without delay to the royal invalid.

Sibilia de Forcia, meanwhile, had been overtaken by the royal officers, and brought back to Barcelona, to meet the terrible charge formulated against her. It was, in point of fact, a twofold charge, that of working witchcraft against the persons of the late and the present sovereigns, her brother and other partisans being associated with her in the charge, and that, specially and separately alleged against the Queen, of having removed from the Palace prior to her flight certain valuables to which she had no legal claim. The result of the trial was a foregone conclusion. All those who had been unfortunate enough to share her flight were put to the torture, found guilty of conspiring with the Queen to injure the late King, as well

as to cast injurious spells over the new monarch, and condemned to death. It is said that she did not escape the rack; it is certain that she only saved her life by her terrified surrender to the King of all her possessions, Don Juan immediately conferring them upon his Queen, a pension of 25,000 sueldos only being settled upon Queen Sibilia, who was, moreover, granted the life of her brother, as well as the release of the Count of Pallars. She was, however, kept in such close and rigorous captivity that the Apostolic Legate, Cardinal de Luna, having visited her in her prison, interceded with the King on her behalf, and obtained from him such an exercise of royal clemency, "out of regard for the Legate and reverence for the Holy See," that her custody was committed to Berenger Barutell, her kinsman, in whose house outside the city she was permitted to take up her residence. To the lips of few of those who have drunk deep of the chalice of fortune has the cup of bitterness in turn been held in such overflowing measure as to those of Sibilia de Forcia. The height of her greatness was the measure of her abasement. That those whom she had pursued with all the relentless passion of a vindictive woman should have it in their power to strip her of all for which she had paid so heavy a price must have added gall to wormwood. That the woman from whom she had sought to tear child, friend, and faithful servants should, in the hour of her humiliation, be recompensed for all that she had made her suffer by the wealth which she had amassed by all the arts of which a clever and unscrupulous wife is capable, must have been the sharpest sting of that hour. Fear of torture and death removed, Sibilia de Forcia passed from her prison to virtual captivity in her kinsman's house; thence, within a short time, she gladly turned to the comparative liberty of the cloister, in the Franciscan Convent of Barcelona. The tide of the new reign swept on, and left her forgotten. Music and merry-making, royal marriages and great events, beat, like waves of an ocean on which she had made tragic ship-

wreck, on the walls which hemmed her in. Some of the bitterness of those seven years of her life in the cloister was carved and concentrated by the sculptor of her marble effigy into the still, cold face of the dead Queen, the crown which surmounts those mournful features being the sole symbol of her royalty, for she has exchanged her coronation robes for the austere habit of St. Francis.

There is evidence that, before her death, on whose intercession or by what chain of circumstances is not clear, Sibilía de Forcia was granted apartments in the Palace where she had once reigned in arrogant pomp and beauty; for we shall see the Queen, Violante, her successor, insisting, at the moment of the accession of Martin the Humane, when she was endeavouring to prolong her rule there by a fiction soon to be disproved, on the removal of Doña Sibilía from beneath the same roof. Sibilía de Forcia died November 24, 1407, having lived to see the accession of King Martin and the marriage of her own daughter, Doña Isabel, to James, last Count of Urgel, which took place at Barcelona on St. Peter's Day, 1407.

Bernat Metge, prince of mediæval satirists, never steeped his pen in more biting sarcasm than when he wrote of this Queen: "How often have I admired in her the handiwork of God, Who joined to a woman's body so valiant a soul!" while he goes on to praise her "energy, constancy, and courage!"

RÉSUMÉ OF CHAPTER IX

Don Pedro of Aragon, afterwards Pedro IV, betrothed to Doña Juana of Navarre, 1334.

Don Pedro marries her younger sister, Doña Maria, 1337.

Doña Maria enters Barcelona, 1338.

Birth of the Infanta Juana, 1344.

The King and Queen hold their Court at Perpignan, 1345.

Death of the Queen, after giving birth to a son, who only lived a day 1347.

Second marriage of the King to Doña Leonor of Portugal. Her death from the plague, 1348.

Third marriage of the King to Doña Leonor of Sicily, 1349.

Birth of Don Juan, created Duke of Gerona, 1351.

Betrothal of the King's daughter, Doña Constanza, to King Fadrique of Sicily, 1356.

Birth of Doña Leonor, daughter of the King, 1358.

Execution of Don Bernardo de Cabrera, by Queen Leonor's orders, 1364.

The Free Companies in Aragon, 1367.

Death of Queen Leonor, 1374.

Marriage of Don Pedro and Doña Sibilía de Forcia, 1377.

Coronation of Doña Sibilía, 1380.

Death of Don Pedro, 1387.

Death of Doña Sibilía, 1407.



COURTYARD AND STAIRCASE, ARCHIVO DE ARAGON

CHAPTER X

DOÑA MATHA D'ARMAGNAC

FATE, which was to deal so hardly with the matrimonial destinies of the eldest son of Pedro the Ceremonious, gave early presage of its sinister intentions towards him. It was, says Zurita, "in order to put an end to a prolonged and terrible war"—open, as well as secret, hostilities between Aragon and France having lasted for several years—that King Pedro at length decided to seek, as so many of his dynasty had sought before him, a bride for his heir who should be angel and ambassadress of peace to her adopted country. The wily diplomat's choice could not have been bettered when it fell upon Jeanne de Valois, daughter of Philip VI of France and his second wife, Blanche, daughter of Philip d'Evreux, King of Navarre. There can be little doubt that, had not fate intervened, "Madama Juana de Francia," as she is styled in the annals of Aragon, would have ranked in those annals with Blanche of Anjou, the "Lady of Holy Peace." She was a princess, declare her contemporaries, "endowed, not only with remarkable beauty, but with many excellent virtues; whilst in no other kingdom could such a bride have been found for the Duke of Gerona, whose equal she was, not only in age, but by birth." No hint of shadow fell across the pathway by which the ambassadors of the King of Aragon, Mossen Berenger de Abella, and Lope de Gurrea, that fidus Achates of the Royal Family, travelled to France on their high errand, the signing of the marriage contract. The Duke of Gerona, meanwhile, awaited the conclusion of their mission at Zaragoza, where, on December 17,

1370, the city, ever keenly at one with all the events in the lives of its sovereign lords—coronations, marriages, births, and deaths—voted a generous grant towards the expenses of the wedding festivities. These, alas, were destined never to illuminate the page on which they should have been inscribed. Stricken down with mortal illness on her journey to Catalonia, escorted by a splendid retinue, the young bride of whom such high hopes had been entertained, and for whom such an exalted destiny seemed to be reserved, passed away at Beziers, to the great grief of her own country and that of her bereaved bridegroom. Stranger though she was to him, save by report, it would seem as though the twenty-year-old Prince, afterwards to be, as Don Juan I, patron of poets and “lover of gentillesse,” mourned sincerely for his shattered romance. It was not until two years later that the trusty Lope de Gurrea was once more despatched to France in search of a successor to the lost Princess who was the heroine of that romance. He found her in Marthe, or Matha—as she is styled in Spanish history—daughter of Jean I, Comte d’Armagnac, and Béatrix de Clermont. The marriage was solemnized by proxy, Lope de Gurrea acting as the Duke’s representative, March 6, 1373, at the Château of Lectoure, the seat of the Lords of Armagnac, who had made of it one of the most strongly fortified castles of mediaeval times in that region. Doña Matha’s brother, Jean II, had by this time succeeded to his father’s countship, and it is he who promises the bride her dowry of 100,000 golden florins, authorizing her to hold in pledge the Viscounty of Auvillars until the stipulated sum had been paid. One item only in the bridal inventory has come down to our knowledge, that sumptuous bedstead, namely, which was to pass, as an heirloom, to her as yet unborn daughter, the Infanta Juana, on her marriage to Mathieu, Comte de Foix.

This Aragonese Infanta may well be styled “The Princess of the Bedstead,” so notable a piece of furniture was the bed in question, judging from the detailed

description which has come down to us in the Archives of the Crown of Aragon. The canopy was of velvet, worked with a design of lions, horses, and doves in gold thread. The counterpane, lined with green cloth, was of the same material and similarly embroidered. There were three pieces of blue silk for curtains, with rings and cords complete; three cushion-covers of blue velvet, with the design of the canopy and counterpane repeated—with these, linen covers were provided, to be slipped on when the cushions were not in use. There was a cloth—used sometimes as a chair-cover—with blue velvet and gold bars on a red ground, and another, similar and smaller, for a smaller chair. There were linen sheets, some exquisitely embroidered with gold thread and silk, five more blue velvet-covered cushions, stuffed with feathers, three coverlets of blue wool, five carpets and three pieces of tapestry accompanying the bed-furniture, besides a red leather coverlet of Morocco workmanship, with the arms of Aragon and Armagnac, the latter device also appearing on a woollen coverlet.

Light thrown in recent times upon the first Duchess of Gerona through the medium of royal correspondence unearthed from the Archives of the Crown of Aragon acquaints us with a wholly lovable personality, worthy in all respects to rank with that possible ancestress of hers, the Demoiselle d'Armagnac, who was, declares her troubadour, "the most gracious creature that ever existed"; and most worthy, assuredly, to be lamented, as was Doña Teresa de Entenza, in her untimely end. Doña Matha, as her letters and those of others concerning her show her to have been, was a loving wife, a tender mother, an affectionate sister, one who never lost touch with, or interest in, the elder ties and claims of her own kindred. With her husband's people, she was on excellent terms. She was affectionately remembered in her mother-in-law, Queen Leonor's last will and testament; her wily old father-in-law, Don Pedro, laid his warm tribute to her virtues on her

grave; she was in constant correspondence with her husband's brother and sister-in-law, Don Martin and Doña Maria de Luna, and with his aunt, the Countess of Urgel. But it is between the lines of her letters to her brother, the Comte d'Armagnac, and to her sister, Jeanne, who had been married to the famous and cultured Jean, Duc de Berry, in 1364, that we read of the woman as she was. Confident that nothing which befalls her or hers is too trivial to be set down, her heart for ever cries out from the written page for news of those who are so near and dear to her still, in spite of the newer claims which have arisen since they parted. Tidings of them, and how they fare, whether it be the brother in his castles of Lectoure or of Auvillars, or the sister, in her Duchy of Berry, never fail to bring "great comfort to her heart." It is sad to reflect that tidings of death so often and so swiftly succeeded those of birth in the nursery news which passed so regularly between Gerona and Lectoure. For that shadow of fatality which was to culminate two reigns later in the total extinction in the male line of dynasty of the ancient Counts of Barcelona fell with sinister recurrence across the cradles of the children of the Duke and Duchess of Gerona. Doña Matha bore five children to her husband; only one of them survived her. Her eldest son, born at Valencia on St. John's Eve, 1374, was warmly welcomed by the whole of the royal family. The King, on learning of the birth of his grandson, sent his congratulations to the young father, wishing the child a long life—a wish, unhappily, not destined to be fulfilled. The hope is repeated in a letter from Don Pedro to his "dear daughter," in which he trusts that the little Infante may grow up in all honour and enjoy good fortune. The span between the letters of the proud and happy young mother, announcing her gladness to her "dear sister, the Duchesse de Berry," and to her "very dear brother, the Comte d'Armagnac," is tragically small. The baby Prince, who was given the name of Jaime, survived his birth but two months,

dying on August 17, 1374. A Princess, named Juana (afterwards Countess of Foix), was born at Daroca, October, 1375. Berenger de Sarta, prothonotary, is charged to give the King news of his granddaughter. We are to meet her in another reign. A son, Juan, was born at Gerona, July 23, 1376, but died in August of the same year. A son, Alfonso, was born and died in September, 1377. Last of all, a little daughter, born July 14, 1378, only lived to be baptized by the name of Leonor, the fever from which Doña Matha had been suffering prior to the child's birth, as she pathetically explains in her letters to her relatives, being accountable for her loss. It was somewhere between the birth of these, her two youngest children, that we must place the letter addressed by Doña Matha to "Our beloved and noble Madoña Sibilia de Forcia"—a letter for which some have been inclined to judge the writer somewhat harshly. Sibilia de Forcia, not yet the openly acknowledged fourth wife of Don Pedro IV, was already, however, queening it over the infatuated King, intervening, as Señor Sanpère y Miquel writes, "between the King and his vassals, between the King and his family, between the father and his sons." No petition, adds the same authority, had a chance of being granted unless it first passed through Madoña Sibilia's hands, whether the petitioner were a wretched serf, or the heir to the throne himself. Who were better able to judge of these facts than the Duke and Duchess themselves? None were better aware than they that if their well-beloved and trusty majordomo, Mossen P. Boyl, is to obtain the reward which his royal master and mistress seek for him at the King's hands, it must be through Madoña Sibilia. It is not disrespect, therefore, to the memory of Queen Leonor (whom, Court gossip averred, the fascinating widow of Don Artal de Forces had already supplanted before the death of the former) that compels Doña Matha to entreat Madoña Sibilia to use her influence with the King to induce him to bestow well-merited and practical recognition upon his son's

faithful servitor. The flattered intermediary loses no time in exerting her influence, as requested—the request itself, coming, as it does, from a source so near the throne, constituting a triumph. Mossen P. Boyl duly receives his gift of 80,000 sous, the King (at Madoña Sibilia's dictation, doubtless) letting it be known that he grants his daughter-in-law's petition in consideration of the affectionate letter addressed by the Duchess to Madoña Sibilia, and of the intercession of the latter. An acknowledgment of the favour shown to Mossen Boyl, and of the part played by Madoña Sibilia in the affair, closes communication between them; a year later, Doña Matha passed away at Zaragoza, in October, 1378. Her remains were temporarily interred in the city which should have been the scene of her Coronation, but four years later we find the faithful Lope de Gurrea, who had promised her a crown, on his master's behalf, at Lectoure, charged by Don Pedro to superintend the removal of the Infanta's coffin to Poblet. There, in course of time, her husband was also laid to rest; and it is upon a final vision of infinite charm and pathos that the unknown sculptor of her effigy bids us turn our gaze—on one side of the dead monarch, as he then was, sleeps his Queen, Violante of Bar, proudly robed in dalmatic, with the regal diadem on her head; on the other, Doña Matha, “your humble companion, the Duchess”—as she was wont to sign herself—simply robed, a garland of flowers on her head, and the crown she never wore in her marble hands.

It is unlikely that the death of wife and sister-in-law severed the friendly relations between Don Juan and the Duc de Berry. In their love of culture, both Princes had much in common. They exchanged friendly letters. One from the Duke of Gerona to the French Prince conveys the request for a couple of hunting dogs, “as we take great delight in such sport.” While a curious light is thrown upon one of the superstitions of their time by the Duke of Gerona's present to his wife's brother-in-law of a bezoar stone, warranted to protect

the possessor against all ills, more especially against danger of poisoning. The Oriental bezoar stone, to which such fabulous virtues were attributed in mediæval times that it was worth ten times its weight in gold, was the morbid secretion found in the intestines of certain ruminant animals.

DOÑA VIOLANTE OF ARAGON (YOLANDE OF BAR)

Yolande of the noble House of Bar, whose name was afterwards changed, in her adopted country, to that of Violante, making her, in consequence, the second Queen thus named in the history of Aragon, entered her husband's family, as sometimes happened then, as now, to ladies of lesser rank, as an unwelcome daughter-in-law. Pedro the Ceremonious, whose own fourfold marriage ventures had given him some skill in manipulating politic alliances for his children, had had other plans for his eldest son and heir, whose recent loss of his first wife, Doña Matha d'Armagnac, had seemed to Don Pedro a direct interposition of whatever force he regarded as providential in the furtherance of a cherished design. The affairs of Sicily, always of sinister import in those of Aragon, were once more asserting their ancient influence. Fadrique, King of the island kingdom, had died in 1377, leaving by his wife, Constanza, daughter of Pedro IV, a daughter, Maria, whom the Pope, setting aside in her favour a Salic tradition, declared lawful heiress to her father's crown. Opposition at once arose from Aragon, Don Pedro intimating to the Holy See that he could not accept such a violation of the will of the late King of Sicily, whereby it had been plainly stipulated that, failing male issue, his crown should pass into the hands of the King of Aragon. Don Pedro proceeded to follow up his ultimatum by his personal departure, in 1378, with several ships conveying a numerous suite, to take possession of his new territory. In the vain hope of

averting the civil war which seemed imminent, the Catalan party in Sicily being as powerful as that of the Sicilians, the young Queen's guardian, Don Artal de Alagon, offered her hand to Giovanni Galeozzo, a nephew of the Duke of Milan. The King of Aragon retaliated by despatching Gilbert de Cruilles, one of his most daring captains, with five ships, to intercept and burn those which were being prepared to convey the noble bridegroom to Sicily. The next move in the game at which Don Pedro had never yet been beaten was to find a husband for the Queen who should once for all secure her inheritance for the descendants of the wily monarch. Grievous, therefore, as was the loss of a good wife, the death of the first Duchess of Gerona could not have happened more opportunely. The very lines which convey the old King's condolences with his son, craftily intimate that he may, if he will, find speedy consolation in the arms of a bride, "pleasing to God, and agreeable to Us." But Don Juan, a widower at twenty-eight, is no longer the pliable boy for whom his father has already chosen two brides. He will have none of the marriage which is thus proposed to him. In any case, his heart and fancy alike had already been taken captive by a prior attachment. The youth, the beauty, the gaiety of Yolande, daughter of Robert, Duke of Bar, and niece of Charles the Wise, King of France, played havoc with Don Pedro's plans. Eventually, as we shall see, the cunning old matchmaker gained his point, however, by marrying the heiress of Sicily to his grandson, Martin the Younger, the son of the King's second son, Martin, Duke of Montblanch.

The marriage of Don Juan and Violante of Bar took place at Montpellier in February, 1380, without any of the stately rejoicings which were customary on similar occasions, and unattended by any members of the royal family save the Infante, Don Martin, his sister, Doña Juana, and her husband, the Count of Ampurias, both of whom were to pay dearly for thus braving the King's anger.

We, to whom the picture of Doña Violante queening it over the Courts of Love of which both she and her husband were such generous patrons is familiar, find it difficult, perhaps, to accept another, less familiar, but at least as true, of Violante, the Niobe of Aragon. For it was to be her lot, as it had been that of her predecessor, Doña Matha, to weep often over the empty cradles in her palace nurseries. Child after child was she to welcome to her hungering arms, only to feel them slip from her passionate hold; whilst she was to taste, above all, the crowning bitterness and mortification of a Queen—of never having borne an heir who should have survived to wear his father's crown. The eldest child of the Duke and Duchess of Gerona—"our most dear daughter, the Infanta Violante"—was born at Barcelona, August 11, 1381, and baptized on the 21st of the same month, her sponsors being the Master of Montesa and the Countess of Cardona. This Princess, betrothed at the age of eleven to Louis II, Duke of Anjou and King of Sicily, became his wife in 1400. The second child of the Duke and Duchess of Gerona was Don Jaime, created at his birth, on March 23, 1384, Dauphin of Gerona, a household being assigned to "the illustrious Infante," as his mother styles him in her letters, "my and my Lord Duke's very dear son." It was through this child, of great promise and of many hopes, that the malice of Sibilía de Forcia was able to wing a secret, though happily futile shaft against her detested stepson and his wife. In 1387, when the little Prince was only three years old, his father lay upon what seemed to be his death-bed. We cannot doubt that it was "La Reyna Forciana" who inspired the letter which the King, upon learning of his son's illness, immediately despatched to the jurats of Gerona, commanding them to take into their custody forthwith, and to deliver into the safe keeping of the royal officials, the little Don Jaime, in order that, as that master of statecraft chose to add, for excuse of his cold-blooded conduct, in the event of the apparently imminent demise of his father,

he should be removed from the guardianship of his mother, to be brought up under his grandfather's personal supervision. Doña Violante, however, was to be spared this cruel insult and injustice. Neither death nor treachery was to rob her of both husband and child. The former, in spite of his delicate constitution, rallied from his serious illness. The latter was to be spared to her for a few months longer. Towards the end of June, 1388, however, there is a note of mournful presage in his mother's letters (she was now Queen of Aragon, her father-in-law having died in the previous year). The much-loved boy began to sicken; then seemed to improve in health; on August 21 he died. This "sinister and most grievous event" called forth the most affectionate sympathy from the whole of the royal family, while the King of Castile sent Friar Toribio to the Court of Aragon with a special mission to endeavour to assuage, with Divine consolations, the bereaved mother's terrible grief. The Queen, in turn, though expressing her gratitude for his kindly words and thought, bids him remember, in touching language, that she is but a weak woman, and therefore not lightly to be comforted in the face of the appalling calamity that has overtaken her. Poignancy, it may be, was added to her sorrow by the reflection that her over-exertion at a ball in 1386 had frustrated her hopes of giving birth to a child whose sex she had so confidently counted upon that, in a letter to one of her relatives, announcing the disappointment of her expectations, couched in the primitively outspoken fashion of her day, she names it Carlos, as she had intended it to be named in the event of its birth. It was not until the following year, 1389, that, on May 18, at Monzon, whilst the Cortes were assembled in that town, Doña Violante gave birth to the anxiously awaited heir to the throne of Aragon. The child, who was named Fernando, and who had for sponsors his uncle, Martin, Duke of Montblanch, Hugo, Count of Cardona, and the Prioress of Sigena, did not live to attain to his august inheritance; he

died in October of the same year. A little Infanta, named Antonia, born September 25, 1391, died May 31, 1392, the Court mourning for her death causing the postponement till June of the wedding festivities of her stepsister, Doña Juana. Another little Princess, Leonor, born January 2, 1393, died in the following July. On January 14, 1394, Doña Violante gave birth, at Valencia, to her sixth child, upon whom were bestowed the names Pedro, Brigido (from his mother's great devotion to St. Bridget), and Hilario. His godparents were Pedro de Abella, "a poor man of noble origin," of Montserrat, and "a poor woman." The little Infante did not long survive his birth, and on April 21, 1395, we hear the unhappy mother imploring the Prior of the Monastery of Scala Dei to pray God to give her a son. The seventh and last child of Violante, however, proved to be a daughter, born April 3 or 4, baptized by the name of Juana, and died August 4 of the same year, 1396. The Queen, writing to acquaint her cousin, the King of Navarre, with this last stroke, says she is "full of grief and sadness, lasting all day." Had this child proved to be the heir for whom we listen to her across the centuries besieging the very gates of Heaven itself with passionate petitions, the doom of extinction of the Catalan dynasty might yet have been averted. But it was not to be.

Dismissing the mournful image which we have conjured up, of Doña Violante as the Niobe of Aragon, we retrace our steps to the better-known and splendid queenship of this Lady of the Courts of Love.

In 1387, the death of Pedro the Ceremonious had called his heir, Don Juan I, and his consort, Violante, to reign over a Court and household which, thanks to the ever-rising tide of commercial prosperity and the influx of all the arts and industries of the world's markets, together with the fussy fastidiousness which had characterized the rule of the Formalist King, had now reached a climax of unrivalled pomp and luxury. While her husband was attended at home and abroad by an army

of counts, barons, and grandees of every rank, no great lady in the land was missing from the household of Doña Violante.

The Court of the Kings of Aragon in the Middle Ages consisted of persons entitled by birth or authority to surround the royal persons. The chief of these functionaries was the majordomo, who was the head of the household, and sometimes styled the Primate of the Palace. Under this functionary, a whole army of lesser officials discharged their multifarious duties. Such were the stewards, who looked after the domestic arrangement of the Palace, the Counts of the Palace, comprising Counts of the notaries, the stables, the spurs, the treasury, and the cupbearers; cellarers, pantlers, equerries, grooms, doorkeepers, prefects of the cellars, scribes; besides the particular guards for the King's person—*mesnaderos*, *ballesteros de maza*, and *monteros de España*, the latter office still hereditary in the royal household in Spain. Of no less importance in the Palace was the Alcalde of the pages, a functionary whose office it was to train the young gentlemen in his care in all knightly exercises, it being then the custom for both sons and daughters of the great families of the kingdom to be brought up at Court, or in the castles of the chief nobles, thus creating strong ties of dependence and vassalage between the throne and its subjects. The Courts of the Queens and Infantas were similarly composed.

On Mondays the King gave public audience to his subjects, on Tuesday and Friday he transacted business of state, the other four days of the week being at his own disposal and pleasure.

The passion of the Queen for dancing, music, and dress was reflected in the ceaseless round of gaiety which formed the daily life of the Palace, with its household of no less than 287 persons. The Queen, writing to the Abbess of Sigena, apropos of a forthcoming interview between the Aragonese and French sovereigns, is pre-occupied, less with the political significance of such a

meeting, than with her almost frenzied search in every direction for the costliest fabrics for her own and her ladies' dresses; although she admits that it is not enough to be attended by a train of noble ladies, exquisitely attired and dowered with beauty, unless their wisdom and discretion correspond with their outward appearance. To supply what may be lacking among her household in this respect, Doña Violante beseeches the Abbess and one or two of her nuns to accompany the royal party.

The royal family divided their time every year between the different parts of their dominions, occupying, in the larger towns, the royal palaces, or, in the smaller ones, lodging at a monastery, or even in a private house. Torroella de Montgri, in the north-east of Catalonia, was one of the favourite residences of the Kings of Aragon, especially in the reigns of Don Jaime I, Don Jaime II, and Don Juan I, the latter of whom set forth, on his last fatal hunting expedition, from the walls, of which but few remnants remain at the present day. The castle of Torroella, known as "El Mirador," commanded magnificent views of the surrounding country, whilst its luxuriant orchards and spacious gardens were the setting, in the days of Doña Violante of Bar, for many a stately and splendid fête. The winter was usually spent by the royal family in Valencia and Murcia, that is to say, from November to February. The Palace of the Kings of Aragon at Valencia, formerly the Palacio del Real, now bears the name of Palacio Real. March, April, and May were spent in Aragon, June to October in Catalonia.

