

vailed in Andalusia, loudly called for the introduction of the Holy Office, as the only effectual means of healing it. In this they were vigorously supported by Niccoló Franco, the papal nuncio then residing at the court of Castile. Ferdinand listened with complacency to a scheme, which promised an ample source of revenue in the confiscations it involved. But it was not so easy to vanquish Isabella's aversion to measures so repugnant to the natural benevolence and magnanimity of her character. Her scruples, indeed, were rather founded on sentiment than reason, the exercise of which was little countenanced in matters of faith, in that day, when the dangerous maxim, that the end justifies the means, was universally received, and learned theologians seriously disputed whether it were permitted to make peace with the infidel, and even whether promises made to them were obligatory on Christians.²²

The policy of the Roman church, at that time, was not only shown in its perversion of some of the most obvious principles of morality, but in the

Bigotry of
the age.

²² Bernaldez, *Reyes Católicos*, ubi supra. — Pulgar, *Reyes Católicos*, part. 2, cap. 77. — Zuñiga, *Annales de Sevilla*, p. 386. — *Mem. de la Acad. de Hist.*, tom. vi. p. 44. — Llorente, tom. i. pp. 143, 145.

Some writers are inclined to view the Spanish Inquisition, in its origin, as little else than a political engine. Guizot remarks of the tribunal, in one of his lectures, "Elle contenait en germe ce qu'elle est devenue; mais elle ne l'était pas en commençant: elle

fut d'abord plus politique que religieuse, et destinée à maintenir l'ordre plutôt qu'à défendre la foi." (*Cours d'Histoire Moderne*, (Paris, 1828-30,) tom. v. lec. 11.) This statement is inaccurate in reference to Castile, where the facts do not warrant us in imputing any other motive for its adoption than religious zeal. The general character of Ferdinand, as well as the circumstances under which it was introduced into Aragon, may justify the inference of a more worldly policy in its establishment there.

PART
I.

discouragement of all free inquiry in its disciples, whom it instructed to rely implicitly in matters of conscience on their spiritual advisers. The artful institution of the tribunal of confession, established with this view, brought, as it were, the whole Christian world at the feet of the clergy, who, far from being always animated by the meek spirit of the Gospel, almost justified the reproach of Voltaire, that confessors have been the source of most of the violent measures pursued by princes of the Catholic faith.²³

Its influence
on Isabella.

Isabella's serious temper, as well as early education, naturally disposed her to religious influences. Notwithstanding the independence exhibited by her in all secular affairs, in her own spiritual concerns she uniformly testified the deepest humility, and deferred too implicitly to what she deemed the superior sagacity, or sanctity, of her ghostly counsellors. An instance of this humility may be worth recording. When Fray Fernando de Talavera, afterwards archbishop of Granada, who had been appointed confessor to the queen, attended her for the first time in that capacity, he continued seated, after she had knelt down to make her confession, which drew from her the remark, "that it was usual for both parties to kneel." "No," replied the priest, "this is God's tribunal; I act here as his minister, and it is fitting that I should keep my seat, while your Highness kneels before me." Isabella, far from taking umbrage at the ecclesiastic's arrogant de-

²³ Essai sur les Mœurs et l'Esprit des Nations, chap. 176.

meanor, complied with all humility, and was afterwards heard to say, "This is the confessor that I wanted."²⁴

Character of
her confes-
sor Torque-
mada.

Well had it been for the land, if the queen's conscience had always been intrusted to the keeping of persons of such exemplary piety as Talavera. Unfortunately, in her early days, during the lifetime of her brother Henry, that charge was committed to a Dominican monk, Thomas de Torquemada, a native of old Castile, subsequently raised to the rank of prior of Santa Cruz in Segovia, and condemned to infamous immortality by the signal part which he performed in the tragedy of the Inquisition. This man, who concealed more pride under his monastic weeds than might have furnished forth a convent of his order, was one of that class, with whom zeal passes for religion, and who testify their zeal by a fiery persecution of those whose creed differs from their own; who compensate for their abstinence from sensual indulgence, by giving scope to those deadlier vices of the heart, pride, bigotry, and intolerance, which are no less opposed to virtue, and are far more extensively mischievous to society. This personage had earnestly labored to infuse into Isabella's young mind, to which his situation as her confessor gave him such ready access, the same spirit of fanaticism that glowed in his own. For-

²⁴ Sigüenza, Historia de la Orden de San Gerónimo, apud Mem. de la Acad. de Hist., tom. vi. Ilust. 13. — This anecdote is more characteristic of the order than the individual. Oviedo has given a brief notice of this prelate, whose

virtues raised him from the humblest condition to the highest posts in the church, and gained him, to quote that writer's words, the appellation of "El sancto, ó el buen arzobispo en toda España." Quincuagenas, MS., dial. de Talavera.

