ritual of Saint Isidore has been lamented, but it marked the assumption by Castile of a place in the community of the western European kingdoms. The Frenchmen, both monks and knights, who accompanied Constance brought to bear on Spain the ecclesiastical, architectural, literary and military influence of France, then the intellectual centre of Europe, as fully as it ever was exercised in later times. Castile ceased to be an isolated kingdom, and became an advance guard of Europe in not the least vital part of the crusades. Alphonso, who during his exile owed some good services to the Mahom- medan king of Toledo, spared that city while his friend lived.

But he carried the war forward elsewhere. He extorted tribute, and double and treble tribute from the princes of Andalusia. In r082 he swept all through the valley of the Guadalquivir to Tarifa, where he rode his horse into the sea and claimed possession of the “ last land in Spain.” In 1084, his friend being dead, he made himself master of Toledo. The fall of the city resounded throughout Islam, and shocked the Mahommedan princes of Andalusia into gravity and a sense of their position. Their peoples began to look to Africa, where Yusuf ben Techufin was ruling the newly founded empire of the Almorávides. The princes had cause to dread him; for Yusuf, the leader of a religious movement still in its first zeal, was known to have no friendly feeling for their religious indifference and elegant, dissipated habits. It was likely that, if he came as ally, he would remain as master. But the case was excellently put by al-Motamid, amir of Seville, a brilliant cavalier, an accomplished Arab poet, and one of the most amiably spendthrift of princes. When the peril of appealing to Yusuf was put before him at durbar by his son, he acknowledged the danger, but added that he did not wish to be cursed throughout Islam as the case of the loss of Spain and that, if choose he must, he thought it better to lead camels in Africa than to tend pigs in Castile. Yusuf came, and in 1086 inflicted a terrible defeat on Alphonso VI. at Zalaca near Badajoz. The immediate results of the stricken field were, however, but small. Yusuf was called back to Africa, and in his absence the Christians resumed the advance. When he returned he was chiefly employed in suppressing the Mahommedan princes. Alphonso was compelled to withdraw a garrison he had placed in Murcia, and Valencia was, by his decision, given up by the widow of the Cid *(q.v.).* But he kept his hold on Toledo, and though his last days were darkened by the death of his only son in the lost battle of Ucles (1108), he died in 1109 with the security that his work would last.

The Almorávides went round the fatal circle of Asiatic and African monarchy with exceptional rapidity. One generation of military efficiency and of comparative honesty in administration was followed by sloth and cor- ruption as bad as that of the Arabs. To this the Almorávides, who were Berbers and were largely mingled with pure negroes, added a dull bigotry and a hatred of thought and knowledge from which the Arab, anarchical and politically incapable as he was, was free. In Aragon the successors of Ramiro Sanchez had begun to press close on Saragossa when the Almorávide invasion took place. The battle of Zalaca gave pause to the Aragonese, as it did for a short space to the Castilians. The interval of advance in the reconquest would have been shorter than it was but for the results of a most unfortunate attempt on the part of Alphonso VI. to unite the crowns of Aragon and Castile by the marriage of Alphonso I. (1104-1134) of Aragon with his daughter Urraca. Urraca (the name is a form of Maria) was dissolute and Alphonso was arbitrary. There was nothing in the manners of the 12th century to make a husband hesitate to beat his wife, and Urraca was beaten, and in the presence of witnesses. The marriage, too, was declared null by the pope, as the parties were within the prohibited degrees. Alphonso and Urraca came to open war, in which he claimed to be king of Castile by right of his marriage and his election by the nobles. The confusion was increased by the fact that Alphonso, Urraca’s son by her first marriage with Raymond of Burgundy@@, was recognized as king in Gallicia, was bred up there by the able bishop Diego Gelmirez, and took an active part in the feuds of his mother and step-father. The death of Urraca in 1126 allowed her son to reunite the dominions of his grandfather. In the meantime his quarrels with Urraca had not deterred Alphonso, who is surnamed the Battler in Aragonese history, from taking Saragossa in 1118, and from defeating the Almorávides at the decisive battle of Cutanda in 1120. In 1125 he carried out a great raid through Mahommedan Spain, camping in its midst for months, and returning with many thousands of the Christian *rayahs,* who, under the name of Mozárabes, had hitherto continued to live under Moslem rule. They now fled from the bigotry and negro brutality of the Almorávides. The failure of Alphonso’s attempt to take Braga in 1134 was speedily followed by his death. He left his kingdom by will to the Knights of the Temple and the Hospital, but the barons of Aragon paid no attention to his wish, and drew his brother Ramiro, a monk, from his cell to continue the royal line. Ramiro, having been first ex-claustrated by the pope, married Agnes of Aquitaine, and on the birth of his daughter Petronilla affianced her to Ramon Berenguer (Raymond Berenger), count of Barcelona, and then retired to his cell at Narbonne.1 This marriage united Aragon and Catalonia for ever, and marks a great step forward in the constitution of a national unity in Spain. Navarre, indeed, which had been united with Aragon since the fratricidal murder of its king Sancho in 1076, preferred to remain independent under a new ruler of its choice. It was henceforth a small state lying across the Pyrenees, dependent on France, and doomed inevitably to be partitioned between its great neighbours to north and south.

Alphonso VII., the son of Urraca, was, during the twenty years between his mother’s death and his own in 1157, the dominating sovereign of Spain. In 1135 he was crowned at Leon, in the presence of the new king of Navarre, of the counts of Barcelona and Toulouse, and of other princes, Christian and Mahommedan, “ Emperor in Spain, and king of the men of the two religions.” In his character of emperor and king of the men of the two religions Alphonso VII. seems to have aimed not at expelling, but at reducing the Moors to subjection as vassal communities. He took Cordova and conquered as far as Almeria, but left vassal Moslem princes in possession. His death was followed by another and, happily, a last division of Castile and Leon. Sancho, his eldest son, took the first and Fernando the second. The dream of the empire was speedily dissipated by the death of Sancho of Castilea year after his father; Portugal had already become a semi-independent state.

The complicated story of the Christian kingdoms of Spain during the next two generations can be best made intelligible by taking the king of Castile as the centre of the turmoil. His boyhood was filled by all the miseries which rarely failed to descend in the middle ages on the people whose king was a child. Alphonso VIII. married Leonora, daughter of Henry II. of England, who, as duke of Aquitaine, by right of his marriage with the duchess Eleanor, had a strong direct interest in Spanish politics. Castile, by its geo- graphicaI position as the centre of Spain from Cantabria to the Sierra Morena, was the forefront of the struggle with the Moors. In Andalusia the downfall of the Almorávides had opened the way to the Almohádes, or followers of the Mahdi, an even more bigoted religious sect than the other. Alphonso had conquered Cuenca, in the hill country between Castile and Valencia, in 1177, with the help of the king of Aragon, also an Alphonso, the son of Petronilla and of Ramon Berenguer of Barcelona. With eminent good sense he rewarded his ally by resigning all claim to feudal superiority over Aragon.

@@@l Raymond du Puy, grand master of the Hospitallers, came to terms with Count Raymond in the matter of the bequest. (See Saint John of Jerusalem, Knights of.)