No royal or noble household at this date was considered complete without the addition of one or more black slaves, whose ebony skins were thought to add fairness, by contrast, to the complexions of the great ladies upon whom they waited. The households of Doña Violante, Doña Maria de Luna, and Doña Sibilia de Forcia undoubtedly included several of these dusky attendants, who were frequently bestowed, as a horse,

a jewel, or other valuable gift might be, upon a royal favourite. Merchants trading with the East found this human part of their consignments quite as profitable as the spices, the silks, and other freights which their ships brought from the Orient to the slave-markets of Perpignan and Barcelona. Doña Violante writes to Francisco Casages, a merchant of Barcelona, to send her by some trustworthy person the slaves she has commissioned him to purchase for her, together with the cloth of gold, silk, and pearls, which seem to have formed part of her order, and which, she was given to understand, had now duly come to hand. Don Juan I sends to the East for "a black slave of about nineteen or twenty years of age," as he sends for carpets, balsam, nuts, and preserved fruits.

A favourite form of indoor amusement was that of *titereros* (in modern spelling, *titiriteros*), or marionettes, an entertainment which was of Italian origin. Items relating to the "stage-carpenter's" requirements for the construction of these puppets appear in early Household Accounts of the Kings of Aragon, the list including "cloth of Brittany," or canvas, pine boards, nails, wire, quires of paper, glue, sheepskins (probably for the costumes), gold and silver leaf chalk and crystal stones (for the eyes?), white wax, and paints, German blue, indigo, vermilion, and ochre. Marionettes were not only, however, a luxury of the Court, but a municipal institution, and the master of the marionettes, who travelled through the country with his little wooden castle or fortress and his manikins packed away in his mule-cart, shared with acrobats, tumblers, jugglers, and rope-walkers the patronage of the crowds at fairs or in the public thoroughfares, his *répertoire* generally consisting of the lives of the saints and romance heroes.

The morris-dance and masked buffoon were as well known at the Court of Aragon as elsewhere in mediaeval Europe, while here, too, the yellow livery and cap and bells of the Court jester flashed and tinkled among the jewels and brocade of the lords and ladies whom he

moved to merriment with his witty sallies. "Ugliness and deformity," says one writer, "were as much a recommendation in a fool, as intelligence in a monkey, beauty of plumage in a peacock, or chatter in a parrot." Aragon's most famous Court jester, "Master," or "Director of the Buffoons," as he was styled, was Antonio Tallander, better known by his sobriquet of "Mossen Borrà," who is said to have entered the service of King Martin in 1397, and who, in addition to his office of entertainer at the Courts of this sovereign and at least two of his successors, Fernando I and Alfonso V, served the latter monarch as ambassador to the Court of the Emperor Sigismund, and corresponded familiarly with both the King and his consort, Maria of Castile. The royal family loaded this fortunate mummer with favours. Don Fernando begs his eldest son to stand sponsor for "the fine boy" of "Mossen Borrà" and his wife, whom we know to have been Inez de Collell, daughter of Mateo and Brunesda de Collell, of Vich, King Martin having bestowed 600 golden florins, on the occasion of the marriage, upon "that faithful servant of our house," "Mossen Borrà." Alfonso V gave him a Tartar slave, and out of his large royal benefactions, he prudently purchased house-property, and rose to be a well-to-do citizen of Barcelona.

The dining-hall or Hall of *Tinell* (open house in Catalan) of the Palace of the Kings of Aragon at Barcelona must be sought to-day beneath the roof of the Convent of St. Clare in that city, of which it forms the nave. To this site of changed uses and many memories we must transport ourselves if we are to reconstruct the picture of the royal meal-times in mediaeval Aragon. At dawn, the Palace sweepers, chosen, we are told, for their youth and nimbleness, and responsible for the sweeping and watering of the noble apartment, duly fulfilled their task. Should the day be one of festival, Christmas, Easter, or Whitsuntide, or the Feast of the patron saint of the city, the walls must be hung with the splendid tapestries kept in reserve for such occasions.

On ordinary occasions, the walls were left bare. As the hour of dinner, usually about one o'clock, approached, the twelve porters whose office it was to be on duty at the outer doors, together with the *ballesteros*, twenty in number, appointed to guard the inner doors, took up their stand. Music summoned the royal family to table, generally provided by four *joglars*, two trumpeters, and one taborer,¹ silence, however, being enjoined upon these instrumentalists on Fridays, during Lent, or in time of war. In striking contrast to the lavish succession of dishes served at the royal table on festive and ceremonial occasions, the ordinary fare was exceedingly simple; generally two dishes at dinner and one at supper. In winter poultry appeared daily; in summer, chicken. On three days in the week, one dish was to be cooked in water, the other with butter. Metge satirizes the gourmands who must have their "fat capons cooked on the spit, with a spicy sauce, partridges, pheasants, fat thrushes, pigeons, and quails." Ancient writers give the palm, above all other dishes, as supremely fit for a king's table, to the peacock, *mirrauste*, and *manjar blanco*, each of which, such writers declare, should be crowned with a royal crown. Of the first of these it is unnecessary to speak in detail; the second appears to have been a kind of *timbale* compounded sometimes of meat or poultry, sometimes of fruit; the third, still known in Spain and Portugal, was a confection of the breast of fowl, mixed with sugar, milk, and rice-flour, almond, ginger, and rose-water. The patriarchal solicitude with which the subjects of the Kings of Aragon supervised and checked their lords' household expenses extended to the choice of the royal menu. The Court physician, who was presumed to know more about the royal constitution than his cooks, not only occupied a place of honour at the

¹ Our own Kings had their retinue of minstrels in the Middle Ages. At the Court of Edward III were five trumpeters, one citoler, five pipers, one tabouretter, two clarion-players, one nakerer, one fiddler, and three "waits." Margaret, Queen of Edward I, had her citharista and her *istrío*.



TWO WINDOWS. CONVENT OF SANTA CLARA, BARCELONA

table, but had, before sitting down to dinner, exercised his office of taster of the meats, vegetables, and bread. This important functionary further advised or vetoed certain foods according to the good or evil influence which they were popularly supposed to have upon those who partook of them. Thus, "rice and pulse were much esteemed," we are told, "in Spain for soup," probably on medical advice, while cabbages, aubergines, and olives were to be partaken of sparingly at the royal table, as they were supposed to cause melancholy! Rocket caused headache, and obscured the sight, beans caused loss of memory, and mushrooms were equally harmful! Onions, leeks, borage, pumpkins, parsley, mint, cress, celery, and fennel were accounted excellent for the digestion, and were specially advised on fast-days. On these days, says Eximenis, the ecclesiastical satirist of the thirteenth century, the fare at royal and noble tables was of the most delicate kind, pancakes, choice fish, not dressed with garlic and onions, but served with dried fruits, almonds, pine-kernels, rice in almond cream, and pine paste. Sauces were much used, rose-water figuring in all, though sorrel-juice was frequently employed.

The royal larder was abundantly stocked from the markets, mountains, streams, and orchards of Catalonia. Fowls, capons, turkeys, peacocks, pigeons, geese, ducks, thrushes, partridge, and pheasant; venison; the far-famed trout of many a storied river; all these abounded, while the gardens around the city and beyond it were a veritable granary of the gods. The mediaeval dessert in bygone Barcelona must have been as goodly to the sight as it was luscious to the taste. Old Estefan Corbera paints their teeming splendour for us who come so long after. Peaches of Balaguer and Solfera, pears of Puigcerda, almonds of Urgel, chestnuts of Vich and Canpreda, oranges, limes, lemons, citron and quinces of Barcelona, figs and pine-kernels, of which the mediaeval confectioner fashioned a confection not unlike the nougat for which the pine-cone gatherers in

the pine region of Spain of to-day may still be seen collecting.

The various sweets which were so important an item of the mediaeval courses were usually prepared by the Court apothecary, who in turn delivered them to the special functionary charged with their presentation at the royal table. Occasionally, however, a local confectioner was patronized, as, for instance, during the reign of Don Juan I, when an order was given to a certain Catorra, confectioner, of Barcelona, to send to the Palace a quantity of metheglin and *alojas*, for which, as Catorra seemed to demur as to executing the order, pending the settlement of his account, the Queen gave her royal word to hold herself responsible. The King again gave orders, October 22, 1388, to a certain Juan de Monlus, to bring him from Alexandria, together with balsam, carpets, nuts and apples, preserved fruits.

Clove, nutmeg, pepper, ginger, and aniseed were the favourite table spices, while under the name of *alimbares* we find the mediaeval preserved fruits, lemon, melon, pumpkin, peach, citron, and pine-kernel. The sweetmeats of Montpellier, Valencia, and Alexandria; raisins, almonds, pistachio nuts, with a little honey, were commonly served at the Aragonese royal table, together with cheesecakes and the famous quince marmalade of Valencia.

Other favourite sweets were those known as *matafaluga* and *camalma*, the former made from carraway seeds, and the latter from pomegranate seeds mixed with almonds and pine-kernels. We also read of "Turks' heads" and "angels' throats," while the "marchpane with a royal escutcheon," the "compote of quinces," and the "violet-coloured custards," of which we may read in the banquets of our own Kings in mediaeval times, were probably not missing from those of their Spanish contemporaries.

At the close of the repast, spiced drinks and wafers or little cakes were served. These drinks, known as *alojas*, included hydromel, metheglin, honey-water,

and hippocras. Arnaldo de Villanova, a famous physician and alchemist of the thirteenth century, gives the following recipe for nectar: cinnamon, ginger, clove, pepper, sugar, honey, and musk. From Mr. Emerson's interesting book on *Beverages* it may be gathered that modern Spain comes no whit behind mediaevalism in the preparation of fascinating and cooling drinks. The very names recall, in many instances, their antiquity. Such are *mistela*, compounded of red wine, sugar, honey, and water; *carraspada*, made from red wine and honey; *mevoja*, honey boiled with water, and then allowed to ferment; *aguamiel*, which is hydromel; *apomeli*, made from honeycomb which has been placed in water; *murinna*, still drunk in the south of Spain, spiced and aromatized, as at mediaeval tables; while the modern celery liqueur, orange and barley water, possibly had their ancient counterparts in Aragon.

Food without sauces was served on trenchers (*tajadors*), those which were liquid or had sauces in bowls or porringers (*escudillas*), which were often of gold. The drinking vessels were of various graceful and curious shapes, the *hanap* predominating. These were sometimes made of wood, with the foot of silver, the cover enamelled with a fleur-de-lis or other device. The salt-cellars were an important table ornament, often in the shape of a little ship. If very large they were pushed along the table on small wheels, and furnished with a cover and key. When the guests were numerous, salt-cellars made of breadcrumbs were placed at intervals on the table. Crystal salt-cellars, on silver feet, set with pearls, figured on the table of King Martin and Queen Maria de Luna.

Don Juan I, weakly in constitution, but active in mind, was greatly addicted to music and the pleasures of the chase. No Court in Europe, save perhaps that of France, possessed such expert falcons, the Chief Falconer having as many as twenty-one called for by the King on his hawking expeditions, while the hunting forays of the Court were on a scale of unexampled magnificence.

As a lover of books, and a collector of rare and curious objects of art, Don Juan had no rival in his times, except his brother-in-law, Jean, Duc de Berry. The world has scarcely ever seen so intellectual a Court as that of this monarch. It would seem, indeed, if we are to accept the picture drawn for us by Bernat Metge, as if it had been cumbered with culture. Here, Bernat Descoll, the chronicler, was treasurer and chancellor; Antonio Vilaregut, the majordomo, translated Seneca in the intervals of his high office; Domingo Mario wrote dramatic poetry, whilst acting as vice-chancellor; Père Dartès compiled a treasury; the Queen's confessor, Friar Antonio Canals, translated *The Decameron*; the very "Sobrecoch" (who held an office between the majordomo and chef), by name Nicholas Pachs, indited wise saws.

But it was music which took the palm amongst all other arts at this cultured Court. The names of many of the *joglars* and musicians of Don Juan have come down to us, and quaintly they read. Colinet, Hanequi, Phifet, Juan de las Orgues, and Gilaberto, his brother, Peter of Bar (apparently a countryman of the Queen's), and his son, John, Nicholas of the Organs, Jaquet, Canuthe, and Martiney. Their task of enlivening the long winter evenings, when the Court was in residence, now at Barcelona, now at Villafranca del Panadès, Monzon, Perpignan, Tortosa, Torroella de Montgri, or other summer resorts, was indispensable to their royal master and mistress. Wandering thus, it may be, the Court musicians soon wearied of a settled life. Thus, a certain Everli, and his three companions, Guelm, Blajoch, and Macadança, players on the cupa and cornamusa, stole away, to the consternation of the Court, on their return from Paris, where, in accordance with the custom of kings, they had been lent by Don Juan for the festivities in celebration of the King's victories in Germany. Instead, however, of returning direct to Aragon, they went back to their former master, the Duke of Turenne, who, on being requested by Don

Juan to send them back, replied that he had only lent them for the latter's coronation. Don Juan vainly besought the King of France to bring the weight of his authority to bear upon the Duke. Everli could nowhere be found, and the King of Aragon was forced to despatch Juan Armer, tenor of the royal chapel, to find him players in France and Germany who should be equal to the lost Everli. Hanequi and Phifet were fortunately able to report later on that they had discovered "two youths, players on the horn, *xalamia*, and other instruments" no less skilfully than the truant.

If sweet singers were many in Christian Spain of the Middle Ages, the instruments at their disposal were numerous indeed. Apart from the guitar, the lute, and the vielle, more particularly associated with the times of the jongleur, we read of the rebec, flute, harp, organistrum, psalterion, dulcimer, timbrels, cymbals, zither, handbells, tambourine, clarions, trumpets, kettledrums, the gigue, "shrill and saucy, with its merry tinkle," and the bagpipes.

It was to these, and to many another whose names are in doubt, that we hear the minstrel singing:—

All the minstrel art I know ;
 I the viol well can play ;
 I the harp and syrinx blow,
 Harp and gigue my hand obey ;
 Psaltery, symphony and rote,
 Help to charm the listening throng,
 And Armona lends its note,
 Whilst I warble forth my song.

I have tales and fables plenty,
 Satires, pastorals, full of sport,
 Songs to Vielle I've more than twenty,
 Ditties, too, of every sort.
 I from lovers tokens bear,
 I can flowery chaplets weave,
 Amorous belts can well prepare,
 And with courteous speech deceive.

The sovereigns of Castile, Navarre, and Foix beg the loan of Don Juan's musicians for special occasions,

Colinet and Macadança being thus requisitioned, while Don Juan in turn requests his son-in-law, the Count of Foix, to lend him his three *joglers*, Hulin, Juan de Beses, and Juan de Collells. The Countess of Foix seems to have shared her father's love for music. In a letter written by her to her stepmother, with whom her relations seem always to have been of the most affectionate character, she tells her that, on a journey, being unable to rest or to obtain any sleep, when they halted, she called to her lady, Aldonza de Queralt, and bid her play to her on the harp, and sing duets with Pablo—presumably a *joglar*. The livery of the Court musicians, in which they were always expected to appear at foreign Courts, was white and scarlet, with the royal arms as a badge on breast or shoulder.

We have now to turn from Don Juan, "Lover of gentillesse," and patron of musicians and artists, to the portrait drawn for us by later pens; that portrait which lifts the veil on the true recreations of this pleasure-loving King, more enamoured, if we are to believe these critics, of the occult arts, to the study of which the most scientific men of his time were openly addicted, than to either the chase or the dance. We are to sweep aside the veil that has for centuries concealed the royal adept, closeted in his laboratory with the indispensable Cresquez, his Jewish astrologer *en titre*, poring over the necromantic tomes of Blas de Corbera, a Bishop skilled in the art; corresponding with the French alchemist, Jaime Lustrach, to whom he is said to have paid large sums in order to assist the impostor in his search for the Philosopher's Stone; invoking spirits of doubtful purity, preparing formula for the manufacture of magic rings, warranted to give warning of the approach of evil influences. What wonder, if this picture be a true one, and we can scarcely doubt it when we see the panic into which the whisper of witchcraft practised against the person of the King threw both Don Juan and his Queen, what wonder, asks one writer, that the subjects of such a monarch invoked the aid of witches

on every occasion? Nor, accepting the truth of the portrait, can we fail to see how narrow was the escape from a shameful death of Sibilía de Forcia.

With the occult recreations of their King, his people had too much sympathy to interfere. It was far otherwise with that element of extravagant pleasure which they attributed to the French Queen, and to which the Aragonese, accustomed to somewhat simpler ideals, took outspoken exception. The King was called upon, after the summary manner of his subjects, to set his house in order, and to this end, to remove from his household certain persons of questionable character, and, above all, Doña Carroza de Vilaregut, who was supreme alike in the Queen's confidence and (though this, it would appear, was but Court scandal and lying gossip) in the King's affections. The royal couple returned a haughty and unqualified refusal to this insolent demand, which was signed by several of the notables of the kingdom, Alfonso, Marquis of Villena, James, Bishop of Tortosa, James de Prades, and Bernardo de Cabrera, but, in the end, the King and Queen were forced to give way, and to consent to the banishment of their favourite, though much that was a delight to eye and ear survived, we may well believe, her departure. If the Courts of Love over which Doña Carroza held sway at the Queen's side were shorn after her enforced exile of much of their brilliancy, yet there was no lack of other diversions. If the songs and recitations of his troubadours, sung and told on winter evenings in the Palace at Barcelona, or in the open-air of the gardens of the summer-house of Torroella de Montgri, palled upon the King, he at least could escape to his occult studies or to the chase; whilst the Queen and her ladies, wearying of the praises of their beauty on the singers' lips, might turn to their heart's content the unwritten pages of the fashions of their day. One such page was illuminated on the wedding-day of the King's daughter by his first marriage, Doña Juana, with Matthew, Count of Foix.

For this, the only surviving child of his first marriage with Doña Matha of Armagnac, Juan I always entertained, it is evident, a deep affection. It is probable that father and daughter had much in common; certainly, she inherited, as we have seen, his love of music. For the great event of her marriage with the head of one of the most cultured Courts of Western Europe, neither trouble nor expense were spared. Spain, even to distant Granada, crowded with looms for weaving fabrics fit for kings' daughters, was ransacked for cloths of gold, silk, velvets, camlets, and yards of linen, for the bridal trousseau; for gold-embroidered coverlets and crimson velvet curtains; whilst her jewels were worthy of her rank and of the place she held in her royal father's heart. Notable amongst these was a garland or coronal "with all its complement"—one of those graceful and fashionable circlets of the day which were worn on great occasions alike by men and women of high rank in Catalonia and Aragon. For the wedding banquet, the King sent messengers to the Abbots and Priors of all the Catalonian monasteries requiring them to provide so many turkeys, so much bacon, bread, and red and white wine. Couriers were also despatched to Perpignan, that unfailing larder of the royal household at Barcelona, with orders to bring back twenty pairs of peacocks, sixty hams, and twenty casks of wine. An enormous quantity of wax was also required, for candles, tapers, and *brandons*; both for the Palace and for the Chapel. Barcelona entered heartily into the preparations for the ceremony, which twelve of the consuls were bidden to attend, in gala robes, while the citizens were to see that the streets were freshly strewn, according to custom, with green boughs and foliage. Barcelona's gift to the Infanta was probably those silver-gilt bowls or basins with the royal arms which figure amongst the Princess's inventory. The bride possibly presented to her bridegroom, according to Catalonian fashion, a sword or jewel, a richly-embroidered purse or pouch, or the local *levacap*, a

peculiarly Catalan head-dress, worn by both sexes, made of silk, cotton, or linen, edged with gold or gems. Purses such as were in fashion in the days of Juana of Aragon would have been no unworthy bridal offering even from Prince to Princess. Upon the Infanta would rest no such prohibition as rested upon the everyday brides of Barcelona, who were forbidden to receive one such purse costing more than 50 sueldos, to such a pitch of extravagance had these accessories of a lady's costume attained at this date. We read of them made of gold brocade, worked with marguerites in pearls, and fringed with pearls and blue silk; of red or yellow leather, with gold cords; of blue *aceituni* with pendent ornaments and cords of various colours. Gloves, again, worked with pearls, were not to be given to brides; we may confidently assume that the Infanta laughed this prohibition also to scorn.

The young Countess of Foix, removed from her father's Court, never lost her place in his affectionate remembrance. He sends to her at the New Year a jewel specially made to his order at Perpignan—a clasp for cloak or gown, a castle with a damsel in white enamel and a bird in her hand, set with one balas ruby, three sapphires, and six pearls. Again, on Candlemas Day, 1394, a festival which was a family as well as a religious celebration in Catalonia, when it was customary for relatives to exchange various objects made of wax, Don Juan sends to the Countess a casket made of white wax, receiving from her in turn several tapers, candles, etc. Was it at her intercession, perhaps, or moved by some remembrance of the brave beauty of her bridal garments, that on April 21, 1393, the King granted to Doña Blanca, wife of Bernardo Mulner, and to her namesake, wife of Juan Blanch, both denizens of Puigcerda, “to wear, statutes to the contrary notwithstanding, cloths of gold and silver, and furs and precious stones”?

The reign of Juan I and his Queen is memorable in the literary annals of Aragon for the foundation at

Barcelona of the "College du Gai Sçavoir," in imitation of the "Very Gay Company of the Seven Troubadours of Toulouse," which, in 1390, on the warm invitation of the King, already well known in France for his patronage of letters, sent three of their conservators to the Court of Don Juan, where their welcome was assured beforehand. The famous centre of culture which they instituted was greatly favoured by the sovereigns who came after its first patron; it reached its golden age, however, in the reign of Fernando the Just, the age of the celebrated Enrique de Villena.

Passionately addicted to every form of dramatic and musical entertainment, the subjects of this King and Queen were quick to seize every opportunity of thus entertaining them. Valencia, for example, offered them on the occasion of their solemn entry into the city in 1392, a lavish display of municipal merry-making, in which special performances were allotted to the various towns-gilds. Thus, the bridle-makers acted a pantomime of savages, the sailors a naval combat, this last affording the carpenters an opportunity of gallantly defending a wooden castle of their own construction.

The Royal Palace at Valencia was at all times a frequent setting for dramatic performances, commonly described as "entremeses," or "interludes." This, says Mr. Chambers in his *Mediaeval Stage*, "was the normal name, varied chiefly by 'play' and 'disguising,' for plays given in the banqueting-hall of the great"; "stage-plays," adds the same authority, "being performed out of door in the summer, and 'interludes' in winter indoors." Under the latter heading we may place that performance entitled "L'hom enamorat e la fembra satisfeta," given before the King and Queen and their Court at Valencia in 1394. The author of the "interlude" was Mossen Domingo Maspons, a councillor of the King. The heroine of the drama was none other than that Doña (or Na) Carroza de Vilaregut to whom the Court of Violante of Bar owed, at first, so much gaiety, and,

later, such rude shock of silenced songs; while it is possible that this "interlude" was the origin of the scandal before alluded to, although by this time her name was linked, not with that of the King, but with that of Mossen Francisco de Pau, the Queen's majordomo, as he appeared with her in a later lawsuit against Don Bernardo de Vilaregut, for not complying with a royal order, which seems to have been made in their favour, to renounce certain property claimed by Doña Carroza.

Widowhood, which she was never to lay aside, came to Doña Violante with tragic suddenness. On May 19, 1396, runs the generally accepted version, the King and Queen, having terminated their sojourn at their favourite summer resort of Torroella de Montgri, were travelling to Gerona, when the former, a halt having been ordered at the wood of Orriols, plunged unattended into its recesses, and there, a few hours later, was found dying. The cause of his death, which took place the same day at Vespers, was commonly declared to have been a fall from his horse, though the legend has long hung about the incident of the apparition of a gigantic and, presumably, supernatural she-wolf, an apparition which, it can be well believed, would have had peculiar and death-dealing terrors for a man of the King's superstitious nature and delicate constitution.

