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

29 This topic is involved in no little obscurity, and has been reported with much discrepancy as well as inaccuracy by the modern Spanish historians. Among the ancient, Castillo, the historiographer of Henry IV., mentions certain "testimonial executors," without, however, noticing in any more direct way the existence of a will. (Crón. c.168.) The Curate of Los Palacios refers to a clause reported, he says, to have existed in the testament of Henry IV., in which he declares Joanna his daughter and heir; (Reyes Católicos, MS., cap. 10.) Alonso de Palencia states positively that there was no such instrument, and that Henry, on being asked who was to succeed him, referred to his secretary Juan Gonzalez for a knowledge of his intention. (Crón. c.92.) L. Marins also states that the king, "with his usual imprudence," left no will. (Cosas Memorables, fol. 155.) Pulgar, another contemporary, expressly declares that he executed no will, and quotes the words dictated by him to his secretary, in which he simply designates two of the grandees as "executors of his soul," (alheces de su anima,) and four others in conjunction with them as the guardians of his daughter Joanna. (Reyes Cat. p. 31.) It seems not improbable that the existence of this document has been confounded with that of a testament, and that with reference to it, the phrase above quoted of Castillo, as well as the passage of Bernaldez, is to be interpreted. Carbajal's wild story of the existence of a will, of its secretion for more than thirty years, and its final suppression by Ferdinand, is too naked testimony to deserve the least weight with the historian. (See his Anales, MS., año 74.) It should be remembered, however, that most of the abovementioned writers compiled their works after the accession of Isabella, and that none, save Castillo, were the partisans of her rival. It should also be added that in the letters addressed by the princess Joanna to the different cities of the kingdom, on her assuming the title of queen of Castile, (bearing date May, 1475,) it is expressly stated that Henry IV., on his deathbed, solemnly affirmed her to be his only daughter and lawful heir. These letters were drafted by John de Oviedo, (Juan Gonzalez,) the confidential secretary of Henry IV. See Zurita, Anales, tom. iv. fol. 235 - 239.
The testaments of the Castilian sovereigns, though never esteemed positively binding, and occasionally, indeed, set aside, when deemed unconstitutional or even inexpedient by the legislature, were always allowed to have great weight with the nation.

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

The historian cannot complain of a want of authentic materials for the reign of Henry IV. Two of the chroniclers of that period, Alfonso de Palencia and Enrique del Castillo, were eyewitnesses and conspicuous actors in the scenes which they recorded, and connected with opposite factions. The former of these writers, Alfonso de Palencia, was born, as appears from his work, "De Synonymis," cited by Pellicer, (Bibliotheca de Traductores, p. 7,) in 1423. Nic. Antonio has fallen into the error of dating his birth nine years later. (Bibliotheca Vatican, tom. ii. p. 331.) At the age of seventeen, he became page to Alfonso of Carthagena, bishop of Burgos, and, in the family of that estimable prelate, acquired a taste for letters, which never deserted him during a busy political career. He afterwards visited Italy, where he became acquainted with Cardinal Bessarion, and through him with the learned Greek Trapezuntius, whose lectures on philosophy and rhetoric he attended. On his return to his native country, he was raised to the dignity of royal historiographer by Alfonso, younger brother of Henry IV., and competitor with him for the crown. He attached himself to the fortunes of Isabella, after Alfonso's death, and was employed by the archbishop of Toledo in many delicate negotiations, particularly in arranging the marriage of the princess with Ferdinand, for which purpose he made a secret journey into Aragon. On the accession of Isabella, he was confirmed in the office of national chronicler, and passed the remainder of his life in the composition of philological and historical works and translations from the ancient classics. The time of his death is uncertain. He lived to a good old age, however, since it appears from his own statement, (see Mendez, Typographia Española, (Madrid, 1760,) p. 100,) that his version of Josephus was not completed till the year 1492. The most popular of Palencia's
DEATH OF HENRY IV.

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

writing, are his "Chronicle of Henry IV.,” and his Latin "Decades," continuing the reign of Isabella down to the capture of Baia, in 1489. His historical style, far from scholastic pedantry, exhibits the business-like manner of a man of the world. His Chronicle, which, being composed in the Castilian, was probably intended for popular use, is conducted with little artifice, and indeed with a proximity and minuteness of detail, arising no doubt from the deep interest which as an actor he took in the scenes he describes. His sentiments are expressed with boldness, and sometimes with the acerbity of party feeling. He has been much commended by the best Spanish writers, such as Zurita, Zuñiga, Marina, Clemencín, for his veracity. The internal evidence of this is sufficiently strong in his delineation of those scenes in which he was personally engaged; in his account of others, it will not be difficult to find examples of negligence and inaccuracy. His Latin "Decades" were probably composed with more care, as addressed to a learned class of readers; and they are lauded by Nic. Antonio as an elegant commentary, worthy to be assiduously studied by all who would acquaint themselves with the history of their country. The art of printing has done less perhaps for Spain than for any other country in Europe; and these two valuable histories are still permitted to swell the rich treasure of manuscripts with which her libraries are overloaded.

Enriquez del Castillo, a native of Segovia, was the chaplain and historiographer of King Henry IV., and a member of his privy council. His situation not only made him acquainted with the policy and intrigues of the court, but with the personal feelings of the monarch, who reposed entire confidence in him, which Castillo repaid with uniform loyalty. He appears very early to have commenced his
in the hands of favorites, who, finding themselves screened by the interposition of royal authority from the consequences of measures for which they should be justly responsible, sacrifice without remorse the public weal to the advancement of their private fortunes. Thus the state, made to minister to the voracious appetites of many tyrants, suffers incalculably more than it would from one. So fared it with Castile under Henry the Fourth; dismembered by faction, her revenues squandered on worthless parasites, the grossest violations of justice unredressed, public faith become a jest, the treasury bankrupt, the court a brothel, and private morals too loose and audacious to seek even the veil of hypocrisy! Never had the fortunes of the kingdom reached so low an ebb since the great Saracen invasion.