PART
I.

tunately this was greatly counteracted by her sound understanding and natural kindness of heart. Torquemada urged her, or indeed, as is stated by some, extorted a promise, that, "should she ever come to the throne, she would devote herself to the extirpation of heresy, for the glory of God, and the exaltation of the Catholic faith."²⁵ The time was now arrived when this fatal promise was to be discharged.

It is due to Isabella's fame to state thus much in palliation of the unfortunate error into which she was led by her misguided zeal; an error so grave, that, like a vein in some noble piece of statuary, it gives a sinister expression to her otherwise unblemished character.²⁶ It was not until the queen had endured the repeated importunities of the clergy, particularly of those reverend persons in whom she most confided, seconded by the arguments of Ferdinand, that she consented to solicit from the pope a bull for the introduction of the Holy Office into Castile. Sixtus the Fourth, who at that time filled the pontifical chair, easily discerning the sources of wealth and influence, which this measure opened to the court of Rome, readily complied with the petition of the sovereigns, and expedited a bull bearing date November 1st, 1478, authorizing them

Papal bull
authorizing
the Inquisition.

²⁵ Zurita, Anales, tom. iv. fol. 323.

²⁶ The uniform tenderness with which the most liberal Spanish writers of the present comparatively enlightened age, as Marina, Llorente, Clemencin, &c., regard the memory of Isabella, affords an

honorable testimony to the unsuspected integrity of her motives. Even in relation to the Inquisition, her countrymen would seem willing to draw a veil over her errors, or to excuse her by charging them on the age in which she lived.

to appoint two or three ecclesiastics, inquisitors for the detection and suppression of heresy throughout their dominions.²⁷

CHAPTER
VII.

The queen, however, still averse to violent measures, suspended the operation of the ordinance, until a more lenient policy had been first tried. By her command, accordingly, the archbishop of Seville, cardinal Mendoza, drew up a catechism exhibiting the different points of the Catholic faith, and instructed the clergy throughout his diocese to spare no pains in illuminating the benighted Israelites, by means of friendly exhortation and a candid exposition of the true principles of Christianity.²⁸ How far the spirit of these injunctions was complied with, amid the excitement then prevailing, may be reasonably doubted. There could be little doubt, however, that a report, made two years later, by a commission of ecclesiastics with Alfonso de Ojeda at its head, respecting the progress of the reformation, would be necessarily unfavorable to the Jews.²⁹

Isabella
resorts
to milder
measures.

²⁷ Pulgar, *Reyes Católicos*, part. 2, cap. 77. — Bernaldez, *Reyes Católicos*, MS., cap. 43. — Llorente, *Hist. de l'Inquisition*, tom. i. pp. 143 - 145. — Much discrepancy exists in the narratives of Pulgar, Bernaldez, and other contemporary writers, in reference to the era of the establishment of the modern Inquisition. I have followed Llorente, whose chronological accuracy, here and elsewhere, rests on the most authentic documents.

²⁸ Bernaldez, *Reyes Católicos*, MS., ubi supra. — Pulgar, *Reyes Católicos*, part. 2, cap. 77. — I find no contemporary authority for imputing to cardinal Mendoza an ac-

tive agency in the establishment of the Inquisition, as is claimed for him by later writers, and especially his kinsman and biographer, the canon Salazar de Mendoza. (*Crón. del Gran Cardenal*, lib. 1, cap. 49. — *Monarquía*, tom. i. p. 336.) The conduct of this eminent minister in this affair seems, on the contrary, to have been equally politic and humane. The imputation of bigotry was not cast upon it, until the age when bigotry was esteemed a virtue.