The call to lay aside the sceptre which she had virtually wielded throughout her consort's reign, must have been indeed repugnant to such a woman as Doña Violante. To yield it to her sister-in-law, Doña Maria de Luna, with whom she had but little in common, must have intensified the bitterness of abdication. Nor did she relinquish her queenship without a struggle. Scarcely had Barcelona acclaimed the virtuous and popular Duchess of Montblanch Queen and Regent pending her husband's return from Sicily, than the widowed Queen announced that the kingdom might still expect the birth of a possible heir to the dead King's throne. The city authorities immediately sent

an embassy to the Palace, imploring the Queen, for the love of God and for the honour of the state, to confirm or to deny her statement. Doña Violante, thus brought to book in the plain, uncompromising fashion of Aragon, hesitates, equivocates. The "grave and reverend signiors" of Barcelona grow suspicious. A guard of "ancient and honourable matrons," the mother of Pedro Oliver, the mother of Francisco Camos, the mother of Bernardo Capila, and others, are appointed on the spot to keep watch and ward over the Queen pending the proof of her assertions. Doña Violante had no alternative but to acquiesce. With what grace she can counterfeit, she welcomes her enforced guests to the Palace, from which she demands, at the same time, the expulsion of Queen Sibilia de Forcia, who, we may gather from this incident, had been assigned apartments beneath its roof, from the royal residence. A strange request! The woman who had triumphed, then, still feared the one who had suffered defeat at her hands. What was there to fear, one may ask, from this discrowned and discredited pensioner, stripped of every outward vestige of royalty? From the fallen Queen, nothing. From Sibilia de Forcia, the proven witch, everything! Was Doña Violante really afraid of her once powerful enemy still? Or was her urgent requisition only part of the rôle she had resolved to play? Did she, in affecting an attitude perfectly natural under the supposed circumstances, hope to impress her guardians with the reality of her condition? What woman of her times, believing that the very breath of the witch had power to strike through stone walls at her victim, would face the perils of maternity with such a danger beneath her very roof? To give birth to a child who might prove to be the means of restoring to her hands, through his long minority, that sceptre to which she was prepared to cling at all costs, within the circle of such baleful influence as that possessed by Sibilia de Forcia, the witch, was a hazard not to be thought of. The sentence of banishment was pro-

nounced on the malignant enchantress, and Doña Violante and her "ancient and honourable" custodians together awaited events. But when the term of their waiting was over, when Doña Maria de Luna was once more free to take up the royalty of the woman who had sought to delay her parting from a passionately loved greatness, the citizens of Barcelona may well have whispered amongst themselves, as they saw the hopes of the widowed Queen come to naught, that the Witch-Queen had triumphed after all; since no son of Juan I and Doña Violante of Bar was to sit upon his father's throne. Doña Violante lived through the reigns of Martin the Humane, Fernando the Just, and Alfonso V, witnessing the rivalry between that monarch and her grandson, Louis, Duke of Anjou, the son of her namesake daughter, the great Yolande of Anjou, for the succession of Naples. Her death took place at Barcelona, July 3, 1431.

RÉSUMÉ OF CHAPTER X

Juan, Duke of Gerona, betrothed to the Princess Jeanne de Valois. Her death at Beziers, 1370.

Don Juan marries Doña Matha of Armagnac, 1373.

Birth of their eldest son, at Valencia, 1374.

Birth of Doña Juana, 1375.

Birth of Don Juan, 1376.

Birth and death of Don Alfonso, 1377.

Birth and death of Doña Leonor. Death of Doña Matha, 1378.

Marriage of Don Juan II and Doña Violante of Bar, 1380.

Accession of Don Juan I, 1387.

Death of Don Juan, 1396.

Death of Doña Violante, 1431.

CHAPTER XI

DOÑA MARIA DE LUNA

By the death, in the summer of 1361, of Count Lope de Luna, the King and Kingdom of Aragon sustained the irreparable loss of "a faithful and valiant servant of the Crown," and one of the greatest of Aragonese noblemen. The Palace of the Aljaferia had been *en fête* thirteen years before on the occasion of his investiture with the title of Count of Luna, never before borne save by the son of a King; but Don Lope was already closely bound to the throne itself by his marriage with Doña Violante, aunt of Don Pedro IV. A widower in 1353, Don Lope had married, as his second wife, Doña Brianda d'Agouth, a Provençal lady, daughter of Count Beltran d'Agouth, nephew of Pope Clement V. By her, he became the father of two daughters, Doña Maria, who succeeded to his possessions, and Doña Brianda, whose matrimonial affairs were to give some concern to the royal family at a later date. There is some evidence in the last will and testament of Don Lope that he had foreseen as a possibility, even if he had not formally discussed the matter with his royal master, a royal alliance for his heiress, for it was expressly stipulated in the document in question that, if Doña Maria should marry "a King, or a King's eldest son," the title of Count of Luna should be conferred upon the second son of such a marriage, together with the right to bear the arms of that illustrious House, whose state, says Zurita, was unmatched by any in Spain. With characteristic promptitude, Don Pedro IV lost no time in annexing the little heiress for his easy-

going, good-natured second son, the Infante Don Martin, the consent of the Spanish Cardinal, Don Gil de Albornoz, Bishop of Santa Sabina, Legate of the Holy See, and Vicar-General in Italy of the estates of the Church, which the terms of Don Lope's will rendered it necessary to seek, being the merest formality. In the absence of the Cardinal in Italy, his brothers, Fernan Gomez and Alvaro Garcia, who were both in the King's service, were authorized to conclude the matter, the tender ages of the contracting parties necessitating a special dispensation, which was speedily forthcoming, since the Cardinal de Albornoz was a kinsman of the bride. It was not until June, 1372, that the marriage of Don Martin and Doña Maria took place at Barcelona. In the following July, the former was created Count of Exerica, by which title, in addition to that of Count of Luna, in right of his wife, he was thenceforth known.

The daughters-in-law of the Kings of Aragon, married in the lifetime of the latter, and compelled to reside, or at least to make frequent appearances at Court, had a difficult rôle to fill, even when the Queen regnant was most friendly disposed towards her sons' wives. While Doña Leonor of Sicily lived, there is every reason to suppose that both her daughters-in-law, Doña Matha and Doña Maria, lived on excellent terms with her and with each other, meriting her affectionate remembrance of them both in her will, in common with her own daughters and nieces. But when the part of Queen was played, first, virtually, and then, actually, by Doña Sibilía de Forcia, nothing remained for the two sisters-in-law but to withdraw themselves from the Court over which that haughty and illiterate beauty now ruled. Both had plausible and politic reasons to advance for that withdrawal in the claims of their young families and the necessity for their husbands to reside on their estates of Gerona and Montblanch.

The ancient walled and now ruined town of Montblanch, the Villasalva of an earlier date, had been

founded in the reign of Ramon Berenger IV, in 1155, and was erected in 1387 into a Duchy which gave his title to Don Pedro's second son. In this old city of the Two Waters, as it was sometimes called, from its site between the rivers Francoli and Anguera, the Duke and Duchess of Montblanch passed the early years of their married life, immediately after the death of Queen Leonor. Even after Don Martin's accession to the throne, both husband and wife kept a tender memory of the town and of its inhabitants, of the nuns of the Convent of Santa Maria de la Serra, a foundation specially under royal protection, as well as of the Jews, to whom, in 1391, Maria de Luna, then become Queen of Aragon, granted special privileges, they being, as she states in the charter, "the treasure of the Lord and of our House." Within the enclosure of its frowning towers and four gates, she was within a few miles' distance of the Pantheon of Poblet, known to the modern world only as one of the loveliest ruined cloisters in existence, but venerated in the time of the Duchess of Montblanch as the Escorial of the Kings of Aragon. Here, it may be, she, too, hoped to be laid to rest, not as Queen, an honour which then seemed remote from her, but as humbler Infanta of Aragon.

Maria de Luna was not to escape, shielded and surrounded as she was by fortress walls and shrines of prayer, the bitterness of bereavement, the Rachel's doom which rested so heavily on the daughters-in-law of Don Pedro IV. Of the four children whom she bore to Don Martin, one only, afterwards to be known as Martin the Younger, King of Sicily, attained to manhood. Two sons, Jaime and Juan, and a daughter, Margarita, died in infancy, and were interred in the Monastery of Val de Christo. If we seek the sole remembrance of these royal children, elsewhere than in their mother's never-forgetting heart, we must turn the pages of King Martin's Inventory, made long after, and read therein of "a child's coral, with a silver ring," of "a little silver chain, and a few amber beads—a child's playthings."

For the only surviving son of the Duke and Duchess of Montblanch, Don Pedro IV reserved a brilliant destiny, which was, however, to rob Maria de Luna in life as she had already been robbed by death. The destiny in question was the sovereignty of Sicily, through his marriage with its youthful Queen, Maria, only daughter and heiress of King Fadrique and his Queen, Constanza, herself a Princess of Aragon. Queen Maria had been left by her father to the care of the valiant and devoted servant of his House, Don Artal de Alagon, who purposed marrying her to Giovanni Galeozzo, a nephew of the Duke of Milan. Martin of Montblanch, however, falling in with his father's wishes as docilely as his brother, the Duke of Gerona, had flouted them in the matter of this identical alliance, secured the prize for his son, who passed thenceforth into the history of Sicily, having but little concern from that time with the affairs of Aragon. His mother saw him sail, accompanied by his father, from the port of Barcelona in 1398, attended by a hundred ships of war, under the command of Admiral the Viscount of Cabrera, and of Vice-Admiral Berenger de Cruilles. For their signal services on this occasion, it was ordered that the ships forming the royal escort should thenceforth bear no other banner or pennon than those with the device of the Counts of Barcelona.

The household of the Duke and Duchess of Montblanch was ever a refuge for those in distress, whether of mind, body, or estate. Both husband and wife knew how to attract to their service, and grapple to their side with hooks of steel, those who had first stood in need of their generous shelter and support. Thus we find them, at the risk of incurring the paternal wrath of Don Pedro IV, giving their protection to the rebellious and fugitive wife of the famous Sir Hugh Calverley, of the Free Companies, that "man of teeth and hand who could feed as much as two and fight as much as ten men," and "whose quick and strong appetite could digest anything but an injury." Again, it is Don Martin

and Doña Maria de Luna who befriended the latter's sister, Brianda de Luna, in her long matrimonial suit with her husband, Don Lope Ximenez de Urrea, and by their powerful intercession with the King secure for her her eventual freedom from a detested conjugal yoke. In their Palace at Valencia, more than one young girl of noble birth learned manners to match her rank in that kindly school; one of them, Doña Margarita de Prades, of the blood royal, was to succeed her royal mistress as Queen of Aragon. And when, in 1388, the young Queen, Maria, of Sicily, was brought to Spain in order that her astute grandfather might the more promptly bestow her in marriage as he willed, the young sovereign, fresh from virtual captivity, must have turned with grateful joy to the motherly welcome that awaited her in the household of Maria de Luna.

Whether the Duchess of Montblanch withdrew, after her husband's departure, to the retirement of his duchy, where the cloisters of Poblet would be within beckoning reach with their treasures of healing peace, is unknown. She was at least no stranger to the citizens of Barcelona. It was no alien to their hearts and hopes who kept the throne of Aragon in safety for Don Martin, when his absence, at the moment of his brother's death without male heirs, left that throne at the mercy of a swarm of competing foes. Maria de Luna, who may not have shone at the brilliant Court of her brother and sister-in-law, Don Juan I and Doña Violante of Bar, had doubtless endeared herself to the people of Barcelona by many an unobtrusive act of quiet kindness, many a secret almsgiving, which proved the keys to open, not a heavenly, but an earthly kingdom to her. Her regency, less prolonged and possibly less arduous than that of Maria of Navarre, opened with sinister signals of storm on every hand. The death of Juan I placed the wife of the absent Don Martin in a position of peculiar difficulty. Barcelona at least recognized none. Without a moment's hesitation, the representatives of the city proceeded in a body to kiss the new Queen's hand, thus acclaiming her

regent of the kingdom until her consort's return from Sicily. Had not Barcelona given this signal proof of love and loyalty, an example which was instantly followed by all the magnates of the realm, the succession would undoubtedly have passed, in the absence of Don Martin, to one of the contending claimants for his crown. Following upon the private acclamation of the new Queen came the more public acknowledgment of her sovereignty in her being conducted, with all the solemnity of a popular recognition of her claims, to the Palace of the Kings of Aragon, where the widowed, and now Dowager Queen, Violante, announcing that she was about to give birth to a possible heir to the throne, refused to be dispossessed by her sister-in-law. Probably at the politic persuasions of Maria de Luna herself, the term of Queen Violante's rule in the Palace was prolonged, a bodyguard of matrons of noble birth being appointed, as we have seen, to be in constant attendance upon her, pending the birth of the anticipated Infante or Infanta, these "discreet and honourable ladies" being chosen by the municipality of Barcelona, in order to secure the succession against the fraud of which they were quite prepared to believe the French Queen—never a favourite in her husband's kingdom—capable. Urgent letters of recall were meanwhile despatched to Don Martin, by Queen Maria and by his subjects. It was actually two years, however, before he returned to claim his throne. The queenship of Maria de Luna, meanwhile, was no bed of roses. Even when the claims of her sister-in-law had been proved spurious, and Queen Maria had been left in sole possession of the Palace, those of the Count and Countess of Foix continued sufficiently menacing. Entering Catalonian territory, the pretenders' troops seized Barbastro, but were forced to surrender, Maria de Luna, with admirable clemency, having given orders that a battle was to be avoided, but that the town was to be surrounded, and supplies cut off. The Count and Countess, thus repulsed, escaped from Barbastro, and took refuge in Navarre.

Thenceforth, until her husband's return from Sicily, Maria de Luna, a true mother of her people, amply demonstrated to those who doubted that a weak woman's body could house so virile and magnanimous a soul, that the contrary was, happily for Catalonia, the case. Bernat de Metge aptly compares her in his satirical "Dream" to the wise and resolute Penelope mourning her errant Ulysses ; but the mourning was in the rare secrecy of a Queen's leisure ; there was too much to be done in public to leave space or time for tears. "Acting in all things most courageously," as the old historian writes, the Queen's first care was, not only to put the defences of the kingdom under her immediate care in good order, but also to despatch reinforcements to Don Martin in Sicily. All this was done with the quiet resolution of a strong woman, who, we may well believe, was as little deterred from her duty by fear of failure as she was unterrified by those great convulsions of nature, earthquakes and "prodigious signs in the air," which marked the year 1396 in Valencia.

Not until April 13, 1399, was Maria de Luna an eye-witness of the coronation, a week before her own, of her husband, King Martin. Detained in Sicily for more than a year after the death of his brother, King Juan I, Don Martin had not arrived in Zaragoza until October, 1397, in which city, accompanied by the Queen, he took the oath before the Justiciar of Aragon, in the Cathedral of La Seo. The coronation of the King, delayed by various causes, was finally fixed for the Sunday within the Octave of Easter, 1399. It was determined that the ceremony should be attended by the most magnificent pomp and circumstance. Great preparations were set afoot, ambassadors being despatched even as far as Sicily, in search of jewels and costly stuffs. The Archdeacon of Zaragoza was specially deputed to make request to the Church authorities of Palermo for the loan of the sword of the Emperor Constantine, said to be preserved in that edifice, that with it the King of Aragon might arm the knights who,

according to custom, were to receive the *accolade* on the day of the coronation. It is not known, however, says Blancas, whether Don Ponce de Tahuste, as the Archdeacon was named, ever accomplished his task. There was no lack of splendour in consequence.

The courtyard of the Aljaferia, where the King lodged, was hung with the richest arras cloths, and, "to shade the company from the heat," covered in with canvas in red and yellow stripes, with the Royal Arms of Aragon. Within this mediæval marquee stood two rows of tables, that for the King placed on a wooden platform, raised four steps from the floor; over it was a rich canopy of crimson velvet embroidered with gold, the chair of state being similarly covered. Close by, stood the King's dresser, with all the necessary gold and silver ware for the service of the royal table. In front of the dresser, stood an exquisite fountain, with three jets, from which issued water, red wine, and white. At each corner of the enclosure were other dressers for the use of the guests. Another awning of blue and white striped canvas was stretched across the smaller *patio*, near the entrance to the Marble Hall. Within the Palace, the walls were hung with the finest tapestries; the Hall known as that of the Hangings, in which was the King's bed, having curtains of crimson velvet embroidered with gold and the Royal Arms, the hangings of this apartment, from which it took its name, being of cloth of gold and of brocade. At three o'clock in the afternoon, the Queen and her ladies looked down from the galleries of the Palace on a great concourse of prelates, nobles, grandees, knights, esquires, and the syndics of the towns and cities, who arrived attended by troops of minstrels playing on trumpets and kettle-drums, to escort the King to La Seo.

At a given signal, he emerged from his apartments, wearing a mantle of cloth of gold and crimson velvet, in stripes, with ermine trimmings. Under this mantle the King wore a surcoat or short soutane, with several pleats, the sleeves wide. On his head he wore a small

cap or chaplet, trimmed with pearls and precious stones of great value. Passing from the Hall of the Hangings through the Marble Hall, he took his seat on a chair of state beneath a canopy, surrounded by his Court. Thereafter, calling to him Don Juan de Cardona, Admiral of Aragon, he gave him the accolade, and so with several others. To Don Antonio de Luna he committed the Royal Standard, and the banner of St. George to the Master of Montesa, who handed it to Fray Ramon del Jardin, Commander-in-chief of the Order, the banners being afterwards borne before the King on his progress to the Cathedral. This being done, the King proceeded to the door of the Palace, where his horse, superbly caparisoned with trappings of crimson velvet and cloth of gold to match the royal robes, awaited him, and mounting, the procession set forth.

First came numerous dancers, taken from the different trades guilds of the city, all in gala dress. After these came twelve *bordonadores* (who threw darts, instead of shooting, at a mark), and six *tablageros*, all mounted on fine horses with trappings of red silk, worked with the Royal Arms and many lions, which are the arms of the city of Zaragoza. Next, two and two, rode those who had been armed knights that day, the Aragonese and the Valencians on the right, and the Catalans and Mallorcans on the left. Before each knight rode an esquire carrying his sword and spurs, another following with his shield; if the knight were noble, his esquire also bore his standard or banner; which, as Blancas vows, was "a most beautiful sight to behold."

Noblest of all the noble knights was Don Alfonso of Aragon, Marquis of Villena, on whom the King had that day bestowed the title of Duke of Gandia, a title destined to be borne two centuries later by the House of Borgia. Clad in crimson velvet, like his sovereign, the newly created Duke rode a magnificent horse, attended by the gentlemen of his household, all on foot, his grandson, Don Alfonso, who rode before him, carrying his sombrero,

or *barretillo*, made of crimson velvet, with a chaplet of pearls, which was the ducal insignia, his banner being borne by his nephew. Following the Royal Standard came a long procession of grandees and gentlemen, then a great wooden castle, with five lighted candles, one in each of the corners, and one larger than the rest in the middle. This was followed by twelve gentlemen on foot, clad in velvet, and carrying as many lighted tapers, painted with the Royal Arms. Last of all the long procession of knights, nobles, grandees, syndics, and gentlemen, came the Archbishops, Bishops, and Abbots. Entering the city by the north-west gate, known as El Portillo, immortalized in later years by the exploits of the heroic Maid of Zaragoza, a pause was made in the market-place in order that the *bordonadores* and *tablageros* might give an exhibition of their skill before the King. At the conclusion of the performance, the journey to the Cathedral was resumed. Owing to the many detours, however, La Seo was not reached until two o'clock in the morning. Night was turned into day by the thousands of torches, tapers, and other lights which lit up the streets through which the procession passed, all the houses being decorated with gaily coloured hangings, such as, under the name of *reposteros*, have always played so large a part in gala decoration in Spain. Having been received at the door of the Cathedral by an imposing array of ecclesiastics, the King was conducted to his royal throne on the right side of the altar; a collation of wine and sweetmeats was served; the latter offered by the Marquis de Villena, the cupbearer being the Count de Prades, of the blood royal, both kinsmen of the King, the latter father of Doña Margarita de Prades, whom we shall see later in the coronation train of Maria de Luna, and later still as the second wife of Don Martin. At the conclusion of this repast, the King withdrew to the apartment prepared for him in the cloisters, where he rested that night, his suite and all who had accompanied him returning meanwhile to their homes, with the exception

of those who had just been made knights, and who kept the customary vigil of arms in the different chapels of the Cathedral. At dawn, all were astir. From every quarter of the city those privileged to witness the ceremony flocked to La Seo. The Queen rode from the Aljaferia, the most interested spectator of all, riding a white horse covered with trappings of white aceytuni—a sumptuous fabric much in vogue in the Middle Ages—and wearing a robe of cloth of gold and a long mantle. She was accompanied by Violante, Queen of Naples, betrothed to Louis II of that kingdom, and by the Infanta Isabel, her sister-in-law, the only daughter of the fourth and last marriage of Pedro IV with Sibilia de Forcia. For these royal ladies and the glittering train of dames and damsels in attendance upon them, places were reserved in the body of the Cathedral between the High Altar and the choir.

The full account of this, one of the most magnificent coronations ever witnessed in Zaragoza, may be found in the diverting pages of Blancas, this volume being more intimately concerned with the Queens of Aragon than with their consorts. Maria de Luna, who doubtless preceded the King on the return journey to the Aljaferia, which was reached “at the hour of Vespers,” entertained at supper, while the King ate in public in the *patio* of the Palace, Don Jaime of Aragon, Bishop of Valencia, Cardinal of the Holy Roman Church, “who was a great servant of God,” the Queen of Naples, the Infanta Isabel, and Doña Brianda d’Agouth, Countess of Luna, mother of the Queen, together with two ladies of the blood royal, Doña Juana and Doña Margarita de Prades. The meal was served in the apartment known as the Hall of the Chimney. Besides the Queen’s table, there were several others at which sat many noble dames and damsels, both of the Court and of the city, with a few ancient cavaliers. In striking contrast, meanwhile, to the seclusion and simplicity of this repast, the King’s supper went forward in the adjoining *patio*. The flourish of trumpets with which the repast

began would come as a distant sound to the ears of his Queen and her noble guests ; they would scarcely catch a passing glint of the golden eagle which, borne before the Duke of Gandia, majordomo of the feast, ushered in the first of the courses. Nor would they be actual eye-witnesses of that " representation of a starry sky " which had been erected in the roof of the dining-hall, crowded with rank upon rank of saints holding palms in their hands, and at the summit " God the Father surrounded by a great multitude of Seraphim, who with sweet voices sang many *villancicos* and *canzones* in praise and honour of this feast." From the starry height presently descended the appearance of a cloud, which rested on the royal buffet, and, parting asunder, disclosed an angel which sang marvellously, and scattered amongst the company lyrics and couplets, all in honour of the day's solemnity, some on red, others on yellow, others on blue paper. The angel then re-entered the cloud, whence he emerged once more carrying a gilt basin for the King to wash his hands in before eating, which the angel delivered to two others, who stood beside the dresser, and who in turn handed it to the knights whose office it was to " serve the towel," as this duty was called. Again the angel re-entered the cloud, and again he reappeared, the second time carrying a dish of fruit, and the third time the cup from which the King was to drink during supper. Weird masques preceded the serving of each course : " a great and very life-like serpent, belching flames, surrounded by armed men, who, with loud cries, sought to slay it " ; " and a rock on the summit of which was a wounded leopard." From this rock leapt into the *patio* rabbits, hares, partridges, turtle-doves, and other kinds of birds, which flew in all directions, and also a few wild boars, with which the company were much diverted. The armed men who had previously attacked the leopard now sought to slay the wounded leopard, but were prevented by men disguised as savages, a mimic battle following. From the leopard's wound now issued a beautiful boy,

clad in the Royal Arms, with a crown on his head and a naked sword in his right hand, in sign of victory, and singing most sweetly. The feast then went on to its close, which was at two o'clock in the night. The King, rising from the table, congratulated the combatants, and proceeding to the Marble Hall, gave the signal for dancing to begin. It is assumed that at this point the Queen, the Infantas, and the other ladies, joined the company. On their arrival, the King opened the ball, his lords and esquires following, and having, presumably, the Queens, the Infantas, and the other ladies for partners, although, adds Blancas, in his account, it is not so stated. At the conclusion of the dancing, a collation was served, whereupon the King withdrew to the Hall of the Hangings, where his bed was, his guests meanwhile departing to their several homes, the Palace remaining a blaze of light with its myriads of torches, tapers, and wax candles. Very early next morning the crowds who had but lately taken their leave of their royal host were once more on the scene. For the King, the day began with his attendance at Mass in the Chapel of Santa Maria clad in a surcoat and mantle of crimson velvet, furred with ermine. The Chapel was sumptuously bedecked with hangings of silk and cloth of gold. At the conclusion of the Mass, the tables were once more arranged in the courtyards, and the feast and "invitations" repeated as on the previous day. Dancing was also repeated, and a third day was spent in the same manner. The citizens were entertained on each of the three days with dancing, bull-fights, and exhibitions of skill on the part of the *bordonadores* and *tablageros*. The King did not leave the Palace until the Sunday following his coronation, when he once more visited La Seo in state. On April 22, the Feast of St. George, the Patron Saint of Aragon, was kept with much solemnity, the festival being anticipated by a few days, we are told, in order that the preparations for the coronation of the Queen should not be interfered with.

At the hour of Vespers on Tuesday, April 22, 1399, Doña Maria de Luna, the third Queen of Aragon to be publicly crowned in the Cathedral of Zaragoza, awaited in her robing-room at the Palace of the Aljaferia, the noble and splendidly attired train of lords spiritual and temporal, of ladies and maidens of the city, who were to escort her on her royal progress to La Seo, as they had escorted Don Martin the week before. As soon as word had been brought to the Queen that all were assembled in the Marble Hall, "she came forth, wearing a *saya* of cloth of silver, and over it a large and trailing mantle trimmed with ermine." Taking her seat on the royal canopied chair which had been prepared for her, she witnessed the dancing of the Queen of Naples, the Infanta Isabel, and the other ladies of the Court and city, and then, accompanied by her kinswomen, and surrounded by her ladies, proceeded to the gate of the Aljaferia, where her white palfrey stood with its "very splendid trappings of white aceytuni." As soon as the Queen had mounted, the procession, identical, for pomp and detail, with that of Don Martin in the previous week, set forth.

