to John II. by his first wife, passed to his daughter by that marriage, Eleanor, countess of Foix. Two provinces of the Aragonese crown, Roussillon and Cerdagne, had been pledged by John to Louis XI. of France, and were still retained by that monarch. The union of Castile and Aragon effected in 1479 was merely a personal union. Each province retained its own institutions and its own laws, and each would have resented the idea of absorption in the other.

The first care of the two sovereigns was to reform the system of government, especially in Castile, where the recent civil wars had given rise to serious disorders. One of their chief objects was to depress the nobles, whose privileges, acquired during the long struggle against the Moors, were inconsistent with a strong centralized govern­ment. In accordance with true policy and with the spirit of the age Ferdinand and Isabella sought to counterbalance the nobles by relying upon the burgher class. The *Santa Hermandad,* or Holy Brotherhood, which was organized in 1476, was a popular confederation of the whole kingdom for police and judicial purposes. Its affairs were managed by local courts,—from which appeals could be made to a supreme tribunal,—and by a general junta composed of deputies from all cities, which was convened once a year. A body of 2000 cavalry was at the disposal of the association, and a special code of laws for its guidance was compiled in 1485. The institu­tion was completely successful in maintaining order and in diminishing the independence of the local jurisdiction of the great nobles. About the same time the lavish grants from the royal domain, which had enriched the nobles at the expense of the crown, were revoked, the central judicial courts were made more efficient by the introduction of trained lawyers, and steps were taken to codify the numerous laws that had been made since the *Siete Partidas* of Alfonso X. The grandmasterships of the great orders of St Iago, Calatrava, and Alcantara, which conferred powers too great to be entrusted to a subject, were on successive vacancies secured to the crown. Trade was encouraged by protective measures, by the breaking down of the barriers between Castile and Aragon, by a strict reform of the currency, and by the commutation for a fixed impost of the detested *alcavala,* a tax of one-tenth upon all sales and transfers of property.

The increased prosperity of the country is well illus­trated by the steady rise of the revenue. “In 1474, the year of Isabella’s accession, the ordinary rents of the Castilian crown amounted to 885,000 reals; in 1477 to 2,390,078; in 1482, after the resumption of the royal grants, to 12,711,591 ; and finally, in 1504, when the acquisition of Granada and the domestic tranquillity of the kingdom had encouraged the free expansion of all its resources, to 26,283,334, or thirty times the amount received at her accession. All this was derived from the customary established taxes, without the imposition of a single new one” (Prescott, ii. 575). No attack was made upon the liberties of the subjects ; the cortes of Castile were frequently convened ; the same towns were called upon to send deputies ; and the only innovation was the frequent neglect to summon the nobles. The numerous *pragmaticas,* or royal ordinances, were mostly limited to administrative matters or to the interpretation of the law. The credit for the domestic administration rests mainly with Isabella. Ferdinand busied himself more with military and diplomatic affairs, and comparatively few innovations were made in Aragon. The *Hermandad* was introduced, and in some other points the example of Castile was followed. But the advanced constitutional liberties of Aragon were uncongenial to Ferdinand. He summoned the cortes as rarely as possible ; and when that assembly

met he spared no pains to influence its composition and its decisions. The centralizing tendencies of the reign were carried still further in both provinces in the later period when Ximenes, who became archbishop of Toledo in 1495, exercised the chief influence. Five councils were entrusted with the administration of affairs :—the “ royal council,” the chief court of justice ; the “council of the supreme” for ecclesiastical business ; the “ council of the orders ” for the great military fraternities ; the “ council of Aragon ” for the management of that kingdom and of Naples ; and the “ council of the Indies ” for the great discoveries of Columbus and his companions.

The political unity of Spain was to be based upon its religious unity. Both Ferdinand and Isabella were imbued with that stern spirit of orthodoxy with which the Spaniards were inspired by their long crusade against the infidel. No institution of their reign was so important as the Inquisition, which was authorized by a bull of Sixtus IV. in 1478, and constituted for the two kingdoms in 1483 under the presidency of Torquemada. Its extension to Aragon was bitterly protested against by the liberty- loving people, but was forced upon them by the iron will of Ferdinand. The activity of the Holy Office was at first directed against the Jews, whose obstinate adherence to their faith in spite of persecution was punished by an edict for their expulsion in 1492. Their departure deprived Spain of many industrious inhabitants ; but its importance has been much exaggerated by authors who have failed to notice that it was followed, not by the decline of Spain, but by the period of its greatest pro­sperity. In spite of their orthodoxy, however, Ferdinand and Isabella were by no means slavish adherents of the papacy. The claim of the popes to appoint to important benefices was strenuously resisted, and the chief control of ecclesiastical affairs was successfully vindicated for the crown.

The steady extension of the royal power in Spain was due in no small degree, as Machiavelli has pointed out, to the constant succession of enterprises in which the attention of the nobles was absorbed. These enterprises may be summarized under three heads :—(1) the union of the Peninsula ; (2) the extension of colonial empire ; and (3) the acquisition of foreign territories.

(1) Under the first head the most important achievement was the final extinction of the Moorish power in Spain. The war which began in 1481 was carried on in a desultory manner for ten years, and was completed in 1492 by the conquest of Granada. The Moors, who had fought with the courage of despair, received very lenient terms from their conquerors. They were secured in the free exercise of their religion, and were allowed to retain their own laws, customs, and language. In some points, such as the trade with Africa, they obtained privileges which were not even shared by the Castilians. But the spirit of proselyt­ism was too strong in Spain to allow this treaty to be observed. The measures taken by Ximenes to bring about the conversion of the Moors provoked a revolt in 1500, which was put down with great severity. They were com­pelled to choose between conversion or banishment, and, although most of them accepted the former alternative, the Moriscoes, as they were now called, found themselves henceforward in the hopeless position of a proscribed and hated minority. In 1493 Ferdinand extorted from the fears and hopes of Charles VIII. of France the restoration of Roussillon and Cerdagne by the treaty of Barcelona. In 1512, after Isabella’s death, he annexed Navarre. The whole Peninsula was now united, with the exception of Portugal, and steps had been taken for the acquisition of that kingdom by marriage. Isabella, Ferdinand’s eldest daughter, was married to Alfonso, the son and heir of