²⁹ In the interim, a caustic publication by a Jew appeared, containing strictures on the conduct of the administration, and even on the Christian religion, which was con-

PART
I.Enforces the
Papal bull.1480.
Sept. 17.

In consequence of this report the papal provisions were enforced by the nomination, on the 17th of September, 1480, of two Dominican monks as inquisitors, with two other ecclesiastics, the one as assessor, and the other as procurator fiscal, with instructions to proceed at once to Seville, and enter on the duties of their office. Orders were also issued to the authorities of the city to support the inquisitors by all the aid in their power. But the new institution, which has since become the miserable boast of the Castilians, proved so distasteful to them in its origin, that they refused any coöperation with its ministers, and indeed opposed such delays and embarrassments, that, during the first years, it can scarcely be said to have obtained a footing in any other places in Andalusia, than those belonging to the crown.³⁰

Inquisition
at Seville.

On the 2d of January, 1481, the court commenced operations by the publication of an edict, followed by several others, requiring all persons to aid in apprehending and accusing all such as they might know, or suspect to be guilty of heresy,³¹

troverted at length by Talavera, afterwards archbishop of Granada. The scandal occasioned by this ill-timed production undoubtedly contributed to exacerbate the popular odium against the Israelites.

³⁰ It is worthy of remark, that the famous cortes of Toledo, assembled but a short time previous to the abovementioned ordinances, and which enacted several oppressive laws in relation to the Jews, made no allusion whatever to the proposed establishment of a tribunal, which was to be armed with such terrific powers.

³¹ This ordinance, in which Llorente discerns the first regular encroachment of the new tribunal on the civil jurisdiction, was aimed partly at the Andalusian nobility, who afforded a shelter to the Jewish fugitives. Llorente has fallen into the error, more than once, of speaking of the count of Arcos, and marquis of Cadiz, as separate persons. The possessor of both titles was Rodrigo Ponce de Leon, who inherited the former of them from his father. The latter (which he afterwards made so illustrious in the Moorish wars) was confer-

and holding out the illusory promise of absolution to such as should confess their errors within a limited period. As every mode of accusation, even anonymous, was invited, the number of victims multiplied so fast, that the tribunal found it convenient to remove its sittings from the convent of St. Paul, within the city, to the spacious fortress of Triana, in the suburbs.³²

The presumptive proofs, by which the charge of Judaism was established against the accused are so curious, that a few of them may deserve notice. It was considered good evidence of the fact, if the prisoner wore better clothes or cleaner linen on the Jewish sabbath than on other days of the week; if he had no fire in his house the preceding evening; if he sat at table with Jews, or ate the meat of animals slaughtered by their hands, or drank a certain beverage held in much estimation by them; if he washed a corpse in warm water, or when dying turned his face to the wall; or, finally, if he gave Hebrew names to his children; a provision most whimsically cruel, since, by a law of Henry the Second, he was prohibited under severe penalties from giving them Christian names. He must have found it difficult to extricate himself from the horns of this dilemma.³³ Such are a few of the circum-

Proofs of
Judaism.

red on him by Henry IV., being derived from the city of that name, which had been usurped from the crown.

³² The historian of Seville quotes the Latin inscription on the portal of the edifice in which the sittings of the dread tribunal were held. Its concluding apostrophe to the

Deity is one that the persecuted might join in, as heartily as their oppressors. "Exurge Domine; judica causam tuam; capite nobis vulpes." Zuñiga, *Annales de Seville*, p. 389.

³³ *Ordenanças Reales*, lib. 8, tit. 3, ley 26.

PART
I.

The sanguinary proceedings of the inquisitors.

stances, some of them purely accidental in their nature, others the result of early habit, which might well have continued after a sincere conversion to Christianity, and all of them trivial, on which capital accusations were to be alleged, and even satisfactorily established.³⁴

The inquisitors, adopting the wily and tortuous policy of the ancient tribunal, proceeded with a despatch, which shows that they could have paid little deference even to this affectation of legal form. On the sixth day of January, six convicts suffered at the stake. Seventeen more were executed in March, and a still greater number in the month following; and by the 4th of November in the same year, no less than two hundred and ninety-eight individuals had been sacrificed in the *autos da fe* of Seville. Besides these, the mouldering remains of many, who had been tried and convicted after their death, were torn up from their graves, with a hyena-like ferocity, which has disgraced no other court, Christian or Pagan, and condemned to the common funeral pile. This was prepared on a spacious stone scaffold, erected in the suburbs of the city, with the statues of four prophets attached to the corners, to which the unhappy sufferers were bound for the sacrifice, and which the worthy Curate of Los Palacios celebrates with much complacency as the spot, "where heretics were burnt, and ought to burn as long as any can be found."³⁵

³⁴ Llorente, Hist. de l'Inquisition, tom. i. pp. 153-159.