First came the dancers representative of the various trades guilds of the city; next, twenty-four *bordona-dores*, half in green silk, and half in red, with six *tira-dores*, all in green, all thirty mounted on fine horses, the colour of their trappings matching the costume of their riders, and embroidered with shields bearing the arms of the city, which were lions. Next, on horseback also, came the chief prelates of the kingdom, the Archbishop of Zaragoza, several Bishops and Abbots, the Duke of Gandia, and other *Ricos Hombres* of the realm. Then came two of the Queen's palfreys, bridled and harnessed, with ornaments of gold and silver and precious stones, led by two noble gentlemen. After these came a great troop of minstrels and trumpeters, and then a great castle of wood, "very well made and painted white, with four tall candles burning at the corners and one larger than the rest in the centre."

This was carried by twelve sons of knights on foot, with torches burning before the Queen, who was attended by her splendid retinue, all on foot. The Queen of Naples and the other ladies rode on handsome palfreys. The streets through which the procession passed presented the same appearance as on the day of the King's coronation, torches and tapers turning night into day, houses being hung with arras cloths, and music and dancing being again features of the route. Arrived at the Cathedral, it being now two o'clock in the morning, the Queen was received by the Archbishop, who had, apparently, detached himself at some point from the procession, and the other Bishops and Prelates, who, having conducted her to her appointed seat at the right side of the High Altar, and recited the set prayers, offered her the customary collation. The Queen then withdrew to the apartment which had been prepared for her, where she rested that night. The next morning, very early, the ceremony of the coronation was performed, in every essential precisely as was that of the King. The ladies in immediate attendance on the Queen, in addition to the Princesses, were Doña Margarita de Prades, who was afterwards to be her successor, Doña Juana de Luna, Doña Leonora de Cerbellon, and Doña Juana de Perellos. Assisted by these ladies, the Queen assumed the sacerdotal vestments which had been previously solemnly blessed by the Archbishop. At this point, the King arrived from the Aljaferia, where he had passed the night, and, entering the sacristy, put on his royal robes and the insignia of his state, as he had worn them on the day of his own coronation. With the crown on his head, the sceptre in his right hand, and the orb in his left, he proceeded to the chair of state which had been placed for him on a dais. The Queen was now conducted from the chapel which had served her as a robing-room, with the Bishops and her ladies in attendance, the Queen of Naples carrying the crown, the Infanta Isabel the sceptre, and a lady named Doña Guiomar the orb, these

three walking before her. As she knelt before the King, the latter, taking the crown from the silver dish in which it was borne by the Queen of Naples, placed it upon the head of his consort, gave the sceptre into her right hand and the orb into her left, and finally put a splendid diamond ring on her finger, the Archbishop meanwhile reciting the appointed prayers, from the Form of Ordination. At the close, the King kissed the Queen's cheek, and the Queen kissed the King's hand. The Queen was then conducted to her chair of state, where she sat during the singing of a solemn Te Deum, having the Queen of Naples on one hand and the Infanta Isabel on the other. Afterwards, the King armed three knights, Don Luis Cornel, Mossen Pedro Canoguera, and Mossen Martin Lopez de Lanuza, and this ceremony concluded he withdrew to the sacristy, where he laid aside his royal robes, and rode back, with a small suite, to the Aljaferia. The Queen remained before the altar until the conclusion of the Mass, when she was conducted to the west door of La Seo to start on her return journey to the Palace. Mounting her white palfrey once more, a rich canopy was held over her by citizens of Zaragoza, while the Duke of Gandia and other nobles of Valencia and Aragon led her horse on the right-hand side, Catalan and Mallorcan nobles, led by the Count of Ampurias, walking on the left. None but the Queen rode, and owing to the density of the crowds in the streets, and the numerous detours made by the procession, in order that as many of the citizens as possible might have an opportunity of greeting the newly crowned Queen, it was at a late hour that the brilliant company at length entered the courtyard of the Aljaferia. As soon as the Queen had exchanged her coronation robes for others no less sumptuous, but less sacerdotal, all sat down to the customary repast. The Palace was now one blaze of lights. As was the custom, the Queen ate alone, on a raised dais, so that she might be seen by all her guests. Her majordomo was the Count of Ampurias,

his son, Don Pedro de Ampurias, the cupbearer, other noble gentlemen fulfilling various other menial offices, as was usual on similar occasions. We are not told whether the company were entertained by any "inventions," such as had been provided at the coronation banquet of the King, nor whether the King himself was present; the feast concluded, however, with the adjournment of the guests to the Marble Hall, where dancing took place and a collation was served, as on the previous occasion. That day and the next, the Queen kept open house, as Don Martin had done the week before, feasting and dancing being resumed on each evening. Although there is no special mention of jongleurs, it is more than probable that they made their appearance on one or more days at the festivities, were it only in honour of the Queen's mother, Brianda d'Agouth, Countess of Luna, a famous patroness of the troubadours of her day.

The accession of Martin the Humane to the throne of Aragon gave to his people a King and Queen whose tastes and temper were far more in harmony with the mould of gravity in which the national character was cast, and with the vein of seriousness which ran through all their culture, than those of his predecessor, the "Lover of Elegance," and his French wife, had ever been. Martin, indeed, seemed peculiarly fitted to be the leader of the intellectual movement which, at the moment of his ascending the throne, had overflowed the borders of Castile, to find, more especially in the graver branches of learning, a congenial soil for its growth and expansion in the sister kingdom. That thirst for knowledge which was characteristic of Christian Spain in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries received a notable impetus from this enlightened monarch. Philosophy and medicine were the favourite studies of the scholars of Aragon, the latter science, already distinguished by the royal favour in the reign of Juan I, who had established professorships of anatomy, being under the immediate and special patronage of his successor, who

founded, at the commencement of his reign, a school of medicine which, according to contemporary documents, conferred the degrees of doctor, licentiate, and bachelor of medicine, and was honoured, in 1400, by the approbation of Pope Benedict XIII, a native of Aragon, and a kinsman of Don Martin's Queen, having been known, before his election to the Chair of St. Peter, on September 28; 1394, as Pedro de Luna. Among the long list of medical practitioners in Barcelona during this reign, appear not only Christian, but Jewish names, both of men and women. Bonposc Bonfill, who translated the works of Galen and Hippocrates into Hebrew, was a native of Barcelona, while a medical author of some repute was a Jew of Lerida, named Rabbi Galab. The trend of thought amongst these early practitioners was, says Señor Don Rafael Altamira y Crevea, towards the experimental rather than the deductive, while the foundation in 1401 of the Hospital of Santa Cruz at Barcelona, in which, perhaps, may be traced some of the influence of Maria de Luna, marked a still further step in the progress of medical science along these lines. Eight years later saw the establishment at Valencia of the first lunatic asylum, which was founded by the piety of the mendicant friar, Fr. Juan Jofre Gailabert.

Professorships of theology, of grammar, of Hebrew and Arabic, existed in various Aragonese towns and cities, chiefly in the monasteries under Dominican rule, while documentary evidence of the period attests the existence of schools established by municipal initiative. At foreign Universities, Aragonese and Catalan professors taught side by side with Castilians.

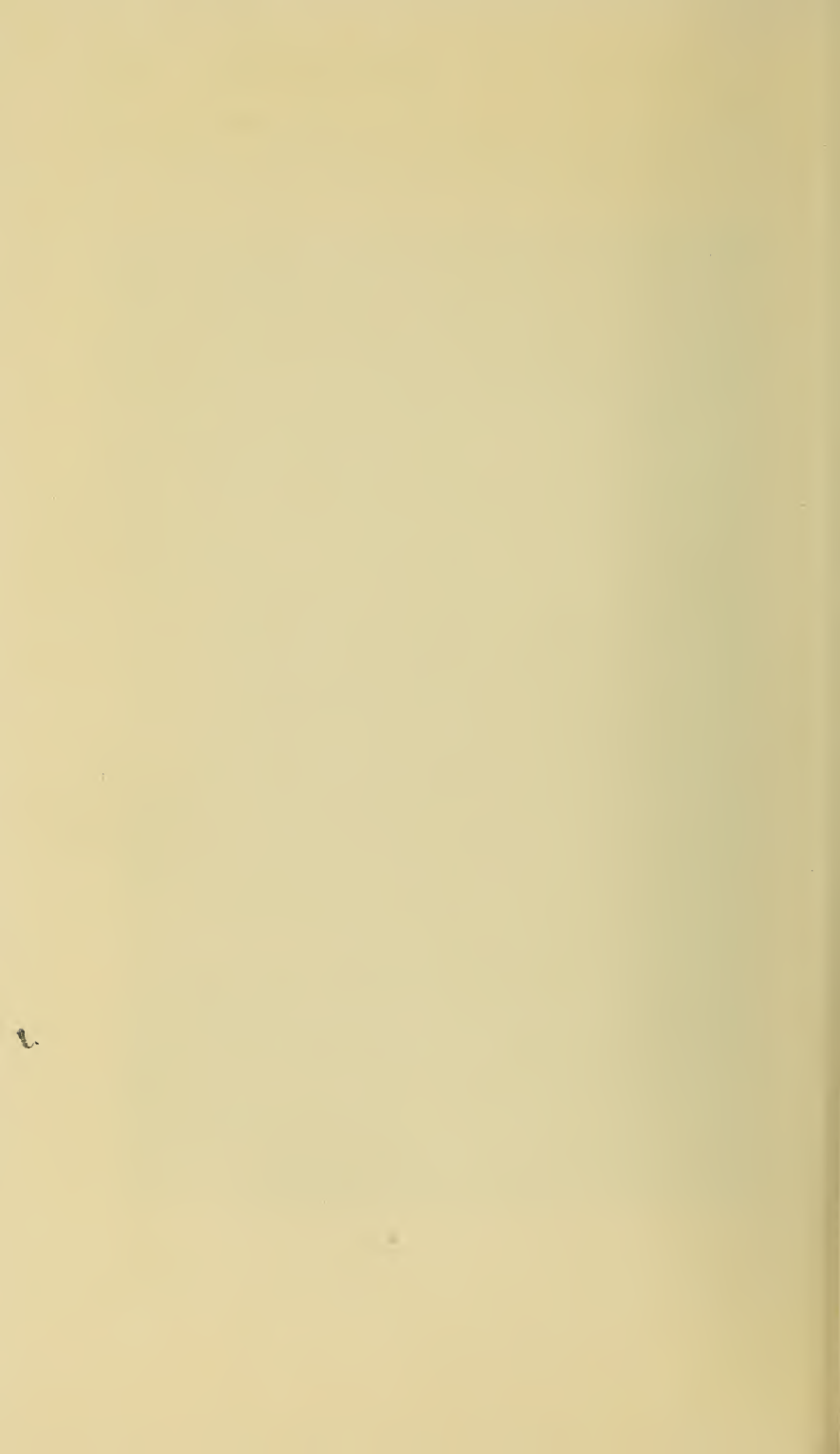
Light flashes on the character of the Humane King from between the lines of his Inventory. The long list of his personal possessions witnesses to his non-exemption from the ruling passions of his age. Soldier as he is, he has his perfuming-dish, of Moorish design, in the shape of a tower, with a lantern, standing on eight feet, together with phials, caskets, and sachets, of

balsam, civet, amber, violet, and musk, many of which, however, were probably reminiscent of the boudoirs of his two Queens. Like his brother, Don Juan I, King Martin was also a great chess and draught player. In his library, we find two or three handbooks to these games, while the boards for both, which figure in the Inventory, were as numerous as they must have been artistic in appearance, some being in the form of little tables with silver feet, with chessmen of jasper, crystal, chalcedony, horn, or glass. Nor was the King entirely free from that prevailing belief of his times in the efficacy of the horn of the mythical unicorn as a safeguard against poison; Don Martin owned "a piece of unicorn's horn set in a silver ring." In his library, he had, doubtless, read of the origin of the myth, which emanated from one Ctesias, a learned Greek physician, who wrote four centuries before the birth of Christ. The German traveller Heutzner tells us that Queen Elizabeth owned a similar talisman, valued at £10,000. The Inventory of Martin the Humane lays claim to a still more unique possession—a reputed Holy Grail, being "a golden chalice, with two handles and a foot, in which were set two garnets, two emeralds, and twenty-eight pearls." To the religious side of the King's life correspond his silver benitiers, rosaries of wood, coral, amber, and crystal; a casket of glass, for the Epiphany offering; a silver-gilt chalice and paten; a Bible, bound in crimson leather; several missals, with the same binding and silver clasps; ampullas with the threefold oil—for chrism, for the sick, and for catechumens. The chapel furniture includes chair-covers of silk embroidered with golden roses, and chasubles of blue damask and gold brocade. A notable reliquary is a coffer of jasper and porphyry, in the shape of a tomb, and in it a coffin of silver, lined with green velvet, with a crystal ball embossed on it, and a gold crown above set with a large balas ruby and several pearls, and in the ball a piece of the sponge associated with the Crucifixion. Martin the student, again, has



[*J. Laurent y Cia., Madrid*

THE CLOISTERS OF POBLET. INTERIOR VIEW



his folding reading-desk, his inkstand enamelled in different colours—"émaulx d'Aragon"—made in the shape of a tower, and above it a cupola, with the Royal Standard, and over the doorway a window and a cross, with the Blessed Virgin and St. John; another being of cypress wood, inlaid, and his goose-quill, the handle worked with silk and gold thread. His penknives are as numerous as they are artistic, the handles being of coral, silver, wood, and glass, most of them enclosed in sheaths or cases. His household effects—once displayed upon the stately buffets in the great hall of the Palace at Barcelona—include hanaps, goblets, bowls, and drageoirs of glass and silver, with the Arms of Aragon and Sicily emblazoned thereon, carafes and coolers, damascened trays, vases "to hold lilies," silver forks or skewers for eating ginger, spoons for ceremonial or common use, some with bowls of mother-of-pearl and silver handles, some of gold, set with sapphires and pearls, others of coral. For bedroom use there are wooden candlesticks, ewers, slippers of red and green silk, a linen dressing-gown with seven rows of gold trimming. In his jewel-case are rings set with cornelian, amber, coral, and jacinth, buttons of pearl and coral and turquoise, points of red and green with silver-gilt aiglets, while a flute in a red case was, perhaps, the gift or the souvenir of some Court singer. The walls of the Palace were hung on great occasions with his tapestries depicting St. George, Moses, the Holy Sepulchre, St. John, the Crucifixion, and Saladin and the Twelve Peers of France.

There is no evidence of Don Martin's ever having dabbled in the alchemical pursuits which his brother found so enthralling, although his library contained several works on astrology. If the same shelves may be accepted as testimony, he was more in sympathy with those arts of cosmography and navigation in which his Mallorcan and Catalan subjects attained to such a pitch of excellence during his reign. His Inventory contains numerous volumes dealing with both arts.

Two celebrated authors of Don Martin's times were Fr. Anselmo Turmeda, a satirical moralist, who wrote *A Controversy of the Ass on the Nature and Nobility of Animals*, and Bernat Metge, to whom we owe a special debt of gratitude for his detailed description of the dress and manners of the times of Maria de Luna, which he embodied in the form of *Four Books of Dreams*, philosophical and moral dialogues.

From what garrulous duenna of the Court of Doña Maria de Luna did Metge, we wonder, wrest those secrets of the boudoir and the toilet which he does not scruple to betray to us, who come so long after, in his piquant pages? Hear this polished courtier and familiar of kings and queens talk learnedly of the paints, the pomades, the hair-washes and scents, which were indispensable to the dressing-table of the fashionable beauty of the period. His indiscreet confidante has whispered in his ear of the mysterious properties of dried figs, the yolk of egg, of dried beans soaked in water, of wine lees and juniper berries to transform raven locks to threads of gold, of fleur-de-lis roots for pomade, and a thousand other ancient devices of woman, ever at war with the arch-enemy of her fairness, Time, to arrest his conquering steps. Metge sweeps aside the *portière* that conceals the inmost sanctuary of the dressing-room, and bids us stand, contemptuous as himself, spectators of the process of the toilette, hear the waiting-women soundly rated now, because, forsooth, the veil is not securely fastened, or false hair and pins are not promptly forthcoming; because the tell-tale double mirror does not give back the desired fall of the trailing robe. Woe betide the *vilaine maladroite* who cannot anticipate her capricious lady's whims! Off with her to the kitchen, fit as she is "only to scale fish and wash up dishes!" And having attended at this daily ceremony—"they dress," says Metge, "with as much ceremony as the Pope when he is about to celebrate a Mass"—the clear-visioned satirist bids us look deeper still, to

recoil, with no less contempt, but with even greater loathing, from the infamy which he conjures up for us. Borrowing his clairvoyant glance, we shall see these painted and bedizened belles of a bygone age surrounded by a swarming horde of vile hags and hideous crones who, under the specious disguise of the much-sought-after fortune-teller, made their way into the very apartments of royalty itself, befouling soul and body and poisoning the very air where they went, delighting to corrupt the innocence of girlhood as well as to drag the fallen woman and the unfaithful wife into a deeper depth of degradation. Then, as now, the opening question for the witch to answer was the mere frivolous "When will my present husband die?" "Am I going to have any money?" For the first throw of the shuttle which was to weave a web of inextricable ruin round the unconscious victim, frivolity sufficed. It was not until the deadly poison had worked at many interviews, well paid for with gleaming gold, that the startled senses began to detect, beneath the mask of the magician, the satyr's smile of the procuress.

An extraordinary fashion in footwear is mentioned as "a novelty" in Catalonia in the fourteenth century, namely, shoes with enormously long toes, called "poleyns" (polaina) from Poland, believed to have been the place of their origin, whence they were also introduced into England, possibly by some member of the Bohemian suite in attendance on Anne, Queen of Richard II. Brandt's *Stultifera Navis*, published in 1494, contains a picture of a young man wearing these poleyns mounted on clogs. In England, where they were termed by one writer "devils' claws," they were sometimes fastened to the knees with gold or silver chains. The clog in all cases projected several inches beyond the shoe.

With the follies of such of her contemporaries as Bernat Metge has portrayed—greedy of pleasure, of food, and finery—Doña Maria de Luna had, we may well believe, little to do. Life had grown more and more

serious for her with the weight of years that took from her, by death or by distance, those who were dearest to her heart. It was the sympathy taught by that best teacher of the art, Sorrow, that turned her thoughts and the impulses of her generosity towards those unhappy serfs whose condition was, she did not fear to affirm, a scandal to both Church and State. Ranging herself on the side of those who, throughout Europe, were then beginning to stir from the torpor of their long enslavement, she knew that she must inevitably draw down upon her, as she did, the hatred and bitter opposition of the nobles. But if ever virtuous woman had as her reward the calling blessed of those who rise up thus to acclaim her, Maria de Luna won that crown. She wears it in the annals of Aragon unshared by any other Queen; though many of them did virtuously, she indeed excelled them all. Having fought the battle of the serfs, having used her influence always on the side of right, having welcomed to her heart and house the children, Don Fadrique and Doña Violante of Aragon, of her son, King Martin the Younger, by his two Sicilian mistresses, Tarsia and Agatha, she laid aside the burden of queenship, and passed away at Villareal, near Valencia, December 29, 1407, having lived long enough to witness, at Valencia, the splendid obsequies, as befitted the hope of two kingdoms, of her grandson, son of Martin the Younger and of his second Queen, Blanche of Navarre—herself destined to take her place, a few years later, as Queen of Aragon. A year before her own death the half-forgotten Queen, Sibilia de Forcia, died at Barcelona, while her ancient enemy, Juana, Countess of Foix, survived her barely twelve months. This Princess, childless by her marriage with Matthew, Count of Foix, who was succeeded in his countship by his sister, Isabel, had been warmly welcomed and given a residence in Valencia, together with an allowance of 3000 golden florins, by the uncle against whom she had once raised the standard of revolt.

DOÑA MARGARITA DE PRADES

The story of Doña Margarita de Prades, the second wife of King Martin the Humane, more nearly resembles that of Mary Tudor, second consort of Louis XII of France, than of any other Queen whom we can recall in history. Both were torn from the arms of lovers who were the elect of their hearts to fulfil a political destiny. Both failed to achieve that fulfilment. In both cases, the romance of their lives centred, not in the elderly and invalid husbands to whom they were sacrificed, but in the young and gallant lovers with whom one, at least, was eventually united, recent researches, in the other case, warranting the belief that the widowhood of Doña Margarita de Prades also knew a brief and secret splendour of true marriage.

To an old and broken man, no longer Martin of the silver throne, the gay, good-humoured monarch and father of his people, mourning the loss of a true helpmeet, the strong, noble woman who had shared the vicissitudes of his restless reign, the tidings, brought to him in the summer of 1409, of the death of his only son, Martin, heir both to Aragon and Sicily, was the crowning calamity of his old age. Confronted with the thought of civil war that must inevitably be his legacy to his people, since he could now no longer hope to leave them a successor strong and young enough to take up the task that was fast slipping from his own nerveless grasp, the King was at the mercy of those who believed their counsel to be the salvation of the dual monarchy. The way of escape from all the troubles which threatened both Sicily and Aragon in the event of the death of their childless suzerain, was the re-marriage of the King. Two young and beautiful ladies, both near of kin to the Royal House, were proposed to their sovereign. The claims of the one, Doña Cecilia de Urgel, were speedily set aside. To those of the other, Doña Margarita de

Prades, Juan Martinez de Mengucho, Abbot of Poblet, lent all his powerful support. The King had seen her grow to her beautiful womanhood at his Queen's side, for she had been brought up, as we have seen, in the household of Doña Maria de Luna, and had attended her royal mistress to her coronation. One obstacle, and one alone, there only to be swept aside, stood between Don Martin and Doña Margarita. The latter had given her heart, and was about to give her hand, to a young and gallant knight, Don Juan de Vilaregut. She was called from the dream of an obscure happiness, at the side of the man she loved, to mount a throne beside a valetudinarian husband. What pressure was brought to bear upon her, we know not. The marriage was solemnized at the King's pleasure-house of Bellosguart, near Barcelona, the nuptial Mass being said, September 17, 1409, by the saintly Vincente Ferrer, already widely venerated for the miracles that were to secure his canonization. But for his native Aragon, the holy friar could work no miracle, as indeed it would have been, that should give to Don Martin and his people the desire of their hearts. It was an ill-omened marriage-altar which was lit, as it were, by the funeral tapers that flickered round the bier of the bridegroom's dead son. To give an heir to Martin, last of the illustrious dynasty of the Counts of Barcelona, was not to be granted even to the intercession of Pope Benedict the Twelfth, who had travelled specially from Perpignan to bestow his benediction on the royal spouses. In the midst of the wedding festivities an ill-timed embassy presented itself at the Court of Aragon, ostensibly charged with the conveyance of the condolences of Louis, King of Sicily, and Doña Violante his Queen, Don Martin's niece, on the occasion of the death of his son, but in reality secretly instructed to press upon the King's notice the claims of Queen Violante's son, Louis, whom his father and mother were willing to send to Barcelona, to be educated there, to the throne of Aragon. With an outburst of his old, hot-headed vigour, the newly wedded

monarch drove the impertinent ambassadors from his presence. The youth and loveliness of his bride had almost given him back his lost hopes for the future. It was a hope destined to be cruelly defeated. As month after month went by, bringing no word of joyful expectancy from the bridal chamber, competitors for the throne sprang up on all sides like armed men. Dearest to the King's heart was the bastard of his dead son, Don Fadrique, but there were more righteous claims. From the clamour of hungry voices that flocked like birds of prey around the infirm and bewildered King, he sought refuge, as meaner men have often sought it, in a hobby. Few have been so splendid as King Martin's, although the merest memory survives of that "veritable jewel of architecture" over which, when completed, Doña Margarita de Prades was to have reigned as Queen. That dream in stone, unfulfilled, still known, amongst the ruins of the cloisters of Poblet, as King Martin's Palace, would have been worthy of her beauty. But death stayed the hand of the royal builder, and on May 31, 1410, Doña Margarita's patient watch beside a dying man's couch, pitiful, if not tender, came to an end, and the palace remained unfinished. Upon the House of Aragon, which Don Martin left heirless and defenceless, immediately broke the full fury of those prolonged storms which he had foreseen, but was powerless to avert, and in which the gracious beauty of his young widow vanishes from our gaze. History sweeps aside the curtain, it is true, at intervals, bidding us gaze upon her in the strict retirement imposed upon the dowagers of the Royal House, petitioning Parliament to grant her the allowance to which her state entitled her, and giving orders for the taking of the Inventory of the late King four months after his death.

It has remained for Señor Don Victor Balaguer, however, to suggest that the royal widow found consolation, though secretly, lest her action should cost her the emoluments of her rank, in her union with the Charles Brandon of her romance, the faithful knight, Don Juan

de Vilaregut. According to this authority, Doña Margarita bore to Don Juan a son, who, at the age of seven or eight, was committed to the care of the Abbot of Poblet by his father, on the eve of his departure for Naples, where, in 1435, he was majordomo in the household of Alfonso V. At an earlier date, Doña Margarita de Prades had presumably entered religion, for in 1424 a document bears the signature of "Margarita the Queen, nun of Valdoncellas." At a still later date, she was Abbess of Bonrepos, where she died, but she was interred at her death, in 1451, at the Convent of Santas Creus, where her tomb bore both Royal Arms and crozier. Her orphaned son, destined for the priesthood, was absolved, on reaching manhood, from his vows, and entered the service of Alfonso V under the name of Juan Jeronimo de Vilaregut, the truth of his parentage having been disclosed to him.

RÉSUMÉ OF CHAPTER XI

Betrothal of Doña Maria de Luna to Don Martin, heir to the throne of Aragon, 1361.