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

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

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

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

1474—1476.


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

¹ The popular belief of Joanna's illegitimacy was founded on the following circumstances. — 1. King Henry's first marriage with Blanche of Navarre was dissolved, after it had subsisted twelve years, on the publicly alleged ground of "impotence in the parties." — 2. The princess Joanna, the only child of his second queen, Joanna of Portugal, was not born until the eighth year of her marriage, and long after she had become notorious for her gallantries. — 3. Although Henry kept several mistresses, whom he maintained in so
These are to be derived from the will of the nation as expressed by its representatives in cortes. The power of this body to interpret the laws regulating the succession, and to determine the succession itself, in the most absolute manner, is incontrovertible, having been established by repeated precedents from a very ancient period. In the present instance, the legislature, soon after the birth of Joanna, tendered the usual oaths of allegiance to her as heir apparent to the monarchy. On a subsequent occasion, however, the cortes, for reasons deemed sufficient by itself, and under a conviction that its consent to the preceding measure had been obtained through an undue influence on the part of the crown, reversed its former acts, and did homage to Isabella as the only true and lawful successor. In this disposition the legislature
continued so resolute, that, notwithstanding Henry twice convoked the states for the express purpose of renewing their allegiance to Joanna; they refused to comply with the summons; and thus Isabella, at the time of her brother's death, possessed a title to the crown unimpaired, and derived from the sole authority which could give it a constitutional validity. It may be added that the princess was so well aware of the real basis of her pretensions; that in her several manifestoes, although she adverts to the popular notion of her rival's illegitimacy, she rests the strength of her cause on the sanction of the cortes.

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

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4 See Part I, Chap. 4, Note 2.  
5 Fortunately, this strong place, in which the royal treasure was deposited, was in the keeping of Andres de Cabrera, the husband of Isabella's friend, Beatriz de Bobadilla. His cooperation at this juncture was so important, that Oviedo does not hesitate to declare, "It lay with him to make Isabella or her rival queen, as he listed." Quincuagenas, MS., bat. 1, quinc. 1, dial. 23.
Spanish jennet whose bridle was held by two of the civic functionaries, while an officer of her court preceded her on horseback, bearing aloft a naked sword, the symbol of sovereignty. On arriving at the square she alighted from her palfrey, and, ascending the platform, seated herself on a throne which had been prepared for her. A herald with a loud voice proclaimed, "Castile, Castile for the king Don Ferdinand and his consort Doña Isabella, queen proprietor (reina proprietaria) of these kingdoms!" The royal standards were then unfurled, while the peal of bells and the discharge of ordnance from the castle publicly announced the accession of the new sovereign. Isabella, after receiving the homage of her subjects, and swearing to maintain inviolate the liberties of the realm, descended from the platform, and, attended by the same cortege, moved slowly towards the cathedral church; where, after Te Deum had been chanted, she prostrated herself before the principal altar, and, returning thanks to the Almighty for the protection hitherto vouchsafed her, implored him to enlighten her future counsels, so that she might discharge the high trust reposed in her, with equity and wisdom. Such were the simple forms, that attended the coronation of the monarchs of Castile, previously to the sixteenth century. 6

The cities favorable to Isabella's cause, compre-

6 Bernaldez, Reyes Católicos, MS., cap. 10. — Carbajal, Anales, MS., año 75. — Alonso de Palencia, Corónica, MS., part. 2, cap. 93, — L. Mariano, Cosas Memorables, fol. 155. — Oviedo, Quincuagenas, MS., bat. 1, quinc. 2, dial. 3.
heding far the most populous and wealthy through-
out the kingdom, followed the example of Segovia,
and raised the royal standard for their new sov-
ereign. The principal grandees, as well as most
of the inferior nobility, soon presented themselves
from all quarters, in order to tender the customary
oaths of allegiance; and an assembly of the estates,
convened for the ensuing month of February at
Segovia, imparted, by a similar ceremony, a consti-
tutional sanction to these proceedings. 7

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

7 Marina, whose peculiar re-
sources and opportunities make
him the best, is my only author-
ity for this convention of the cor-
tes. (Teoría, tom. ii. pp. 63, 89.)
The extracts he makes from the
writ of summons, however, seem
to imply, that the object was
not the recognition of Ferdinand
and Isabella, but of their daugh-
ter, as successor to the crown.

Among the nobles, who openly,
testified their adhesion to Isabella,
were no less than four of the six
individuals, to whom the late king
had intrusted the guardianship of
his daughter Joanna; viz. the
grand cardinal of Spain, the con-
stable of Castile, the duke of In-
fantado, and the count of Ben-
vento.
of Spain and the archbishop of Toledo, who, after careful examination, established by undoubted precedent, that the exclusion of females from the succession did not obtain in Castile and Leon, as was the case in Aragon; 8 that Isabella was consequently sole heir of these dominions; and that whatever authority Ferdinand might possess, could only be derived through her. A settlement was then made on the basis of the original marriage contract. 9 All municipal appointments, and collation to ecclesiastical benefices, were to be made in the name of both with the advice and consent of the queen. All fiscal nominations, and issues from the treasury, were to be subject to her order. The commanders of the fortified places were to render homage to her alone. Justice was to be administered by both conjointly, when residing in the same place, and by each independently, when separate. Proclamations and letters patent were to be subscribed with the signatures of both; their images were to be stamped on the public coin, and the united arms of Castile and Aragon emblazoned on a common seal. 10

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

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

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