MS., cap. 44. — Llorente, Hist. de l'Inquisition, tom. i. p. 160. — L.

³⁵ Bernaldez, Reyes Católicos,

Marineo, Cosas Memorables, fol.

Many of the convicts were persons estimable for learning and probity; and, among these, three clergymen are named, together with other individuals filling judicial or high municipal stations. The sword of justice was observed, in particular, to strike at the wealthy, the least pardonable offenders in times of proscription.

The plague which desolated Seville this year, sweeping off fifteen thousand inhabitants, as if in token of the wrath of Heaven at these enormities, did not palsy for a moment the arm of the Inquisition, which, adjourning to Aracena, continued as indefatigable as before. A similar persecution went forward in other parts of the province of Andalusia; so that within the same year, 1481, the number of the sufferers was computed at two thousand burnt alive, a still greater number in effigy, and seventeen thousand *reconciled*; a term which must not be understood by the reader to signify any thing like a pardon or amnesty, but only the commutation of a capital sentence for inferior penalties, as fines, civil incapacity, very generally total confiscation of property, and not unfrequently imprisonment for life.³⁶

164. — The language of Bernaldez as applied to the four statues of the *quemadero*, "*en que los quemavan*," is so equivocal, that it has led to some doubts whether he meant to assert that the persons to be burnt were enclosed in the statues, or fastened to them. Llorente's subsequent examination has led him to discard the first horrible supposition, which realized the fabled cruelty of Phalaris. — This monu-

ment of fanaticism continued to disgrace Seville till 1810, when it was removed in order to make room for the construction of a battery against the French.

³⁶ L. Marineo, *Cosas Memorables*, fol. 164. — Bernaldez, *Reyes Católicos*, MS., cap. 44. — Mariana, lib. 24, cap. 17. — Llorente, *Hist. de l'Inquisition*, ubi supra. — L. Marineo diffuses the 2,000 capital executions over several years. He

PART
I.Conduct of
the papal
court.

The Jews were astounded by the bolt, which had fallen so unexpectedly upon them. Some succeeded in making their escape to Granada, others to France, Germany, or Italy, where they appealed from the decisions of the Holy Office to the sovereign pontiff.³⁷ Sixtus the Fourth appears for a moment to have been touched with something like compunction; for he rebuked the intemperate zeal of the inquisitors, and even menaced them with deprivation. But these feelings, it would seem, were but transient; for, in 1483, we find the same pontiff quieting the scruples of Isabella respecting the appropriation of the confiscated property, and encouraging both sovereigns to proceed in the great work of purification, by an audacious reference to the example of Jesus Christ, who, says he, consolidated his kingdom on earth by the destruction of idolatry; and he concludes with imputing their successes in the Moorish war, upon which they had then entered, to their zeal for the faith, and promising them the like in future. In the course of the

sums up the various severities of the Holy Office in the following gentle terms. "The church, who is the mother of mercy and the fountain of charity, content with the imposition of penances, generously accords life to many who do not deserve it. While those who persist obstinately in their errors, after being imprisoned on the testimony of trust-worthy witnesses, she causes to be put to the torture, and condemned to the flames; some miserably perish, bewailing their errors, and invoking the name of Christ, while others call upon that of Moses. Many

again, who sincerely repent, she, notwithstanding the heinousness of their transgressions, *merely sentences to perpetual imprisonment!*" Such were the tender mercies of the Spanish Inquisition.

³⁷ Bernaldez states, that guards were posted at the gates of the city of Seville in order to prevent the emigration of the Jewish inhabitants, which indeed was forbidden under pain of death. The tribunal, however, had greater terrors for them, and many succeeded in effecting their escape. Reyes Católicos, MS., cap. 44.