Marriage of Don Martin and Doña Maria at Barcelona, 1372.

They receive the title of Duke and Duchess of Montblanch, 1387.

Their son, Don Martin the Younger, sails for Sicily, 1398.

Don Martin succeeds his brother, King Juan I. Maria de Luna as regent, 1396.

Coronation of the King and Queen, 1399.

Death of Doña Maria de Luna, 1407.

Second marriage of King Martin to Doña Margarita de Prades, 1409.

Death of King Martin, 1410.

Death of Margarita de Prades, 1451.

AUTOGRAPH OF DOÑA MARGARITA DE PRADES

CHAPTER XII

DOÑA LEONOR DE ALBURQUERQUE

NOTHING in the history of mediaeval Aragon is more remarkable than the consummate skill with which the Justiciar and those who were responsible for the government steered the ship of state through the interregnum which intervened between the extinction of the dynasty of the Kings of the House of Barcelona and the accession of the dynasty of Castile. Six claimants presented themselves for election to the vacant throne. These were, Don Jaime, Count of Urgel, great-grandson of Alfonso IV; Louis, Duke of Calabria, great-grandson of Pedro III; Fadrique, Count of Luna, grandson of Martin, the last King; John, Duke of Prades, grandson of Jaime II; Alfonso, Duke of Gandia, great-grandson of Jaime II; and Don Fernando, Regent of Castile, nephew of the late King, and brother of Enrique of Castile. As the months slipped by, and the difficulties of decision seemed no nearer a solution, it was agreed that a council of nine persons, representative of the estates of Aragon, Catalonia, and Valencia, should be empowered to choose a King, on behalf of the people, from amongst the six candidates. Meeting at Caspe, a little riverside town on the Ebro, sixty miles from Zaragoza, on March 29, 1412, the conclave announced, on June 28, the election of Don Fernando, first of the name in Aragon, to be King, and, incidentally, yet another Doña Leonor to be its Queen.

Leonor, daughter of Don Sancho, Count of Alburquerque (brother of Don Enrique II, King of Castile), and Doña Beatrice of Portugal, was born some months

after her father's violent death in a street brawl at Burgos, in 1374. In Castile, together with all her high-sounding titles which were hers by inheritance from the moment of her birth—Countess of Alburquerque, Lady of Medellin, Tiedra, Uruena, Montealegre, Villaloin, Briones, Villalba, del Alcor, Castromonte, Carvajales, Haro, Ampudia, Belorado, Cerazo, Ledesma—she bore the name of Urraca—that curious name of many meanings which we have seen borne once, by a Queen-consort, in the history of Aragon—which she seems to have changed, from the moment of her arrival on Aragonese soil, for that of Leonor, more familiar in the ears of her new subjects. Her great wealth had won for her the sobriquet of the “Rica Hembra” (the Lady Grandee); the beauty of her red-gold hair is chronicled in the annals of her husband's reign. She had been married to King, then Prince, Fernando, at Valladolid in August, 1395, when she was twenty-one and the bridegroom fifteen; she was still a young and beautiful woman, the mother of five sons and two daughters.

The coronation of Don Fernando I of Aragon, the details of which we owe to the threefold authority of Alvar Garcia de Santa Maria, a contemporary chronicler, of Geronimo Blancas, and of an extract from the last will and testament of the King himself, deserves the place of prelude which it actually held to that of his beautiful and noble consort.

On November 24, 1413, Don Fernando, acclaimed King of Aragon by the representative assembly of Caspe, made known to Don Blasco de Heredia, Governor of the kingdom, his intention of proceeding to Zaragoza, in order that he and his “very dear consort, the Queen,” might receive the Crown and Holy Unction, together with “all other outward signs of royal excellency”; the day proposed for this solemn ceremony being January 8, after the Festival of the Epiphany. It was the King's sovereign pleasure, therefore, that his will in the matter should be forthwith made known to his faithful lieges. This letter despatched from Lerida, Don Nicolas de

Biota, Seigneur of Albatillo, Keeper of the Household Accounts, was next instructed to make all necessary preparations for the august celebration. It was not until January 15, 1414, that these preparations were actually completed. On that day, the King, states our first-mentioned authority, was received at the gate of Zaragoza by his eldest son, Don Alfonso, afterwards his successor as Alfonso V, and by many knights and great lords of the Kingdom of Aragon, by the citizens, and by the members of his own household, his trumpeters and minstrels, all wearing the royal livery, which was green, white, and red, the heralds going before, making known to the people the coming of their new ruler. At the Palace of the Aljaferia, all was in readiness to receive one of the noblest sovereigns who ever sat upon a throne of Spain. The walls were hung with priceless tapestries, the chairs all thrones, so sumptuous were the *bancals* thrown across them—some of cloth of gold, others of silk, all with fringes of gold—while the floors were covered with magnificent carpets. A huge temporary building, or marquee, had been erected in the courtyard of the Palace by order of the King, of white pinewood, with skylights in the roof. This, like the halls in the Palace, was richly hung, and canopied with red and yellow woollen cloth (bunting?). Over the chair of state, where the King was to take his seat at the banquets which were to be served every day in this temporary dining-hall, was stretched a canopy of cloth of gold bearing the Arms of Aragon and Sicily. The marquee was lit by sixteen candelabra suspended from the roof, with four great candles burning in each, others being placed at the entrance to the hall, which was capable of seating a thousand persons, or more.

A fountain of wood, painted to represent jasper, rained jets of red wine, white wine, and water.

Everywhere in the Palace, on velvet and damask backgrounds, on wall-hangings and chair-coverings, side by side with the Arms of the House of Aragon, appeared the device of the newly founded Order of Our

Lady of the Lilies¹ (La Jarra de Nuestra Señora or de Las Azucenas); a jar of lilies pendent from a chain of gold, with an image of the Blessed Virgin, surrounded by stars, and bearing the Child Christ in her arms. The Order was a military one, the knights, who belonged to the noblest families in Aragon, vowing "to fight against the Moors, for the honour of the Christian Faith, and to protect widows and orphans." Founded by the King, "a very devout knight of Our Lady," in honour of his coronation, the first investiture of the new Order seems to have been one of the most imposing of the incidents connected with that solemn function. A hall in the Palace, to which, for the time being, was given the name the Palace or Hall of the Jars, having been set apart for the ceremony, and a chair of state placed therein for the King—called the Chair of the Jars, from the four jars of lilies, gilt, which stood at the four corners of the dais on which it stood—the Royal Founder of the Order proceeded to invest the chosen knights, the jongleurs playing the while on their instruments, "so that none could hear the others speak."

The streets and lodgings of Zaragoza were impassable and crowded to suffocation. Not Aragon only, but Castile, Navarre, and Sicily, all bound to the new King by ties of blood or vassalship, had sent their noblest, fitly attended, to do him honour. Those frowning, fortress-like houses of the ancient capital of the Moors of Northern Spain were backgrounds for a dazzling wealth of colour as knight and prince and serving-man came and went in that brilliant week of the coronation of Ferdinand the Just. It was the day of the device, not only fluttering and flaunting itself on knightly helm and menial's shoulder, but blazoned in exquisite embroidery on quaint *houppelande* and trailing *gonela*; the day of braided tresses and garlands of gold encrusted with gems—pearls, emeralds, and balas rubies. It was

¹ "The Order of the Looking-glass of the Blessed Virgin Mary," as one old writer styles it, describing the jar of lilies as "Bough-potts with their mouths full of lilies."

the day of fabrics whose very names blossom on the page that bears them—fabrics lovely as the image which they evoke—“*primavera*”—cloth of springtime—“*velillo*”—thin, delicate, strewn with flowers worked in silver thread—“*tela de nacar*”—cloth of mother-of-pearl, fashioned of opalescent threads—silver serges, watered cloth of silver, and delicate *picotes*, satins of Majorca.

On the Thursday prior to the coronation, which was February 8, while the King's sons, and numerous knights and esquires of Castile and Aragon were jousting before the Palace, the Moors who formed part of the embassy sent by the Moorish King of Granada to represent him at the coronation, gave a display of their national game of reeds with all their customary grace and dexterity. The players wore their native burnouses and *aljubas*, and the short swords known as “*espadas ginetas*,” while in one hand they carried their shields, and their reeds in the other. The attendant trumpeters “made such a tumult before the gates of the Palace that the Aragonese and others looking on took the game for a real battle, many of the horses, in fact, being wounded, and the players thrown.” The contest only ceased with nightfall, when all repaired to the *Aljaferia*, where they were received by the King, who, to show his royal largess, caused the treasures of his house to be opened, and bestowed the following gifts on his household, so that all should come in fitting attire to the coronation.

To some, he gave lengths of *aceytuni*, very rich, with gold, to others, plain *aceytuni*, with sable for trimming; to the prelates, and a few of the knights, scarlet cloth, with gris fur; to some of the knights and esquires, cloth “*de mostre Mileres*,” with vair for trimming—this oddly named fabric being doubtless the no less curiously named *Mustardevelin*, or *Mustardvillars*, a mixed grey woollen cloth, says Fairholt, often mentioned by mediaeval writers, and made at *Moustiers de Villars*, near Harfleur. Wands, chains of gold, and florins were distributed amongst the servants.

Sumptuous as was the wardrobe of the Royal House of Aragon on all gala occasions, it may be doubted whether any King, not even excepting Don Martin and Pedro the Ceremonious, ever went to his coronation more regally attired than Don Fernando the Just. According to custom, the King, having bathed the night before, put on new garments, first, a shirt of fine linen, then white silk breeches, with the leg-bandages of silk also, their whiteness signifying "that he should walk with chastity, as befitted a devout knight of Our Lady"; then, a doublet of aceytuni, very richly embroidered with gold and crimson, and over the doublet a tunic of bright scarlet, without sleeves, and a pellote or pelisse over this, made of crimson aceytuni and gold, with the Royal Arms, and a pointed hood, and ermine edging. The royal hose were of scarlet cloth. For the actual ceremony of the coronation, we learn that the King assumed gold-embroidered hose, with gold fastenings, shoes of white *ricomas*, with similar ornamentation and fastenings, his shirt of white linen; the Alb was of very fine linen, fringed, with one band of gold and the other of crimson aceytuni, the edges of the sleeves embroidered with gold and pearls, with a girdle of white silk, with two gold knobs at the ends, the Chasuble worked with gold and pearls also on a ground of crimson aceytuni, having also the device of the Jars and Our Lady, a tunic of white damask, lined with red aceytuni, the collar embroidered with the Arms of Aragon, the sleeves embroidered with gold and pearls, with fringes, and three sapphires introduced thereon; the Dalmatic and Maniple, as appointed in the Order for the Coronation. Long after, at the moment of dictating his last will and testament, the memory of the dying King goes back, it is easy to recognize, to the solemn hour of his coronation. It was his passionate desire that all who should stand beside his tomb in the choir of Poblet, whether his own immediate descendants or strangers to come long after, should behold the dead monarch in his habit as he lived on that gala day of his "solemn

crowning and anointing in La Seo." He therefore directs that his effigy should be clad in the sacerdotal vestments which he then wore, "in the fashion of a Cardinal when the Pope celebrates the Divine Office, and sandals of velvet on his feet, which he wore when he was crowned, and that on his head should be placed a crown of silver-gilt, set with crystal stones, and a sceptre in his right hand and an orb in his left, both of silver-gilt, and an ensign beside him, and all his other ornaments of silk and linen. And that above him should be laid his helmet, commonly called *timbre*, and also a small shield, called a *targe*. And these things shall remain thereon," ends the moribund King, "to perpetuate our memory, upon our tomb." Alas! The tomb of the Just King has long since crumbled into the dust of Poblet itself!

The Queen of Castile had sent to Don Fernando, to be worn at his coronation, the crown with which his father, King Juan, had been crowned before him—an incident in which Zurita sees a foreshadowing of the eventual union of the two kingdoms. The King, however, with admirable tact and discretion, gave orders for his crown to be made in Barcelona, whose craftsmen in gold and precious stones were famous for their art. They excelled themselves in their execution of the royal order. The Crown was of gold, five marks, three ounces in weight, set with one ruby, ten balas rubies, large, small, and medium, seventy-six sapphires, all very large, of the finest water, four hundred and ninety-six grains of pearls, clear and white, as large as peeled nuts, which, Blancas adds, is nothing extraordinary, since Pliny mentions a pearl as big as the hilt of a dagger. The Crown was made in twenty-eight sections, fourteen joining the chaplet round the head, and the other fourteen forming the turrets and pyramids round the Crown, the whole so exquisitely made and adorned that the like had never before been seen. This truly royal diadem was borne before the King in the coronation procession, on a silver-gilt tray, by his eldest son, newly created

Duke of Gerona. It was afterwards used to crown Doña Leonor. Side by side with it reposed that sent by the Queen of Navarre, set with rich jewels also, balases and rubies, but not so fine nor of such value as the other. The Sceptre, carried by the Infante Juan, and the Orb, borne by the Master of Santiago, were no less notable than the Crown, the former tipped with a great balas, as big as a pigeon's egg, and the latter of gold, having a little cross on the top.

A notable guest at the coronation was Don Enrique de Villena, famous in the literary annals of Spain, his allegorical play, the first of the kind in Spain, being performed in the open air during the passage of the procession through the streets on the return from the coronation. The distinguished author looms large in all the incidents of the festivities. He had been among the company at the banquet which preceded the crowning of the King, he had served as cupbearer at the customary collation offered to the sovereign on his arrival at La Seo the night before his coronation; he had shared with the Duke of Gandia the high honour of carrying the Dalmatic in the procession from the sacristy to the Cathedral; he had borne the mantle of white aceytuni, furred with ermine, at the investiture of Don Juan, second son of the King, as Duke of Peñafiel. At the coronation banquet, Don Enrique had also acted as assistant cupbearer, and the following day as Server of the Knife, an aptly allotted office, his *Arte de Cisoria* being his chief claim to fame as a littérateur. Ticknor compares this quaint treatise with Dame Juliana Berners' *Treatise on Fishing*.

Don Enrique's allegory was staged on "a great castle, in the shape of a wheel, with a high tower in the centre, and four other towers at the four corners, the centre tower being fortified, and in the centre was a wheel, very great, whereon were four damsels, representing the four Virtues, Justice, Truth, Peace, and Mercy, and at the summit of the great tower was a seat, and on it a child clad in the Royal Arms of Aragon, and a golden



DON FERNANDO I, DOÑA LEONOR D'ALBUQUERQUE,
AND COURTIERS

crown on his head, and in his hand a naked sword, as though he were a king. And the child sat there, without moving; only the wheel moved; and the damsels declared what was their significance, and then, mounting to the towers, clad in white silk, embroidered with gold, each in turn sang to God the praises of our Lord the King, and of the excellent occasion, and then each one recited a couplet, each Virtue commending the quality which she represented, Justice the while bearing in her hand a sword, Truth, scales, Peace, a palm, and Mercy, a sceptre."

Other open-air performances also took place in the crowded streets. A wooden town, staged on carts, with houses, roofs, and towers, "marvellously natural," was attacked by two garrisons in two castles erected opposite the town, the besiegers throwing from their enclosure, which resembled a tilting-ground, balls as big as the head of a ten-year-old boy, being of leather stuffed with wool, while the townsmen retaliated with cabbages and other missiles.

The King of Navarre was represented at the coronation by his bastard son, "Mossen" Godfroi, Count of Cortes, whose outfit, we may well believe, was no less worthy of the occasion than that with which he "went to meet his father, Don Carlos III, on his return from a journey to France." Whether or no "Mossen" Godfroi took with him "red and white shoes" and hose to match, his buskins, green *hukes*, and other items of the earlier journey, he would certainly have travelled, as was then the custom, with his bed and furniture complete—hangings of red and black serge, canopy, dorsal, coverlet and three curtains, with their rings and cords. Was it for this same traveller, moreover, that payment was made, in 1414, to Bertran de Soraburu for "certain silver spangles, to be worn at the coronation of the King of Aragon, Don Fernando"?

The coronation of the last of the many Leonors of Aragon is of peculiar interest, as being the last also of which we have any record in the annals of the Queens

of Aragon ; the last occasion, that is to say, on which we, who come so long after, may follow as spectators in that glittering procession as it wends its way along the streets of ancient Zaragoza, with songs and dances, with flash of jewels and rainbow robes, conducting its queenly central figure to the most solemn moment of her life in the consecrated fane of La Seo. We are to turn no more those pages, set as it were with living jewels, whereon we may behold, as scarcely elsewhere in history, the very picture drawn long before for yet earlier ages by the inspired Psalmist ; here, once more, and then no more for ever, we are to be reminded, as so often in the history of Aragon, of that spirit of the East which permeates so much of her national life in the Middle Ages, beholding "the King's daughter, all glorious within, her clothing of wrought gold, brought with joy and gladness" into the Palace of the King of kings.

Dusk had fallen on Zaragoza, the hour of Vespers having struck, when, on the evening of Tuesday, February 13, 1414, "the noble and most devout Queen, Doña Leonor, set forth" from the Palace of the Aljameria, to receive her consort's crown in the Church of San Salvador, robed in white aceytuni, brocaded with gold, and supported by her sons, Alfonso, afterwards Alfonso V, the Magnanimous, and his brother, Juan, Duke of Peñafiel, known in history as Juan II, father of the unfortunate Prince of Viana. Their way to the Marble Hall, the scene of so many a gala night in the history of the Court of Aragon, was lit by the hundred torches which were borne before the Queen, twelve being carried "round about her," by twelve little pages, in white liveries, with trimmings of white fur. In the Hall, where a chair of state had been set for her coming, were assembled all the Court, the jongleurs, and the Princes and Princesses. At a given signal, dancing began, in which all present joined, "marvellously well." After the dancing was ended, the Queen proceeded to the Palace gate, where her white palfrey, with its white trappings, awaited her. The procession,

identical in all respects with those of previous similar occasions, then set out for La Seo, where the customary collation of spicery and wine having been served, the Queen withdrew to the lodging of the Archbishop, where she slept that night. The next day, Wednesday, was the actual ceremony of the coronation. The noble ladies who were charged with the coveted office of carrying the sacerdotal robes were Doña Leonor de Ixar, who bore the Alb, her sister, Doña Teresa, the Girdle (these two insignia being mentioned for the first time as being worn by the Queen, though they had always formed part of the King's insignia); Blanca Manuel, a lady of the suite in attendance on the Queen of Navarre, carrying the Chasuble of rich white damask, brocaded with gold, and embroidered with *aljofar* (small seed-pearl embroidery); Doña Leonor, Countess of Quirra, the white Dalmatic, sown with pearls and other precious stones; Doña Leonor de Villena, the Maniple. Of still higher rank were the ladies deputed to carry, in their appointed order, the Crown, the Orb, and the Sceptre. The first of these was entrusted to the Infanta Doña Maria, eldest daughter of the Queen, the second to her sister, Doña Leonor, and the third to Doña Leonor, daughter of the King of Sicily. The scene in the Cathedral at the moment of the coronation must have been, as Blancas declares, "a sight wonderful to behold," so gorgeous were the dresses of the ladies, *aceytuni* being the favourite wear; so costly the furs, sable, vair, and gris, the necklaces of gold, the girdles studded with precious stones, the chaplets of jewels, and that graceful form of head-ornament so much in vogue in the Middle Ages in Aragon, consisting of a circlet of gold with pendants forming a fringe all round the head, a fashion which, as Viollet-le-Duc reminds us, belongs to remote antiquity, appearing on funeral figures on Egyptian tombs, travellers in Spain in more modern times having noted the fondness of the women for "tiny coins strung on a silken thread, or made into buttons."

The time being February, there was a notable display of furs on the dresses of the ladies who thronged the Moorish windows of the city to see the splendid procession go by. In Spain, as elsewhere in the Middle Ages in Europe, the trade of the pelterer was a profitable one. "The names of those beasts bearing fur, and now in use with the bountifull Society of Skinners," as quoted in Thomas Middleton's seventeenth-century masque "The Triumphs of Love and Antiquity," are almost without exception those in vogue in Spain at this date. Ermine, lambskin, gris (marten), sable, otter, lynx, wolf, and squirrel seem to have been the favourite furs, many of these being native to Catalonia, where some at least on the list are to be found at the present day. Much sought after was the fur of the letice ("a beast of whitish-grey colour," says Cotgrave—the marten), of which we find as many as twenty used to edge a capirote in 1383 for the Queen of Navarre. English rabbit skins sold for half as much again as those from Spain, says Fairholt, in his *Costume in England*. Sumptuary ordinances fixed the prices which furriers were to charge for their work in this century. For sewing vair or white fur on ladies' mantles not more than two maravedis, the same for *pellotes*, for a tabard, fifteen.

The coronation of this golden-haired Queen was characterized by a charming unrehearsed effect which, we are told, was specially approved of by King Fernando's Catalan subjects, and "admired by all." When the Queen had been duly crowned, the Sceptre and Orb placed in her hands, and a ring of great beauty and value on her hand, the royal couple, laying aside the insignia of their rank, kissed one another, not with the customary formal salutation on the cheek, but over and over again on the mouth, "to the great delight of all," but more especially of the Catalan onlookers. The Queen, covered with blushes, was then conducted to her chair of state once more, the Infantas and Infantes, her children, now approaching to kiss her hand, their

royal mother in turn kissing them on the lips. The King having armed certain knights, the procession returned to the Aljaferia, where the usual repast was served. None entered into the enclosure which was reserved for the Queen save those who served her and two knights, who stood at the corners of the table with two wax candles to give light, besides that of the seventy-four candles suspended from the ceiling, and one hundred more which were held at the entrance to the enclosure, where the food was brought in. To amuse the company, the services of the popular entertainer, a dwarf named Borrá, had been retained. This famous and fortunate comedian enjoyed a rent-roll of 1500 florins per annum, and was, says Valla, "excellent and famous among comedians of his time." In 1436, we hear of the Cortes voting a grant of 1000 sueldos to "Mossen Borrá, buffoon." The night, or rather the early morning, was brought to a close with the customary dancing, in which the Infantas and the Court ladies took part, and after spices and wine had been served, the company broke up, the Queen retiring to her apartments. For three days, the Queen kept open house, as the custom was, the festivities of the first day being repeated on the two following. In special honour of the Queen's coronation, the King had ordered a great tournament to be held, a hundred knights against a hundred. The scene of the contest was the Campo del Toro, and the King and Queen were spectators, viewing the lists from the towers on the ramparts of the city. This event took place on the Friday following the coronation; on the Sunday and Monday after, there were displays of skill at the Moorish game of reeds; and on Monday, the Prince and the Duke, the King's sons, jousted in honour of the Queen, their mother. The lists were fifteen in number, and the King and Queen looked on, as before, from the ramparts. Valiant feats were performed by the royal and other knights, and at the conclusion of the tilting, the company returned to the Palace, where the King opened the ball with his

daughter, the Infanta Maria ; the same evening witnessing the betrothal in the great hall of the Aljaferia of Doña Leonor de Villena, who had had the honour of carrying the Maniple before the Queen at her coronation, to Don Antonio de Cardona, and of another Doña Leonor, sister of Don Garcia Fernandez Manrique, who was affianced to the Conde de Quirra. In celebration of this marriage, the King gave a great banquet, at which he entertained the bridegroom and other knights, the Queen and himself afterwards honouring the newly married couple by conducting the bride to her new home, and by dining with them later. With this marriage, says Blancas, "the most honourable and most noble festivities of the coronation came to an end."

No pains were spared from first to last by Don Fernando to endear himself to his new subjects, in all respects living up to the reputation which had preceded him from Castile as regent. The early days of the new reign were filled with countless proofs of royal clemency, and with the reinstatement or pensioning of various persons who had held office in different capacities under his predecessor. His unsuccessful rivals, meanwhile, had, with one notable exception, accepted the inevitable, and done homage. Jaime of Urgel, however, held out stubbornly against the will of the people, incited by his mother, the Countess Margarita, who refused to allow her daughters, as was customary, to enter the household of the new Queen, whom she insultingly styled Doña Urraca, Countess of Alburquerque.

That the Queen, however, bore the Countess no malice may be gathered from the fact that when the rebel Count, in spite of the support promised to him by the English Duke of Clarence and his compatriot, Don Antonio de Luna, was first defeated by the royal troops at Alcolea, and then, after the surrender of Balaguer, where he had taken refuge, forced to abandon all pretensions to the throne of Aragon, he was treated

by his conqueror with all possible consideration and magnanimity. King and Queen alike must have been moved, united couple as they were, by the devotion and tears of the young Countess of Urgel, who, attended only by two ladies, made her way from the besieged city to throw herself at the King's feet, imploring his clemency towards her unhappy husband. It was a plea supported, not only by the Bishops of Malta and Urgel, who accompanied her to the royal presence, but by the suppliant's own close connection with the royal family of Aragon, as the daughter of Don Pedro IV and Doña Sibilia de Forcia. All, however, that Doña Isabel was able to secure for her captive lord was the royal promise that his rebellion should not be visited with the penalty of death, which was commuted to imprisonment for life in the fortress of Jativa. Two years later, the Queen received into her household, at the King's desire, the two elder daughters of the Count, Doña Isabel and Doña Leonor, the two younger, Doña Juana and Doña Catalina, being allowed to remain with their mother while she lived; at her death, they were transferred to the Court of Doña Maria, Queen of Alfonso V, son and successor of Don Fernando. One of the four sisters, Doña Catalina, died young; Doña Isabel married the Infante Don Pedro of Portugal, who afterwards aspired to the throne of Aragon, and perished in the attempt; Doña Leonor became the wife of Ramon Ursino, Count of Nola, and Doña Juana of Gaston, Comte de Foix, on whose death she married Don Juan Ramon, son of the Count of Prades.

The year of Doña Leonor's coronation at Zaragoza saw the investiture of her eldest son, Alfonso, afterwards the Fifth of Aragon, as Duke of Gerona, and the urgent request of the Sicilians that the King should send them with all speed one of his sons as their King. The son chosen by Don Fernando in response to this request was his second son, Don Juan, Duke of Peñafiel, the one of his children with whom his relations were least cordial. The hand of the young Prince had been sought in

marriage by the celebrated Queen Joanna of Naples, and he had also been proposed as a husband for the Infanta Isabel, daughter of the King of Navarre. In Sicily, however, he was destined to meet the lady whom he eventually married, elder sister of the Infanta Isabel—Blanche, the widowed Queen and Vicereine of the island. In 1415, the heir-apparent of Aragon, Don Alfonso, was married at Valencia to Doña Maria of Castile.

The same year witnessed the rejection, by her namesake sister-in-law, Doña Maria, eldest daughter of the King of Aragon, of the hand of Henry V of England. The English ambassadors, two in number, accompanied by a certain Master of Theology, named John Guy Thornton, formerly tutor to the King, arrived at Perpignan, December 15, 1415. The alliance was one which commended itself both to the pride and the policy of Don Fernando ; but the Infanta stubbornly refused the proffered honour. In vain her parents dwelt on the renown, the valour, and the wealth of her royal suitor. Doña Maria, like Isabella the Catholic, in after years, had set her heart upon marrying where her heart had gone, and there, and not elsewhere, her hand should follow. We have a picture drawn for us of the wilful, obstinate Princess turning a deaf ear alike to parental blandishments and parental commands, vowing, with true woman-craft, that “ not to marry the best man in the world, would she leave her father and mother ! ” In vain the King pointed out that “ England was not so very far away ” ; where, moreover, he added, would she find so gallant a knight to do her the honour of making her his Queen ? If the King commanded, replied the Princess, with affected submission, she must needs obey, but if she might ask so great a favour, it would be that she might be allowed to remain in Aragon. Ferdinand the Just was a mediæval father in a thousand ; the incident closed with the King bowing to the will of his daughter. To us, who look back across the centuries at the two kings, Henry, the rejected, and

Don Juan II of Castile, the elect, Doña Maria's choice does her little credit. For the foolish boy, weak alike in mind and body, who found himself, at the age of twelve years, his own master, to his own and his kingdom's undoing, since both became thenceforth mere pawns in the game of Alvaro de Luna, cuts a sorry figure beside English Harry, the victor of Agincourt, the beau-ideal of the gallant soldier.

There was no lack of youth at the Court of Doña Leonor. Besides her own five sons and two daughters, two of the former destined to succeed their father in turn on the throne of Aragon, several other illustrious and youthful personages shared her maternal care. The most important of these was the boy Don Fadrique of Aragon, Count of Luna, son of Martin the Younger of Sicily, who, bereft at the age of nine of his grandfather, King Martin's guardianship, passed into the kindly wardship of Don Fernando. The times were those when the bar sinister passed for no reproach. The bastard of kings was the equal of princes. Thus, we find the King appointing a household for Don Fadrique conformable to his rank, assigning him a revenue, and treating him, in short, in every way, as one of his own sons, with whom he was brought up, as his great-grandfather, the famous Count Lope, had been brought up with the sons of Don Jaime II. The story of the base ingratitude with which Don Fadrique repaid his royal benefactor belongs to the reign of Don Fernando's son and successor, Don Alfonso V.

Two little high-born sisters, Doña Isabel and Doña Leonor, daughters of the ill-fated rival of King Fernando, Jaime, Count of Urgel, were also received by Doña Leonor into her motherly care after the defeat and life-long imprisonment of their father in the fortress of Jativa. The marriages of these children and of their sister, Doña Juana, and Doña Catalina, were matters of intimate and maternal concern to the royal family of Aragon, as we shall see at a later date.

To the brilliant Court of Doña Leonor also belongs

the tragic romance of her namesake lady-in-waiting, Doña Leonor de Escobar. This "most noble demoiselle, as beautiful as she was illustrious by birth, and of very noble parentage," had the misfortune to attract, whilst in the service of her royal mistress, to whom she was tenderly attached, the passion of the Queen's second son, Don Juan, afterwards King of Aragon and Navarre, a prince who, as boy or man, never spared the thing he coveted or the obstacle in the path of his ambition. By her royal lover, Doña Leonor became the mother of a son, Alfonso, afterwards created the first Duke of Villahermosa. Doña Leonor is the La Vallière of Aragon. Unglorying in her shame, she embraced the religious life in the Convent of Santa Maria of the Ladies of Medina del Campo, after the birth of her little child, upon whose face, it is said, she never looked again after her profession. In the cloister, where she earned a well-deserved reputation for sanctity, Doña Leonor was reunited for a few years to her royal mistress, who, as a widow, sought the same refuge, and at whose feet she was eventually laid to rest, in the convent of her profession.

In March, 1416, Doña Leonor mourned the loss of her youngest son, the Infante Don Sancho, Master of Calatrava, who passed away at Medina del Campo.

A still heavier sorrow was to fall upon her a few days later. The failing health of Don Fernando had urged upon him the advisability of seeking recovery, if it might be, in his native land, a proposal at which the States-General of Barcelona took umbrage. It is possible that his hot-headed subjects did not realize that it was a dying man who, weary and wounded, and attended only by a few of his household, passed from them for ever, borne in a litter, on his last journey. Death overtook him at Igualada, April 2, 1416. He left behind him a noble memory ; that of "a just man, a kind father, a true knight, an honest suitor, a devoted king, a gallant soldier." Don Fernando had made his will at Perpignan on October 10, 1415, with the assistance

of his secretary, Pablo Nicholas, and the approval of the Queen and his son and successor. His executors were the Queen, Don Sancho de Rojas, Archbishop of Toledo, his confessor, Friar Diego, Diego Fernandez de Vadillo, his secretary, and Bernardo de Gualbes, Chief Steward of the Principality of Catalonia. For the discharge of his debts, he gave his rich crown and jewels and all his gold and silver plate, and divided all his and Doña Leonor's possessions in Castile amongst his children.

The widowhood of Doña Leonor was crowded with many sorrows. From that royal tomb at Poblet in which she had buried all her heart and happiness, she passed from her four years' reign as Queen in Aragon back to her native Castile, over which one of her daughters, the Infanta Maria, was to be Queen. If she came in quest of peace, of that claustral retirement to which so many other royal ladies had turned with eager, though weary steps, bitter disappointment awaited her. From the ceaseless and senseless wars which were being waged at this time between Castile and Navarre, with the traditional implication of Aragon, Doña Leonor, bound as she was by the closest ties to the three kingdoms, must have found it practically impossible to hold aloof, even within the walls of her cloister. Protection there was none for her, as events were quickly to prove, in her nephew's dominions. They and he alike were under the masterful rule of that bold intriguer, Alvaro de Luna, who for nearly forty years was the virtual King of Castile. Where her dead husband had been regent, Doña Leonor was a cipher, even though the year 1418 saw the marriage of her daughter, the Infanta Maria, to her cousin, the chosen husband of her heart, the weak fourteen-year-old King, Don Juan II. Doña Maria, strong as she had shown herself to be in the matter of her affections, was powerless to withstand the all-powerful favourite, or to protect her widowed mother from his insults.

Ten years after leaving Aragon, Doña Leonor re-

visited the scenes of her former queenship. In 1426, her son, Don Alfonso V, being in residence at Valencia, his mother visited him there, bringing with her her younger daughter, Doña Leonor, the object of the visit being to discuss the marriage of the Infanta, for whom two possible bridegrooms had been proposed, Philip the Good, Duke of Burgundy, and Don Duarte, son and heir of the King of Portugal. The matrimonial destiny of the Princess was satisfactorily arranged at the interview, but the Kings of Castile and Navarre both frowned upon the Queen's expedition. The visit was therefore brought to an abrupt close, the Queen returning to Medina del Campo with her daughter, whose marriage with the Portuguese Prince was solemnized in the following year at Teruel, the bridal journey to Portugal being postponed, however, until 1428. Both of Doña Leonor's daughters thus lived to wear the crowns of queens-regnant. Both died, with mysterious suddenness, in 1435, not without suspicion of having been poisoned by Alvaro de Luna, their mother's inveterate enemy. Through her, he could always strike at the confederacy of her sons which constantly threatened his downfall. De Luna stood aside, indeed, when Doña Leonor's second son, Don Enrique, audaciously seized the person of the King of Castile, and kept him prisoner at Tordesillas until he had compelled him to consent to his marriage with his sister, Doña Catalina. But in 1430, when the Constable was once more in power, he revenged himself on the temporary success of the Aragonese faction in Castile, by taking forcible possession of the estates of Doña Leonor in Castile, and imprisoning the widowed Queen in the Convent of Santa Clara de Tordesillas, famous as the retreat of Doña Valentina de Mur, whose fatal beauty had worked such havoc in the life of Don Fadrique of Aragon, but who afterwards became Abbess in this convent. With the recurrent ascendancy of her sons, Doña Leonor recovered her lands and her liberty, but sorrows followed thick and fast upon her footsteps. She was called upon not

only to witness, the dissensions between those nearest and dearest to her, but to lose three of her sons and both her daughters before death mercifully set her free. The last and crowning sorrow of her life was the defeat and captivity of her two sons at the Battle of Ponza, of sinister fame in the annals of Aragon. It was virtually her death-blow. She died at the Convent of Medina del Campo, December 16, 1435, "after great labours and sorrows."

RÉSUMÉ OF CHAPTER XII

Birth of Doña Leonor de Alburquerque, 1374.

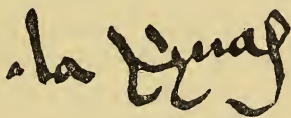
Her marriage to Don Fernando, Regent of Castile, 1395.

Accession of Don Fernando to the throne of Aragon, 1412.

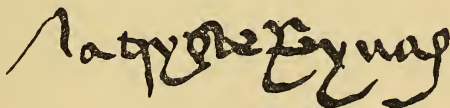
Coronation of King Fernando and Queen Leonor at Zaragoza, 1413.

Death of the King. Doña Leonor retires to Castile, 1416.

Her death at Medina del Campo, 1435.



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AUTOGRAPHS OF DOÑA LEONOR DE ALBURQUERQUE

(1) Before her widowhood : (2) after.

CHAPTER XIII

DOÑA MARIA OF CASTILE

ON November 14, 1401, in the Alcazar of Segovia, a daughter was born to Enrique III of Castile and his Queen, Catherine of Lancaster. English blood, therefore, ran in the veins of this future Queen of Aragon, who received the name of Maria. Passionate blood also flowed in the same channel, for the little Infanta was the granddaughter of Pedro the Cruel and his beautiful mistress, Maria de Padilla. Her matrimonial destiny was early assured. Castilian politicians were already busied with that dream of the union of Castile and Aragon which the accession of Fernando of Antequera to the latter throne had seemed to bring a little nearer fulfilment. Betrothed when literally in her cradle to her first cousin, Don Alfonso, eldest son and heir of Ferdinand the Just of Aragon, no pains seem to have been spared to fit Doña Maria for her future exalted position, although none of those who were responsible for her upbringing could have foreseen how arduous her queenship was actually to prove. Doña Juana de Zuniga and her daughter, Doña Mencia, to whom in succession the education of the Infanta was confided, were both women of exceptional talents and lofty character, and the thoroughness with which they discharged their onerous task was amply rewarded by the remarkable results achieved in the person of their illustrious pupil. Florez, the celebrated biographer of the Catholic Queens of Spain, is loud in her praises; whilst the history of the reign of her ungrateful consort, Don Alfonso V, which belongs rather to Italian than to Spanish annals, is that

of his noble and neglected wife's administration of the affairs of Aragon, which prospered, as one historian reminds us, "during the King's absence beyond the sea, as a country that has no history."

When Doña Maria had attained the age of seven years, the Papal dispensation rendered necessary by the close relationship between the contracting parties having been granted by Pope Benedict XIII, the betrothal of the youthful and princely pair was ratified with the customary formalities, the bride's dowry being the Marquisate of Villena, commuted to 200,000 golden doubloons. Attended by the Bishops of Palencia and Mondonedo, and by the usual suite of grandees, the Infanta was conducted to Valencia, where the marriage took place June 12, 1415. At the Court over which she was eventually to reign, she found the warm and maternal welcome of her aunt and mother-in-law, Doña Leonor, to whose queenship she was to succeed ere another year had gone by. The withdrawal of the widowed Queen from Aragon must have been a real and great loss to her young daughter-in-law. She needed the presence and the ripe counsels of the elder woman as no happily married wife ever needs the friendship of another woman. For very early in her married life, Doña Maria recognized, clearly, though without submission—that came long after—that, if she was to find even the outward semblance of happiness in Aragon, she must seek it in her devotion to the people over whom she had been called to reign. The fifteen-year-old Queen of Don Alfonso V does not seem to have sought, or to have given proof of her capacity for, the rôle which fate was reserving for her. Her husband, careless from first to last alike of Aragon and of his consort, was occupied, for the four years immediately following his accession, with the concerns of Corsica and Sardinia, and, incidentally, with the mistake which was to recoil so disastrously upon his kingdom, the recall from the vice-royalty of Sicily, in spite of the pleadings and protestations of its inhabitants, of his younger brother,

Don Juan, to find compensation in the hand of the widowed Queen of Sicily, Blanche of Navarre, and in the intrigues which he was now free to foment in Castile. There, however, he came into speedy conflict with his brother, the Infante Enrique, who had followed his mother, Doña Leonor, with the rest of her family, back to her native land. Both brothers disputed with Alvaro de Luna the supremacy over the boy-King, who was at once their cousin and their brother-in-law, Don Enrique, however, striving still more for the prize of the hand of the Infanta Doña Catalina, the King's sister. By a dramatic *coup*, he attained his end. On July 14, 1421, "before the King had risen from his bed," the Prince, with a handful of fellow-conspirators, under pretext of removing Don Juan from the humiliating bondage in which he was held by Alvaro de Luna, made him prisoner in his Palace, only setting him at liberty when he had consented to the marriage of his audacious captor with Doña Catalina. The birth of a son in this same year to the Duke of Peñafiel, as Don Juan was now styled, and his wife, Doña Blanca of Navarre, was a sharp reminder to the childless Queen of Aragon of the withholding from her hungry arms of the sole tie that might have bound her errant husband more closely to her side. The year 1421 was also the year of Don Alfonso's departure on that memorable expedition which was to have "so far-reaching an influence on the future history of United Spain." It was a woman's hand that beckoned him, fanning the restless flickering of his roving ambitions to a flame of thirst for conquest. Juana of Naples, who had jilted his younger brother, Don Juan, in order to marry the Count de la Marche, who had speedily exchanged her fickle embraces for a dungeon, now summoned the head of the House of Aragon to the doubtful honour of becoming her adopted son, and heir to her crown. Seconded by the Pope, such an offer was one after Alfonso's own heart. But scarcely had it been accepted, when Juan, fickle as ever, transferred it to Louis of Anjou, the hereditary

foe of the House of Barcelona. Confronted by the dilemma in which he was now plunged, Don Alfonso had but one course left open to him. That course, as he made it known to the world, counselled that, under the circumstances, it would be more politic to await developments, which were sure to arise where such a woman as Queen Juana was concerned, not in Naples, where he had already established himself, but in Aragon. That he withdrew from Italy, however, with a bad grace, may be inferred, whilst the plundering and burning of the city of Marseilles on his homeward voyage reads like the petty spite of a thwarted boy venting his ill-humour on the nearest unoffending, inanimate object. Minor and family matters filled the years that intervened, all too slowly, between the King's return to his Spanish, and his second expedition to his Italian, dominions. The Castilian intrigues of his brothers kept him constantly on the brink of war with Castile, only averted, time after time, by the discretion of his Queen. All her services in this connection, however, were coldly regarded by the King, who was now almost completely estranged from her. The mystery of the final rupture between the ill-assorted pair has never been completely solved, though the tragic solution has been sought in the violent death of Doña Margarita de Ixar, a lady of the Court of Doña Maria, by whose orders, it is said, the unfortunate lady, suspected of an intrigue with the King, was cruelly done to death. Doña Margarita, it was believed, paid with her life for another's sin, since the reputed son whom she was supposed to have borne to Don Alfonso, Don Fernando of Calabria, was believed by many to have had a still more exalted personage for his mother. Whatever were the true facts of the tragedy, the King on learning of the death of Doña Margarita, took a solemn oath never again to live with the Queen as his wife, and thereupon departed on his second and final expedition to Italy. The event, however, which, in the eyes of the world, cleared his way to that inheritance which had been snatched from him by Louis

of Anjou, was the death of his rival. This was quickly followed by that of Juana herself, and by the prompt assertion of the claims of Alfonso of Aragon to her possessions. Opposition at once arose from Rome, the Duke of Milan being appointed to give martial expression, at the head of the Papal forces, to that opposition. Alfonso retorted by taking possession of the city of Terracina, his brother, the Infante Don Pedro, acting as his proxy. Terracina, or, more correctly, the neighbouring Isle of Ponza, was to be a name of no less sinister meaning in the annals of Aragon than that of Uclés in the history of Castile. The "Magnanimous" King was no admiral; the flower of the Aragonese nobility, under his command, sustained a crushing defeat at the hands of the Italians, and Don Alfonso and his two brothers were taken prisoners by the victorious Duke of Milan, yet treated, as the chronicler tells us, "not like prisoners, but as princes." Portent upon portent had not failed to stamp that fatal Fourth of August, 1435, upon the popular imagination of the subjects of the captive monarch. At Zaragoza, the fall of an arch of the stone bridge which was in process of erection over the Ebro caused the deaths of five persons, several others being seriously injured. Still more ominous was the tolling of the famous Bell of Velilla, which, untouched by mortal hands, gave forth, as it was wont upon occasions of disaster to the Royal House, its sonorous and sinister warning. But the Bell of Velilla foretold joy as well as sorrow, for, on the Vigil of the Epiphany of the following year, it once more announced the restoration of the King and Princes to liberty.

The news of the defeat of the fleet of Aragon did not reach Barcelona until August 29, when the whole nation was plunged into mourning for its sovereign and sorrow for the Queens, mother and wife, and for the Princesses of the Royal House, sisters of Don Alfonso. The time, however, was one for immediate action, not for futile tears. The nation looked, as one man, and not

in vain, to Maria of Castile, who thus entered upon her long and lonely and heroic bearing of the burdens of his state which her consort was never afterwards to resume. It was to be her rôle henceforth not only to wield in his stead the sword of justice and mercy in his dominions ; it was to her, above all, that Don Alfonso was to look when it became necessary, as was to be so often and so urgently the case, to replenish the coffers whence he drew his supplies for prosecuting his campaign in Italy, careless as to the impoverishment of Aragon thereby. From Barcelona, where she had patiently awaited, in the midst of their people, tidings of the fate of the King's gallant fleet, Doña Maria proceeded, the worst being known, to Zaragoza, whence she despatched a summons to the grandees of the kingdom to meet her there for the purpose of taking counsel together as to the course to be pursued in the face of the national calamity. The Cortes having been convoked for November 5, 1435, at Monzon, the Queen proceeded to pay a flying visit to her brother, the King of Castile, who received her with every show of affection and respect at Soria. The visit lasted nine days ; on November 19, Doña Maria left Soria to keep her appointment with the Cortes, having accomplished the object of her journey, the prolongation of the truce which had been agreed upon between Aragon and Castile, the security of which was indispensable to the free hand necessary for her in the critical position of Aragon at the moment. Light from the torches borne before her flashes on her weary face and drooping figure as, seated on her royal throne in the Church of San Juan at Monzon, she takes the oath of her convocation and wins from the Cortes the necessary grant of men and money to enable the King to retrieve his fortune. Her efforts on his behalf were poorly repaid, first, as last, by Don Alfonso.

Her heavy task was by no means lightened by the interfering and thwarting influence of her brother-in-law, the provocative and intriguing Don Juan, Duke of Peñafiel, and, at a later date, through his marriage with

Doña Blanca, widow of Martin of Sicily, King of Navarre. Throughout her regency, we see him, in the rare intervals of his machinations in Castile, busily engaged in frustrating all his sister-in-law's efforts for the good of her people, and in undermining her husband's faith and confidence in her abilities as administrator. He even partly succeeded in ousting her from her office as Lieutenant-General for the whole kingdom, wresting from his brother the control of Aragon, leaving only that of Catalonia to the Queen. It was probably at his suggestion, also, that Don Alfonso proposed, in 1436, that the Queen should join him in Naples. Fortunately for the peace of Aragon, Doña Maria refused. She loved Aragon too well to abandon it to Don Juan. The hand of a peacemaker, not of a crafty plotter, was necessary at the helm of state at this juncture. Don Juan hated her, not only because she was the sister of his enemy, the King of Castile; she was the friend of his equally hated and unfortunate son, the Prince of Viana.

Throughout her administration of the affairs of Aragon Don Juan was the thorn in her side which pierced most deeply into her heart.

"Bring me a constant woman," writes that great dramatist who was an unrivalled reader of the human heart, "and to that woman, when she has done the most, yet will I add an honour, a great patience." It might have been Maria of Castile whom the poet had in mind. In the pages of the *Cancionero* of Lope de Stuniga, she stands, a noble figure, sadder than Leda, robed in white, girdled with gold, the collar and device of the Jar and Griffon round her neck, a rosary in her hands, and her brows bound with the martyr's palm. It is the portrait of a woman who was patient indeed, though her patience broke her heart at last. Over her grave face there rested, we are told, a veil of habitual melancholy—strange contrast to the brilliant smiles of Lucrezia de Alagno, the enchantress of Torre del Greco!

Where are we to look for the secret and solution of

that livery of sadness which, early assumed, was never laid aside until death? Is it to be found in that other tragic mystery—the one blot on a noble character—the violent death of Doña Margarita de Ixar, her lady-in-waiting, said to have been brought about by command of her royal mistress, who suspected her of being the mother of the King's bastard son, Don Fernando, afterwards Duke of Calabria, and eventually, having been legitimized by the Pope, his successor on the throne of Naples? Or was it the still more sinister truth, too late revealed to her, that the hapless victim of her jealous rage had paid the penalty of another's sin, to shield whom she had laid down her life? For the mother of the bastard Prince, popularly supposed to be a certain Vilardona Carlina, has been held by some historians to have been yet more highly placed, and united to the King by the closest bonds of relationship by marriage—namely, his sister-in-law, Doña Catalina, wife of the Infante, Don Enrique. If the scandal reached the ears of Doña Maria, she at least gave Doña Catalina the shelter of her silence and her roof, for this “golden-haired Infanta,” who shared her husband's wandering life for years, passed away, October 19, 1439, after giving birth to a son, in the Archbishop's Palace at Zaragoza, tenderly watched over in her dying moments by her sister.

Cause enough for the shadows to deepen on the outward features as they deepened on the heart and around the path of Aragon's noble Regent and forsaken Queen. As the term of her regency lengthened, she ceased to look for the summons which she was too proud to demand, which should have called her to her rightful place at her husband's side. In 1436, indeed, there had been idle talk of such a summons; but the fact that it was proposed to replace her as regent by the Duke of Calabria was probably enough to bring the project to a swift close. And, as time went on, bringing to her year by year the testimony of eye-witnesses—ambassadors from Barcelona who vainly sought to draw their

✓ sovereign from the siren spell of Lucrezia de Alagno to his half-forgotten Aragonese kingdom—Maria of Castile accepted her burden, and strove to be content with her lonely splendour of a throne. Without a pang of never-stifled yearning, or, at least, without a pang betrayed, she took her kind and courteous leave of those fairest and noblest of Catalonia's noble youth, who, finding her Court too dull, her rule too austere, were for ever spreading wings of impatient desire towards that gay and splendid Court of Naples where the Golden Age might once more be lived beneath the sway of that lady of the King's heart, who was its virtual Queen. They passed, too, these willing exiles from Aragon, to bridals arranged for them by the Magnanimous monarch. Thus, the Infanta Leonor, daughter of the Count of Urgel, sailed from Barcelona to marry the Neapolitan Count de Nola ; whilst the almost royal House of Cardona gave another Leonor, daughter of Don Ramon de Cardona, to be the bride of Don Antonio de Arborea, Marques de Oristan. If their Queen's thoughts ever followed their receding galleys towards those shores which, as one of her poets has well said, she had good cause to curse, none knew it, as she turned back to take up her heavy charge once more. She needed quiet composure for its fulfilment. We can scarcely picture her in any other mood. The path which she was called upon to tread in its execution, was, as we have said, agloom with shadows. The mediaeval order and the feudal system were passing in the midst of strange portents, famine, tempest, flood, and signs in the heavens, as though the elements themselves were at once typical and in sympathy with the fierce struggle of the long-enslaved to shake off the hated yoke of their feudal lords. The wild music of those lawless bands who marched through the land to the sound of flageolet, trumpet, and drum, might well have struck, as indeed it did strike, terror into the hearts of those who had good cause to tremble as that army terrible with banners rolled by. But on the ears of the woman whose fearless

sympathy was all theirs, who had won their compassion and respect, if not their affection, by her life of devotion to duty, and her warm espousal of their cause, it fell but as yet another trumpet-call to duty. Duty, and that by no means an easy task, was all that was required of her. The King of Naples looks to the Regent of Aragon to find him money to carry on his distant and undesirable rule in Naples. It is his place to ask, hers to use all the eloquence at her disposal to replenish his often-emptied coffers. He demands an armada of forty-two galleys, or three hundred men; Barcelona, approached by the Regent, responds with literal zeal, one Consul alone, Juan de Fivaller, undertaking to fit out six galleys at his own cost. Calm and composed by nature, she is driven, by the urgency of commands from Naples, like a leaf before the wind, like a petrel before the storm, to do his behests.

From that memorable day in 1429, when she pitched her tent between the armies of Castile and Aragon at Cogolludo, and turned the tide of fratricidal battle by her silent, yet eloquent plea for peace, Doña Maria saw the way that was appointed her to walk in, and trod it unflinchingly. The itinerary of her journeys during the years of her regency represent not merely miles of wearisome travelling, in a country where travel has always been traditionally difficult, but a strain that slowly, but surely, sapped the strength of which she was ever unsparing. Life for her was a stern thing of hardships and anxieties, a striking contrast to that long holiday, in which she could scarcely have borne a part, those splendid Neapolitan fêtes, with their pantomimes, their ballets, their "disguises" and "interludes," and "moralities," which were the jewelled setting of the sway of Alfonso V over his Italian province—a frame from which it is to be feared the serious-minded Queen would have torn more than one offence, as we find her, in 1454, prohibiting the appearance in municipal merry-makings at Barcelona of naked men or "other indecencies," as well as the use of rockets or Greek fires. It

was the influence of Doña Maria that undoubtedly brought to Aragon the respite of the five years' truce which was agreed upon between the warring Kings in 1430. She it is who flings herself into the breach whenever that solemn cessation of hostilities seemed, as it often was, to be on the point of breaking down. When the disaster of Ponza seemed to leave Aragon open to the attacks of enemies from all quarters, Doña Maria's first thought is to summon the Cortes of Monzon to grant supplies to her captive husband of men and money, but her second thought is to make assurance doubly sure by interceding with her brother, the King of Castile, that his dogs of war may not be let loose upon a defenceless people in the midst of their humiliation and disaster. And it is to the credit of the foolish ✓ Don Juan II of Castile that, puppet as he was in the hands of Alvaro de Luna, he never failed in respect or affection for his sister. As a Queen, he received her on her native soil; as a Queen, he kept faith with her. If she came as a suppliant, she was treated as a fellow-sovereign. Publicly, he declared, on the occasion of his granting her plea for the extension of the five years' truce in 1435, that he did so out of his great love and regard for the Queens of Aragon and Navarre. Nor does she relax, but rather redoubles her efforts in the cause of peace, when the accession of her nephew to the throne of Aragon on the death of his father, in 1454, seemed for awhile to jeopardize that which she had fought so valiantly to maintain.

Doña Maria gave practical proof of her interest in home industries by her frequent patronage of the craftsmen of Perpignan. Her commissions include gloves of dogskin and kid, embroidered with pearls and trimmed with silk fringe of different colours, and her numerous purchases of sheaths, or cases, some of gold, others of green or black leather, remind us of the multiplicity of these objects and their uses in the mediaeval lady's wardrobe. From Perpignan, also, Charles d'Oms sends her a length of cloth, "called cadis," for her "own use."

The researches of Señor Don Guillermo de Osma in the Archives of Valencia have brought to light an interesting correspondence which throws still more light on the Queen's fostering care of the arts and crafts of her subjects. The correspondence in question begins, November 26, 1454, with a letter written by the Queen, then residing at Borja, to Pedro Boil, Lord of Manises, in which she instructs that "noble and well-beloved" servant of her House, to have manufactured to her order, his estate being in the centre of the industry, a set of Majorca ware for her own personal use. As soon as the order is completed, the various items are to be at once delivered to "our loyal attorney, Don Christobal de Montblanch," to be by him transmitted to the Queen. The several items, which were duly despatched within four months of the receipt of the order, were, two aguamanils, or ewers, two large dishes for holding and serving meat, plates, bowls or porringers (*escudillas*) for broth, flower-vases, and other articles the use of which is undetermined by modern authorities, such as the morteros, of which half a dozen were ordered. On the receipt of the ware, which seems to have been an exquisite example of the famous lustre-ware of Manises, the Queen expresses her gracious thanks to Don Pedro, and gives a further order for six jugs and the same number of drinking-cups of the same.

The lonely Queen had her consolations. Spiritually, she found them, we are told, in the sermons of a certain Friar Matthew, whose influence as a fashionable preacher in Barcelona, Zaragoza, and Valencia, made him many enemies, and finally caused his banishment from Court. The Queen, however, remained his firm friend; in an illness which overtook him at Valencia, we find Doña Maria specially commending the care of the invalid to the *jurats* and *prud'hommes* of the city. Besides Lope de Stuñaiga, already cited, and Johan de Tapia, who sang her virtues, she had Jaime Roig, the troubadour, for her physician, a writer best known as the author of the *Libre de Consells fet per lo Magnifich Mestre Jaume*

Roig, or *Le Libre ou les Dones e de Concells*, a biting satire on women, though concluding with praise and glory to the Madonna. At her Court, too, sang Andreu Febreu, the talented translator of Dante's *Divine Comedy*, and the austere beauty of the elegies of Ausias March, that "man of a very lofty spirit," singer of Love and Death, and friend of the ill-fated Charles, Prince of Viana, found echo and response in her sorrowful heart.

The Kingdom of Aragon, which we have seen swept, in common with the rest of Europe, at the close of the fourteenth century, by the scourge of the Black Death, was called upon, at the middle of the fifteenth century, to confront that great social upheaval of the Peasant Revolt, which was the economic aftermath of the Plague. It was in the north-east or Catalonian district of Aragon that this revolt raged most fiercely. In that fascinating chapter of the close of the Middle Ages, which deals with the decay of the feudal system and the rise of the rural democracy, *pagesos de remensa*, as they are called, the last two Queens of Aragon figure almost side by side, wielding a powerful, though widely differing influence on the struggle.

Doña Maria of Castile was, as we should expect to find her, the mother of the manumitted serfs, paying with her popularity amongst the governing classes for her fearless espousal of their cause, and the repeal of the countless cruel and obnoxious taxes that pressed so heavily upon them. Her partisanship was visited with the scathing denunciations of the Cortes and the charge levelled at her by the nobility, of "inciting the people to rebel against their natural lords."

Doña Juana de Enriquez, on the other hand, step-mother to all the world save her own children, withstood the inevitable struggle towards freedom of an enslaved populace with all the foolish and over-bearing tyranny of a parvenue. If Doña Maria lifted one burden from those toil-ridden shoulders, Doña Juana would have bound a score thereon. Maternal legislation is

not for her ; sword in hand, she sallies forth to quell the tide which neither she nor her predecessor could hope to stay. One Queen was the wise woman who bows before the inevitable trend of social destiny ; the other was the foolish woman who pits her weak will against its onrush.

Administrative genius coupled with the maternal instinct, the stronger for its piteous denial, were the dominant virtues in the character of Doña Maria of Castile. Around her, as around other Queens of Aragon, we see grouped much that was young and motherless. On the death of Doña Maria de Luna, she succeeded to the charge of the granddaughter of Don Martin the Humane, Doña Violante of Sicily and Aragon, for whom she arranged a marriage, dowerless bride though she was, with Don Enrique de Guzman, Count of Niebla, a kinsman, on his mother's side, of the Royal House of Castile, the betrothal being celebrated in the presence of the Queen. The repudiation of Doña Violante by her husband, who drove her from his house in order to place at its head a sometime discarded mistress, was a source of "great grief and displeasure" to the Queen, who addressed a strong remonstrance to the Court of Castile on the subject of the Count's inhuman treatment of his young wife. From it sprang a deadly feud between the Houses of Guzman and de Luna. Many years after her first unhappy union, Doña Violante married as her second husband Don Martin de Guzman, a kinsman, apparently, of the Count de Niebla. The young daughter of the rebel Count Fadrique de Luna, a niece of Doña Violante, was also placed in the care of Doña Maria by Don Alfonso after the unhappy matrimonial dissensions between her father and mother. This ward of the Queen's, however, died before a suitable marriage could be arranged for her.

The daughters of Don Jaime of Urgel passed, as we have seen, from the guardianship of Doña Leonor to that of Doña Maria when the latter became Queen of Aragon. The marriage of one of these young ladies was

not accomplished without much persuasion on the part of Doña Maria. The match-making King Alfonso, who seems to have employed his leisure from camps in promoting alliances between his Italian courtiers and the ladies of Aragonese noble families, proposed, in 1437, a marriage between the Neapolitan Count of Nola, one of the most illustrious of his new subjects, and Doña Leonor of Urgel, requesting Doña Maria to send the bride with all speed, on board a galley commanded by Matheo Pujades, to Naples. But, "with great stubbornness," Doña Leonor absolutely refused to be thus dealt with as though she were mere merchandise. The King thereupon gave orders that, if she did not consent of her own free will, she was to be carried on board by force! But Doña Leonor continued obdurate. Matters grew to such a climax that the King was besieged with letters from all Doña Leonor's relations, imploring him not to force the alliance upon her, which, we are told, "caused the King to marvel much," seeing that the Count was amongst the highest in the land.

Doña Leonor's attitude may be explained, perhaps, by the fact that the Count of Nola seems to have previously sought the hand of her sister, Doña Juana, and that it was only on learning of the latter's second marriage, after barely eight months' widowhood, that he consented to console himself with Doña Leonor, then about twenty-four. The Queen's gentler counsels, however, must have eventually prevailed with the "proud ladye," for her marriage with the Count of Nola appears to have taken place within a year of her "stubborn refusal."

Under Doña Maria's tutelage, also, there grew up in Barcelona the young Prince known as the "Fortunate Infante," the posthumous son, by his second wife, Doña Beatriz Pimentel, of Don Enrique, brother of Alfonso V, who was mortally wounded at the battle of Olmedo, in 1445. Fate at one time seemed to reserve a brilliant destiny for this youthful Prince, who was proposed as a husband for the luckless Infanta Juana, nicknamed La Beltraneja, but when the cloister had

claimed her, he married a Portuguese lady, Doña Guiomar.

The hapless Prince of Viana, again, found in Doña Maria, no less than in her husband, a friend whose intervention, over and over again, in the distressing quarrels between his father and himself, postponed, it may be, the inevitable tragedy which ended all the Prince's misfortunes and which neither she nor Don Alfonso were able altogether to avert.

From 1446 to 1448, the picture which the records of the reign present of this lonely Queen, struggling not only against the growing infirmities of a premature old age, but against that tide of social revolution which broke at the very foot of her throne, is of infinite pathos. Perhaps because she saw the inevitableness of its oncoming, perhaps because she was too dejected and tired-out to resist, she placed herself on the side of the *pagesos de remensa*. She had been alternately shocked and sickened, pious and fastidious as she was, by the proofs of decadence and demoralization which had flaunted themselves before her eyes in the social order throughout the years of her impressionable girlhood in Aragon. She had recoiled alike from the open immorality alleged, without contradiction, against the clergy, even the monastic Orders, and the equally low standard of morals prevalent amongst the people over whom she desired her rule to be above all else maternal. She had seen flood and famine at their woeful work amongst those upon whom the burden of servitude already pressed to an insupportable degree. Her heart, upon which no child of her own had ever rested, went out to the oppressed, and for this, their oppressors pointed the finger of scorn and warning at her as "the instigator of disorder."

For a parallel to the social conditions prevailing in Spain as regards the relations between lord and vassal, in the thirteenth, fourteenth, and early part of the fifteenth centuries, we have but to turn to our own history of the same period. In both countries, the

Black Death had bequeathed a sinister harvest of depopulated towns and untilled fields, with their consequences of mortality and famine, to the survivors. But there was a yet more appalling legacy than this to be faced. Coterminous with the gradual decadence of the great feudal magnates had been the gradual rise of the manumitted serf. As in England, manumissions were purchasable, by loans to the lord for his military expeditions, whence he returned, laden, it might be, with profitless laurels, to find the tillage of his fields neglected, and his freed vassals peopling the free towns, a growing menace to the very existence of his own order. These chartered towns became veritable cities of refuge for the disaffected in the Middle Ages. Scarcity of labour resulted in impoverished revenues for the landowner, who found himself compelled to pledge or sell the priceless heirlooms of his house, or to fall into the hands of Jewish usurpers. The sales of the exquisite works of mediaeval art that thus passed into alien keeping symbolize the passing of the feudal system itself into the melting-pot of revolution. The freed serfs, feared and hated by their late oppressors, lay or ecclesiastic, were not altogether without the support of the Church. But it came from her most democratic section, the landless friars, who were, in many cases, sons of those rural districts which are ever the ultimate refuge of the passing, primitive world. It was they, rather than Doña Maria, surely, who spared neither exhortation nor denunciation in their self-imposed mission of inciting the revolting Catalans in the early part of the fifteenth century. Thus, we read of San Vicente Ferrer, as he was afterwards to be, traversing the towns and villages of north-eastern Catalonia, with his following of twelve priests and a noisy and disorderly multitude, some, half-naked, scourging their bodies with rods, others chanting psalms, the twelve priests, meanwhile, proclaiming the indulgences offered by the Holy See, the Saint haranguing the crowds, announcing, in his discourses, the approaching hour of Divine

judgment, a prophecy whose fulfilment must already have seemed to have fallen on his desperate and despairing hearers, a prey as they were to the assaults of merciless Nature no less than of the unpitying rich.

The moment was one of strained relations between people and sovereign. The Estates of Catalonia, whose response, throughout the years of his absence in Italy, to his insatiable demands for money had been ungrudging, had at length come to an end of their patience, if not of their resources. They would finance no more foreign wars; the affairs of Aragon were more pressing than those of Italy. Cortes and Queen separated, with disappointment and displeasure on her side; in this mood, she issued, from Perpignan, to which she retired on the rising of Parliament, her sentence in favour of the vassals of the Bishop and Chapter of Gerona, who had revolted against their lords, the latter retaliating by excommunicating Juan de Montbuy, charged with the execution of the Regent's decree, which was followed by the royal repeal of certain taxes peculiarly odious to the *pagesos de remensa*. The Estates of Catalonia thereupon proceeded to take the Queen to task after the approved manner of Aragon. Speaking plainly, as was their wont, more especially to their rulers, the Estates set before Doña Maria the inevitable outcome of her persistence in her now openly declared partisanship of the rebel manumitted serfs. Such an ill-advised sympathy could not fail, they declared, to result in open conflict between the people and their King, the former already threatening, if they were not fully enfranchised, to place themselves under the leadership of the King of France, the Dauphin, or René of Anjou—a course which the Catalans actually followed in the next reign. We are willing, added the rebels, to give our money to the King, in return for our freedom; but if we pay, and fail to obtain it, then, to a traitor King, traitor vassals!

Maria of Castile did not live to see the fulfilment of the Catalans' threat, nor the darker days of the Peasant

Revolt ; but, had the free hand been given her which was never bestowed upon the loyal and self-sacrificing Regent, some of the troubles of the reign of Don Juan II might have been averted. Her successor as Queen of Aragon was not the woman to brook the democratic temper.

The year 1452 witnessed a visitation of the plague at Barcelona. On account of it, the Queen removed to Villafranca del Panades, where the Cortes was pro-rogued.

Not until 1452 does it seem to have occurred to Don Alfonso that the burden which he had laid upon his wife's shoulders as far back as 1435, and which she had borne patiently and uncomplainingly ever since, was at length proving too great for her strength. The year was that in which he received the two envoys, Juan Ximenez Cerdan and the lawyer, Ramon de Palomar, deputed by the city of Barcelona to make one more effort to recall their sovereign to his forsaken allegiance. But in vain the ambassadors pointed to ruined and depopulated towns and untilled fields, fringing the borders of Castile, bearing tragic witness to the ever-present fears of invasion which brooded darkly over the minds of those who wearied for the return of the King who had forgotten them. The stage to which they summoned him was, however, too narrow, too obscure for one who had the soil of Italy for his battlefield. One grace at least, however, he would bestow upon his tired Queen. Three persons from each of the three estates of the realm were appointed to assist Doña Maria in her onerous task—the Abbot of Ripoll, Roger de Cartella, the Count of Prades, Arnaldo de Vilademain, Luis de Castelui, Frances Dezpla, Bartholome Maull, Juan Pages, and Ramon de Palomar.

The last years of Doña Maria's life were rendered darker by the insolent and shameless attempt of Lucrezia de Alagno to secure for herself the legal title of Queen by her marriage with her royal lover. The King's mistress made her solemn entry into Rome,



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INTERIOR DOORWAY AND TOMB OF "MOSSÉN BORRÁ,"
SANTA LUCIA, BARCELONA

October, 1457, her ostensible mission being to attempt to improve the strained relations subsisting between Alfonso and Calixtus III, who described the King of Naples as the "constant torment of the Church." Maria of Castile would have been past being hurt by the cruelty of Lucrezia's real mission in the Eternal City, or by "the almost regal honours" accorded to her rival, who was "received with as much pomp and honour as though she had been the Queen she aspired to be." For the true purpose with which the proud beauty journeyed to Rome was to induce the Pope to allow Alfonso to repudiate his faithful wife on the plea of her sterility, to enable him to marry his Neapolitan enchantress. But the Papacy, often the merciless arbiter of the destinies of royal wedded lives, was no less the champion and defender of conjugal virtue. It was not as her faithless consort would have required her long devotion to his interests, that Calixtus III would have rewarded one who had shown so high an example of wifely loyalty. Lucrezia returned, rebuffed and disappointed, to Naples.

The loneliness of the last months of the life of Maria of Castile were in harmony with the longer loneliness that had gone before. On August 23, 1457, she set out, though suffering, from Zaragoza, only to be overtaken at Segorbe, where she wished to spend the Virgin's birthday, September 8, by illness which compelled her to make a stay of three weeks in that city, hovering between life and death. As soon as she was convalescent, the physicians in attendance advised her to push on to Valencia without delay, and to spend the winter in that city. The journey was accomplished with great difficulty, the royal invalid being carried on men's shoulders, or in a litter. She arrived at Valencia, October 19, 1457, and died there September 4, 1458.

By her last will and testament, duly witnessed by Bartholomew Serena, who was at once her secretary and public notary, and made at Zaragoza, in the Monastery of Santa Maria del Carmen, February 21, 1457, she con-

stituted her husband universal legatee ; but the King having predeceased her, a second codicil transferring his rights to his brother and successor, Don Juan II, was added August 31, 1458, at Valencia.

RÉSUMÉ OF CHAPTER XIII

- Birth of Doña Maria of Castile, 1401.
- Betrothed to Don Alfonso of Aragon, 1408.
- Their marriage solemnized at Valencia, 1415.
- Becomes Queen by the accession of her husband to the throne of Aragon, 1416.
- King Alfonso sails for Sicily, 1434.
- Her death, 1458.

AUTOGRAPH OF DOÑA MARIA OF CASTILE

CHAPTER XIV

DOÑA JUANA DE ENRIQUEZ

THERE is contrast and likeness, alike suggestive, between the names and lives of the last two Queens of Aragon. Both were Castilian, therefore proud and fearless. But the pride of Doña Maria was of that grave, serene order with which it is usual, even to this day, to associate it. The pride of Doña Juana de Enriquez, on the other hand, was that of the parvenue. In valour, neither yields the palm to the other, though the campaign of the one was carried out on the stage of politics, of the other in actual warfare. Leagues of unlikeness separate the two Queens when we come to look at their character and conduct. Each, indeed, fought for many years to keep a kingdom intact for a husband who, in the one case, never flung his faithful steward a word of thanks, and, in the other, was completely dominated by his life-partner. Both Queens were in close conflict, from which was born a bitter enmity, over the long and cruel persecution of the ill-fated Prince of Viana by his father and stepmother ; whilst we may be sure that no shaft of mockery and malice was left unwinged by Juana de Enriquez, the proud mother of a son who was to succeed to an inheritance greater even than her dreams had pictured, against the "barren woman" in her lonely Palace at Barcelona. One Queen was a peacemaker, desiring peace not for Castile, the land of her birth, alone, but for Aragon, the land of her adoption, as well. Juana de Enriquez sought no such unselfish gift for her husband's kingdom. She merely sought a crown for her son, and it was of greater moment to her that he should mount the throne of Castile, with Aragon

and Navarre as appanages, than that he should rule over an undivided Aragon. If Juana de Enriquez was "the boldest and not the least skilful commander in the kingdom," Maria of Castile was one of the ablest administrators of any time. History has bestowed upon Alfonso V of Aragon the title of the Magnanimous ; to the wife who proved herself the best gift he bestowed upon the country which he abandoned, at a most critical period in its history, to her care, he never gave one magnanimous thought or word.

In death, it may be, Maria of Castile and Juana de Enriquez had most in common ; if we seek in vain in the last will and testament of Alfonso V for the mention of the former's name, we find Juan II, sensualist in old age as in youth, forgetting the wife to whom he owed so much in the embraces of a young girl of the people after Doña Juana's death.

Juana de Enriquez, Castilian-born, flits across the stage on which she was the last of the Queens of Aragon to play a part like the stormy petrel to which we have compared an earlier Queen, Doña Urraca of both Castile and Aragon. In her flight she traverses many an ancient town ; Estella, Sos, Tudela, Pampeluna, Olite are all associated with her name ; but it is in the steep streets of the venerable hill-city of Gerona, of which it has been truly said that after all its stirring past "it seems asleep," while the turbulent waters of the rushing Oña race by the battered walls and balconied houses, that one is most reminded of the tempestuous life and varied fortunes of the Lioness of Gerona, whose redeeming glory in the eyes of those who seek to cover the dark stain which attaches to her memory as stepmother of Charles of Viana is, that she was the mother of Ferdinand the Catholic.

Juana was the daughter, by his first marriage with Doña Marina de Cordova, of Don Fadrique de Enriquez, Admiral of Castile, the great opponent of his still more famous contemporary, Alvaro de Luna. She was, therefore, nursed and cradled amid those endless intrigues

which distracted her native land throughout the most impressionable years of her life. It was not the best of schools for any child, certainly not for such a girl as the Admiral's daughter. She was witness, from her cradle, of the political see-saw, [manœuvred by the factions of Alvaro de Luna and the Enriquez, hand and glove with the Aragonese Princes, which now exalted her father to the virtual ruler of the kingdom, now debased him to a proscribed fugitive. Imbibing, with all the ardour of a precocious child, the poison of such an atmosphere, she was as truly fitted, by heredity and early environment, to be the wife of that arch-intriguer, Don Juan II of Aragon, as his first wife, the beautiful and noble Blanche of Navarre, had been utterly unsuited. To such a girl as Doña Juana, witness of the prolonged and desperate struggle for supremacy in Castile of the contending factions of her father and the powerful minister of the weak Juan II of Castile, that born conspirator, the King of Navarre, once Duke of Peñafiel, must have seemed the beau-ideal of a lover. This handsome, graceful Prince, with his pale face and insinuating smile, his "white hands that any lady might have envied," his fastidious tastes and his love of fine clothes, of jewels, of dancing and sport, to say nothing of his craft and falsity, was even more attractive to Juana de Enriquez as a widower than he had been when, as a gallant boy of eighteen, he had won the heart of that mystic and royal lady of whom he was so unworthy. Arrogant, ambitious, unscrupulous, beautiful, the appeal of the woman to the man must have been no less powerful than that of the man to the woman. There can be little doubt that his second wife had marked her quarry down long before the death of his wise and good Queen Blanche set him free to offer Doña Juana his hand. She was not the woman to be disposed of at the bidding of any man, least of all at that of the little, short-sighted, crafty father whom she ruled with a rod of iron, and who was afterwards content to use his high office in Castile as a means of extracting information of

the doings and projects of highly placed personages which, transmitted to his imperious daughter, were quickly turned to her own ends. But fate for long seemed to fight on the side of Navarre and the children of Blanche. The betrothal, indeed, took place September 1, 1444, but it was not until three years later that the solemn ceremony at Tour de Lobaton, the residence of the Admiral, was ratified at Calatayud. Obstacle upon obstacle multiplied to bar Doña Juana's way to a throne. First, the Papal dispensation, necessary to the marriage between contracting parties related in the fourth degree, seems to have been slow in forthcoming. Next intervened the utter defeat of the Admiral's faction at the battle of Olmedo, where Don Juan of Navarre was wounded, and compelled to take refuge, to its final undoing, in his late wife's little kingdom. Doña Juana, however, seems to have consoled herself for the delay to her ambitious hopes by assuming the style and title of Queen of Navarre, under which title she was found by the victorious troops of the King of Castile keeping a Court composed of one lady, Doña Teresa de Quinones, in the Castle of Medina del Rio Seco, after her father's defeat at Olmedo. Both ladies were taken prisoners by the King, though they were treated with every consideration. The Prince of the Asturias having obtained the Admiral's pardon, May 14, 1446, his daughter was restored to him, with the proviso that she was not to be sent to Navarre without the King's permission. A fresh delay to the marriage, which, says Moret, "the furies must have inspired Don Juan to contract," was caused by the flames of Atienza, but the summer of 1447 saw Doña Juana at last united to the husband who, in spite of all her faults, remained, for the twenty years of their married life, the overlord in whose service she spent lavishly and to the utmost all those qualities of finesse and courage which she cannot be denied. Those who declare that Doña Juana was the tool of her husband, the unwilling accomplice of his crimes, strangely misread the character of the two. Hers was the master-mind

that not only conceived, but executed, with unerring aim, all the plots and counter-plots, as well as the secret conspiracies, of his reign. A woman with all the armoury of woman's craft at her command, a fierce hater, affecting modesty and simplicity, dissolving into floods of tears when it suited her, she was, at the same time, possessed of a man's daring courage, invincible tenacity, energy, resolution, decision, and grasp of military and diplomatic affairs. The daughter who had governed her father was not likely to be less the governor of her husband, that husband the restless, treacherous, superstitious Don Juan II of Aragon. Doña Juana was now free to assume in reality the royal state which she had flaunted before the world from the day of her betrothal. Its new Queen came, not as a blessing, but as a curse, to Navarre.

No more ill-omened entry has ever been made in history, though it was the coming of a father to his son's kingdom. Recovered from the wounds which he had received at Olmedo, Don Juan quickly recognized that a new stage for his restless talents lay ready to his hand. Ably seconded by his evil genius, Doña Juana, he was not slow to discover flaws in the will by which Queen Blanche had hoped to make her son's inheritance secure. Within its borders, moreover, as within those of the sister kingdom in which he no longer had a footing, two powerful factions, those of the Agramontes and the Beaumonts, were ever ready to fly at each other's throats, and equally ready, therefore, to fling themselves into any conflict that seemed to promise a chance of striking a blow at the adversary. The torch of war, kindled in Navarre by the treachery and ambition of the Duke and Duchess of Peñafiel, was only to be quenched in the blood of the gentle and cultured Prince whom they had resolved to despoil of his rights. The King and Prince of Castile—the latter of whom had but recently repudiated the eldest daughter of Don Juan and Blanche of Navarre, whose history was to be no less tragic than that of her brother—hurried to the assistance of the Prince of Viana. While the news sent Don Juan post-

haste from Zaragoza to repel the threatened invasion of Navarre, the Duchess of Peñafiel, or, Queen of Navarre, as she now styled herself, shut herself up in Estella, where she defied the invaders. The battle of Aibar followed, in which the father won, and the son, taken prisoner, was sent into captivity at Monroy. During his captivity, the Prince of Viana learned of the birth, at the little town of Sos, in Aragon, on March 10, 1452, of his famous half-brother, Ferdinand, afterwards the Catholic sovereign of United Spain. It is uncertain whether the friction between the stepmother and stepson which must have dated from the first entrance of the Queen into Navarre blazed into open hostility from the moment of the birth of Doña Juana's own son. It had been so with other Queens; there is no reason to suppose that the mother of Don Juan's second son looked with kindlier eyes, because of that birth, on the son of a dead woman who barred her own child's way to a throne. It has been suggested that the hatred of Doña Juana for the luckless Prince had its origin at a banquet, given by the Queen in honour of her father, the Admiral, in 1451, at which she made the insolent request that the Prince should rise from table and serve her and her father, as though he were majordomo, and not rightful King of Navarre. The Prince, it is said, was in the act of complying, out of regard for the father's wife, with this outrageous demand, when he was forcibly dissuaded by Don Luis de Beaumont, who bade him keep his seat. From that moment, it is declared, Doña Juana was resolved that nothing should stand between her and her ambitions for the son who was born amid strife and alarms, though his baptism at Zaragoza was made the occasion for such a display of pomp as had hitherto been unknown save at the baptisms of the heirs to the throne. His sponsors were the two chief jurats of Zaragoza, Ramon de Castellon and Cypres de Paternoy, Don Jorge de Bardaxi, Bishop of Tarragona, administering the rite of baptism. Doña Juana played her cards as well as her native diplomacy would have led

us to expect. Throughout the long and tragic struggle between father and son which is best told in the history of the unhappy, cultured, and disinherited Prince of Viana, it is always the King who comes well to the front as the cruel parent, the usurping tyrant. If Doña Juana permits the veil to be swept aside for a moment upon her share in the long tragedy, it is to let her be seen as the tender mother, interceding for a rebellious son, as the angel in the house who wept over the domestic discord which she would have given her life to heal. Juan II has sins enough to be laid to his charge; but his wife cannot therefore go scatheless. It cannot be doubted that she, whose influence over the King was all-powerful, was not the woman to stand aside while his inveterate animosity pursued his eldest son through exile to his mysterious death, and deliberately consigned his daughter, the unhappy Doña Blanca, to the custody of her sister and brother-in-law, the Count and Countess of Foix, to be done to death at their hands, for no other crime than her devotion to the person and cause of her brother. Doña Juana was cognizant of all the twistings and turnings in that devious path by which she compelled her complaisant consort to do her secret bidding.

If we are to seek for an exhibition of the military talents of Juana de Enriquez, we must look to the siege of Gerona; but for a display of her more womanly qualities, of her matchless diplomacy, her evasiveness, her trickeries and subterfuges, we must turn to those prolonged negotiations of 1459, when, from March 20 to April 21, and again for two more months, she pitted her woman's wit against all the combined forces of the Deputation of Barcelona, the champions and guardians of her stepson. The events of those weeks are tragi-comedy. The Prince of Viana, whom the death of his uncle, Alfonso V, had deprived of a generous host and powerful friend, was now left, though heir to the throne of Aragon and rightful King of Navarre, at the utter mercy of his pitiless father. Summoned to Spain,

he obeys the call, although plainly warned, by the Court physician himself, not to come to Lerida, where the Court was then in residence, as "something difficult of digestion might be given him"! Deceived by the cordiality of his welcome, he falls the more easily a prey to the cruel coils that are being woven round his unwary steps. Doña Juana has not only her plans, but her spies, in Castile. Her arch-spy, the old Admiral, who stands in no less awe of his imperious daughter as a Queen and at a distance than he did in her domineering girlhood, whispers of secret negotiations carried on by the Prince of Viana with the King of Castile. So perilous a possibility as an alliance with Castile must be prevented at all costs. From that quarter, Doña Juana had high hopes for her own son, with which the son of a dead mother must not be allowed to interfere.

It is not clear when the precise moment arrived when Doña Juana began to give shape, in her restless and intriguing brain, to her master-ambition for her son. Even as late as 1467, the year before her death, we find her to all outward appearance submissively discussing with her husband the proposals of marriage which Pierre de Peralta, Constable of Navarre, had been charged to negotiate between her daughter, the Infanta Juana, and Don Alfonso, brother of the King of Castile, in revolt against the latter, and between Don Ferdinand, heir of Aragon, and Doña Beatriz Pacheco, daughter of the ambitious Marquis of Villena, who, it is said, not being able to marry his daughter to a King, aspired to a King's son. But an event which occurred seven months before Doña Juana's own death, the death, namely, of Don Alfonso, July 5, 1467, probably brought the Queen's decision to a head, and induced her to bequeath to her husband and son, as her last imperious charge, the policy which dictated the signing, at Cervera, January 7, 1469, a year after her death, of the marriage treaty between Don Ferdinand and his cousin, the Infanta Isabella, ultimate heiress to the throne of Castile.

Zurita maintains that it was Don Juan, and not his wife, who was set on the marriage with the heiress of Castile, and that his own acquiescence in the proposals of the Marquis of Villena was a mere feint in order to gain time in which to watch the progress of events in the sister-kingdom.

The whisper transmitted from the vigilant father-in-law was permitted to filter through to the son-in-law's ear. Coming from such a source, it was a warning to be heeded. If rumour were not lying, here was an enemy to be got rid of, no longer a son to pity or to pardon. But the Prince, culprit or criminal, has Don Juan's Catalan subjects behind him. He is the idol, who went near to being the patron saint, of Barcelona, which rises as one man to safeguard his person and his rights, demanding that, for the better security of the former, he shall be lodged in their midst. Moreover, he must come alone; they will have none of the Castilian woman, his step-mother, whom they altogether and profoundly distrust. But the Castilian woman, her husband's representative at the moment in Aragon, Don Juan's hands being full with the affairs of Navarre, desires nothing in the world so much as to pose in public in that rôle which she has now definitely adopted—that of the tender mother, rather than stepmother, of the Catalans' adored Prince. She begins a few days after the arrest of Don Carlos at Lerida, and his subsequent removal, as a prisoner, to Aytona, by ingratiating herself into the good graces of the deputies whom the States-General of Catalonia despatch in hot haste to remonstrate boldly with the King on his treatment of his son. Hardly have they emerged from their unsatisfactory audience of the irritated King, when they are met, on the very threshold of the presence-chamber, by the smiling and soothing reassurances of the Queen, who intimates that, although she fears it will be useless to attempt to re-open the subject that day, yet, for her part, she promises them that nothing shall be left undone to bring about that better state of things between father and son which she, no less than

they, his best friends, so ardently desires. Her graciousness completely disarms them. They write high praise to Barcelona of her "discretion and intelligence." She cannot do enough to disperse the mists of unjust suspicion which have obscured the minds of those who have the Prince's welfare at heart. Judiciously, she lets it be known that it is she, who, travelling post-haste over fearful roads, comes as an angel of deliverance to open the gates of Don Carlos's prison-house at Morella. She plays her rôle to perfection. The captive awaits her arrival in the hall of the castle, and, advancing, as she alights from her litter, desires to kiss her hand. At first she demurs—one must not be too lenient with a culprit, after all—but yielding, she eventually permits him to kiss, not only her hand, but her lips. Then, retiring with him to his apartments, she sits and talks to him with such maternal kindness, as to draw tears from the eyes of all who hear her. The Prince is free—to give practical proof of the fact, he goes to dine with one of the principal citizens of Morella, but Doña Juana is also of the company. With great outward good comradeship, stepmother and stepson ride together to Trahiguera, to Tortosa, to Perello; but all this display of maternal solicitude fails to deceive Barcelona, ever on the watch. The Queen sends her steward, Mossen Luis de Vich, to announce her intention of escorting the Prince to the capital of Catalonia. The States-General beg that she will do nothing of the kind. If she persists in doing so, the authorities refuse to be responsible for her personal safety. In vain Doña Juana pleads, cajoles, sheds floods of tears, is stupefied at such base ingratitude on the part of those for whom she has worked so loyally—is not their Prince free, as she had promised he should be? Is she, to whom he owes his liberty, to be debarred from sharing in his triumphal entry, from partaking of the "splendid collation," the "sugar-cakes, preserves, and all manner of choice wines," with which Barcelona was about to regale him? The States-General regret that so it must be. She must come no nearer to the capital

than Sant Boy de Llobregat, one league from Barcelona. There, all the weapons of her woman's armoury having for once proved useless, she hears, with fury in her heart, though her smiles, we may believe, never forsook her, the acclamations of the city which had refused her entrance, hailing with delirious shouts of joy "Carlos, first-born and heir of Aragon and Sicily, whom God preserve!" And listening, as those exultant cries were borne across the distance to her ear, she rejoiced to know they sealed his death-warrant; she remembered, with sinister satisfaction, that the Prince's constitution had been undermined by his exile in the enervating air of Naples; that he had been often tired, and frequently compelled to rest, on their progress from Morella; that the robust and gallant boyhood of her idolized Ferdinand was in such splendid contrast to the enfeebled health of his stepbrother. She had need to fall back upon such reflections as these, rebuffed and thwarted and humiliated as she found herself at every turn. Tarraza, taking its cue from Barcelona, closed its gates at her approach, sounding the tocsin, as though to give warning that an enemy was at hand.

Her cunning does not fail her when it comes to the prolonged negotiations between herself, as Don Juan's lieutenant, and the Deputation of Barcelona, fighting as much for their hereditary liberties as for the Prince of Viana. Her adversaries find her apparently docile, prone to weep, but in reality adamant, implacable, imperious in her demands that numerous clauses in the proposed treaty between the Catalans and their sovereign shall be eliminated, as derogatory to the honour of the King. She has her spies even in the States-General. It was possibly on their suggestion that a gift of 200,000 livres is proposed to be offered to the Infante Ferdinand, in order to induce his mother to have the treaty signed with the least possible delay. She does not let go her point in the matter of her entrance into Barcelona, which the citizens politely continue to resist. Vainly she complains that in one town she has been unable to

sleep, because the lodging assigned to her is infested with vermin ; that, at another, she is ill, and wishes to take medicine ! A more suitable lodging shall be found for her ; but the pressing matter is that of the signing of the treaty. From March 20 to April 21, the struggle goes on. Three hours' persuasion and expostulation are needed to induce her to yield in the other matter of remaining away from Barcelona. On Holy Thursday, after having attended all the services of the day, she receives the deputies at eight o'clock in the evening, and a few days later departs for Zaragoza, carrying with her the modified treaty, to be submitted to the King. Certain of the deputies, however, whom she cordially invites to accompany her on her journey, politely and prudently decline the invitation. Out of sight is out of mind ; on May 10, no news having arrived from the Queen, the notary, En (Don) Brujo, is despatched to Zaragoza, on the delicate mission of compelling the immediate signature of the treaty. The ambassador of the States-General reaches the Aragonese capital on May 13. The Queen receives him at ten o'clock in the morning in a crimson quilted dressing-gown, in which Don Brujo fails to recognize her until she graciously makes herself known, and, as he kneels to kiss her hand, " embraces him in royal fashion." En Brujo proceeds to broach the subject of his embassy. The Queen declares that she cannot be hurried. That same evening she departs for Villamayor, three leagues from Barcelona. En Brujo follows and overtakes her. Her secretary, she tells him, has not yet arrived, He spends the evening in her company, " listening, but speaking little." At eleven he has earned the price of his importunity. The Queen, " to get rid of him," bids the Master of Montesa act as her secretary, and, the hour being so late, a ring belonging to one of the ladies of the Court is used to seal the letter. It was not until June 24, however, that the treaty was actually signed whereby the Prince of Viana was confirmed in his office of Lieutenant-General of

Catalonia, a title which he was to hold for so brief a period.

With the acquittal or accusation of Juana de Enriquez concerning her stepson's death, history has had much to say. That she regretted it, none who know the heart of a strong woman greedily ambitious for her own child, can for one moment suppose. When she knelt for the first and last time in homage at the coffin of the dead Prince, signing it with the cross, and kissing the black velvet pall, whatever darker thoughts passed through the silence of that farewell which was either sincere, or hideous mockery, it is certain that it was with relief that she rose from her knees, to hail her Ferdinand heir to Aragon in his stead.

The way to his peaceable possession of Navarre, to which he had brought no peace, but a sword, scarcely ever sheathed since the death of his first wife, had been cleared, indeed, for Don Juan, by the removal from that path of his son and daughter, but in the rest of his dominions, the flutes, drums, and trumpets of the insurgent Catalonians seemed to herald the downfall of his dynasty. France and Castile hovered like expectant vultures on his borders. The people, who regarded the untimely death of the Prince of Viana as that of a national hero and martyr, were loud in their execrations and denunciations of the King and Queen, and the outlook was dark indeed. But the torch of Juana de Enriquez' dauntless courage still burned in her strong hand. That warlike music which struck terror into the hearts of the towns of Aragon as it surged by, breathing the quenchless aspirations of a people set on liberty after centuries of thralldom, was to her a call to arms. Flinging herself into the thick of the fray, and taking up her residence at Gerona, she made it known that it was her intention to quell the rebellion against the royal authority at all costs. She was aided in her task, as Urraca of Castile, whom she so closely resembles, was aided in hers, by a notable counsellor, the famous Juan Margarit of Moles, a native of Ampur-

dan, sworn foe of the plebeian rebels, and determined, in league with the Queen, to curb the disaffection amongst the peasantry, by stern measures, if necessary. An infuriated populace flung themselves against the walls of that city whose lot it has been so often to suffer the stress and shock of siege. On the fall of the outer defences of the town, the Queen and her party were forced to take refuge in the ancient fortress known as the Gironella, which was defended, under the personal direction of the Queen, with incredible valour. Again and again, inspired by the presence amongst them of a woman who betrayed none of a woman's weakness, but rather put her soldiers to shame, the defenders hurled back the assaults of the besiegers. So furious was the combat, that in one day five thousand arrows were launched against the stout old walls, while the flower of Aragon's knights perished in the siege. Gerona was saved for Aragon, at the cost of the cession to France, in return for its aid, of Roussillon and Cerdagne, long coveted by the crafty Louis XI. The valiant Queen, sword in hand, defending her husband's throne, as no other Queen in history has ever defended the cause of a worthless sovereign, takes the stage of the long struggle in the wars of Catalonia as a heroine whom we could well wish more whole-heartedly to admire. She swept the rebel towns with untiring energy, braving the hardships of the camp, and the perils of long journeys in the midst of a people to whom her very name was odious, scarcely consenting to take a much-needed rest when both she and her son, whose inheritance she was fighting so passionately to preserve, were stricken down by fever at San Jordi Desvalls for several days. Hardly convalescent, she was called upon to face new dangers which threatened Aragon from an unexpected quarter.

The Catalans, in hot, sustained revolt against their sovereign, had summoned Don Pedro of Portugal, nephew of the dead Count of Urgel, to assume the crown which Don Juan's subjects declared forfeit. The blood of intrigue ran in Don Pedro's veins ; for two years, he



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ABSIDES OF LA SEO, ZARAGOZA

added greatly to the accumulating troubles of the latter part of Don Juan's life; but on June 29, 1466, the Portuguese pretender was removed in what Mr. Burke calls "the accustomed manner"; or, to quote Zurita, "he was given herbs." But his successor was quickly found. The rebel Catalans now sought the aid of the famous René of Anjou, who deputed his son, John, Duke of Calabria and Lorraine, to accept their lordship by proxy. The crafty Louis XI of France, who had come to the help of Doña Juana at Gerona for the price of Roussillon and Cerdagne, now permitted the army of Lorraine, eight thousand strong, to march through the first of the ceded provinces. In spite of the heroic defence offered to the invaders by the untamed Lioness of Gerona, who was supported in this, her last campaign, by her youthful son, Don Fernando, and by the King's bastard, the Archbishop of Zaragoza, more apt with sword than crozier, the royal troops were completely defeated before the fateful city of Gerona. Don Fernando narrowly escaped capture at the hands of his enemies, and only owed his life to the valour of Don Rodrigo de Rebolledo, who bravely defended the Infante at the risk of his own safety, when beset by a detachment of the invading forces while convoying supplies to Gerona. Had not the rigours of a severe winter intervened, it is probable that the young heir of Aragon would have been bereft of his inheritance, so constantly did fortune seem to favour the army of Lorraine. Hard pressed as she was on all sides, Doña Juana found time to arrange, on March 25, 1467, at Tarragona, the marriage of her sister, Doña Aldonza de Enriquez, upon whom she bestowed a dowry of 15,000 florins, with Don Juan Ramon Folch de Cardona, Constable of Aragon, son of Don Juan, Count of Prades.

On June 6, 1467, the Catalan army appeared before the walls of Gerona. The Queen and the Archbishop immediately ordered the gates to be closed, which so exasperated the troops that the Count of Pallars, their commander, had much difficulty in restraining them.

In the midst of the confusion, a certain Sampso, of the Queen's faction, appeared upon the city walls, and addressed the beleaguers in the most opprobrious terms. Whereupon, the Catalans, flinging themselves with terrific fury upon the walls, carried the outer defences by assault, the Queen and her defenders being forced to take refuge in the high tower of the inner fortifications, known as La Gironella. On the following day the troops of the States-General set to work to make a wooden tower, to open mines and breaches, the soldiers being animated by the supposed apparition of the Blessed S. Charles of Viana in the air animating the combatants.

A year before her death, Doña Juana gave signal proof of her prudent policy with regard to Navarre by the noteworthy alliance which she concluded with her stepdaughter, the Countess of Foix, at Exea, June 21, 1467, whereby the latter was confirmed in her present rights as Lieutenant-Governor of Navarre during her father's lifetime, and in her future succession to the twofold inheritance for which she had stained her hands with the murder of her sister—the kingdom of Navarre and the Duchy of Nemours. By this unparalleled instance of two women taking the military and knightly oath (to be friends of each other's friends and enemies of each other's enemies), Doña Juana left her own and her husband's hands free to deal with the more pressing problems now presented for solution by the invasion of the Duke of Lorraine. It may be that the Queen, mistress as she was of statecraft, distrusted this stepdaughter whose methods had served her own ends so well. The Infanta Leonor was her father's daughter; like him, coldly calculating and unscrupulous; an enemy to be reckoned with, an ally to be sought and bound by the most stringent treaties. Thus, in the presence of the Archbishop of Zaragoza and the Bishop of Pampe-luna, Queen Juana took the oath which made her own grip on Navarre secure before going forth to pit her woman's wit against a great military leader, as she

had pitted it against the grave, plain councillors of Barcelona.

Death, which alone could quench that fiery spirit, came to Juana de Enriquez in dreadful guise. The cancer in the breast with which she was stricken after the death of her stepson was popularly believed to be a righteous punishment following on that death, of which the Catalonian subjects at least of Don Juan II never ceased to hold her guilty, however much dispassionate investigation in later times has acquitted her of any share in the last chapter of the tragedy of Charles of Viana. To the domain of legend, also, if calmer critics have proved their case, must be assigned that bitter death-bed cry of the Lioness of Gerona, " Ah, my son, my son ! What hast thou not cost me ! " Words which, it is said, were wrung from the dying Queen when, on making a confession of her supposed guilt to her husband, the King turned from his consort with loathing. The Court kept the Christmas of 1467 at Tarragona, in the midst of war, for the country was still in the throes of internal conflict, as well as overrun by the troops of the Duke of Lorraine. Peace was but a bitter mockery in the ears of the dying Queen and her husband ; yet there was marrying and giving in marriage at the Court. November witnessed the union of Troilos Carrillo, son of the Archbishop of Toledo, and Doña Juana, the motherless daughter of the Constable Pedro de Peralta, Count of St. Stephen, whilst in January the hand of Doña Leonor, natural daughter of Don Juan, by whom she had been previously legitimized, was bestowed, together with a dowry of 15,000 florins, upon Don Luis de Beaumont, Count of Lerin, son of the powerful Don Luis de Beaumont, Constable of Navarre. The Queen slowly grew worse ; her place at the Cortes, which were to be held at Zaragoza, whither the Court removed in the New Year, was taken by her son, Don Ferdinand. On February 13, a Saturday, his mother passed away in the capital of Aragon after much suffering. By her will, to which she affixed her signature on the day of her death,

Doña Juana appointed as her executors, the King, Don Luis Despuch, Master of Montesa, and Doña Isabel de Mur, niece of the Archbishop of Zaragoza, Don Dalmao de Mur, and wife of Don Pedro de Urrea, Viceroy of Valencia, the Queen's mistress of the Robes, and her favourite lady ; Pedro Miguel, Archdeacon of Belchit, and Vicar-General of Zaragoza, and Messire Ferrer, Prior of the Church of San Salvador of Zaragoza. The testatrix took practical thought at the moment of her death for the future of her sister, Doña Aldonza de Enriquez, betrothed to Don Juan de Cardona, Constable of Aragon, son of the Count of Prades, to whom she bequeathed 15,000 florins as dowry. To Don Geráu de Espez, her chief majordomo, was left 20,000 sueldos, while to Don Lopez de Gurrea charge was given to pay off all debts which she and the King had been forced to contract owing to their prolonged and ruinous wars. To her only daughter, the Infanta Juana, whose sisters, the Infantas Leonor and Marina, had predeceased their mother, the Queen left her jewels and an annuity of 4000 golden florins for her dowry, directing that Doña Isabel de Mur should continue in her service, as well as Doña Brianda de Mur, sister of the latter, who was the wife of Don Nicolas Carroz de Arborea, Viceroy of Sardinia, and Doña Maria de Cerdan, wife of Don Pedro Rodrigo de Rebolledo. Appointing her son universal legatee, and bequeathing to the Friars of the Order of St. Jeronimo all her property in Castile which she had inherited from her mother, Doña Marina de Cordova, and her grandmother, Doña Inez de Ayala, she directed that her executors should assign some part of her Castilian estate for the foundation of a monastery for the said Friars. The dead Queen was laid to rest in the Convent of Poblet, where her ashes mingle with those of her ill-fated stepson.

If we cannot altogether endorse the eulogies of Zurita, who pronounces Juana de Enriquez to have been "an excellent and valiant Princess," yet we can well believe that her death, coming as it did when Don Juan had

never stood in such need of her counsel, was a heavier blow to her consort than all the troubles and tragedies they had surmounted together in the past. That he mourned for his admirable helpmeet with unshaken faith and constancy was not to be expected from the royal sensualist. Documents long discreetly hidden from the public ken, but brought to light within the last few years, prove that the last years of the aged and widowed monarch's solitude were cheered by the companionship of a young girl of Zaragoza, apparently of humble birth, who, after the King's death, "easily found a husband," as we are told, although the latter's complaisance did not extend to the point of bestowing, without protest, upon his bride the arras, or morning-gift, usually associated with an untarnished reputation. But, whatever empire seemed to usurp the place of the dead Queen, Juana de Enriquez was never forgotten; nor can Spain of to-day forget her who was the mother of Ferdinand the Catholic.

RÉSUMÉ OF CHAPTER XIV

Betrothal of the King of Navarre and Doña Juana de Enriquez, 1444.

Her marriage, 1447.

Birth of their son, afterwards Ferdinand the Catholic, 1452.

Intrigues against her stepson, the Prince of Viana, 1452-9.

Campaign in the Ampurdan, 1460.

Alliance with her stepdaughter, Doña Leonor of Navarre, 1467.

Death of Doña Juana, 1468.

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