to him, and his final defeat and murder at Montiel, are famous episodes. Henry of Trastamara, the beginner of the “ new kings ” (1368-1379), reigned by election. The nobles and the cities to whom he owed his crown had proportionate power. In his reign and those of his immediate successors the Cortes . flourished, although it failed to establish checks on the absolute power of the king. Henry was on the whole a successful ruler. He forced his neighbours of Portugal to make peace, his fleet defeated an English squadron off Rochelle, and he restored internal order. The civic *hermandades,* or brotherhoods, enforced respect from the nobles. John I. (1379-1390), Henry’s son and successor, had to contend with John of Gaunt, son of Edward III. of England, who had married the eldest daughter of Peter the Cruel, and claimed the crown of Castile in her name. John averted the danger by arranging a marriage between his son Henry and Constance, the eldest daughter of John of Gaunt, an alliance which united the two equally illegitimate lines representing Alphonso XI., and so closed the dispute as to the succession. He was less fortunate in his efforts to vindicate the rights of his wife Beatrix to the throne of Portugal. The defeat of the Castilians at the battle of Aljubarrota (1385) compelled the king to renounce his pretensions. The minority of his son, Henry III. (1390-1406) was long, and his effective reign short, but in the brief space allowed him the king, a weakly man surnamed El Doliente (the sufferer) did something to establish order. He recovered all the immense grants of crown lands and rents, impounded by the nobles during his minority. The first years of the minority of his infant son, John II. (1406- 1454), were by a rare exception peaceful. The young king’s uncle Ferdinand (called “ of Antequera ’’ because he was besieging that town, which he took from the Moors, when he heard in 1412 that he had been declared heir to the crown of Aragon by the Cortes of Caspe) acted as regent. Ferdinand was able and honest. His succession to the throne of Aragon is an event of capital importance in the history of the Peninsula.

The kings of Aragon from the death of James the Conqueror in 1276 to the death of Martin I. in 1410 were so largely con­cerned in the struggle with the Angevin party in Naples and Sicily, that their history belongs rather to Italy than to their Peninsular kingdom. They were six in number; Peter III. (1276-1285), Alphonso III. (1285-1291), James IL (1291-1327), Alphonso IV. (1327- 1336), Peter IV. (1336-1387), John I. (1387-1395), and Martin I. (1395-1410). In so far as their influence was felt in the internal affairs of their Spanish kingdoms, they had a double task to perform. The first was to reunite the Balearic Islands and Roussillon, which James the Conqueror had left by will to a younger son, to the crown of Aragon. This was finally achieved, after a hideous story of fratricidal hatred and murder by poison, by Peter IV. Their second task was to reduce their turbulent barons, in Aragon, Catalonia and Valencia alike, to the position of obedient subjects. In this task also it was Peter IV. who achieved success. The barons of Aragon and Valencia had extorted from his weak father the charter known as the Union, which not only recognized their just right not to be punished in life or property, except by process of law, but explicitly authorized them to elect the *justiza or* the chief justice, whose decisions were to be independent of royal confirmation, and to take up arms whenever they considered themselves aggrieved. Such an instrument was of course incompatible with the monarchical or any other form of government. The object of the life of Peter IV. was to force the barons to surrender their charter. After years of struggle and preliminary failures, Peter IV. defeated the “ Union ” utterly at the decisive battle of Epila (1348). He was a typical king of the 15th century, immeasurably false, and unspeakably ferocious, but he was not a mere blood- thirsty sultan like his enemy, Peter the Cruel of Castile. When he won he took indeed a brutal vengeance on individuals, and he extorted the surrender of the charter and destroyed it with his dagger in the presence of the Cortes at Saragossa. He cut his hand in his eagerness, and declared that the blood of a king was well shed in securing the destruction of such an instrument —whence his popular nickname of Peter of the Dagger (del Pune- jalet). But his use of the victory was statesmanlike. He fully confirmed the right of the nobles to trial by law and security against arbitrary punishment; he left the franchises of the city untouched, and respected the independence of the *justiza.* The result of his victory was to give Aragon and his other dominions a measure of internal peace unknown in Castile. The reigns of his sons and successors, John and Martin, were insignificant and tranquil. The death of Martin without children in 1410 left the succession open. The two years of discussion which followed are interesting as a proof that Aragon had reached a higher political level than Castile. The Cortes was able to administer in peace, and the question of the succession was debated as if it had been in a suit between private persons. The judges finally decided in favour of Ferdinand, on the ground that his mother, Eleanor, was the daughter of Peter IV., and that though a woman could not reign as a “ proprietary queen ’’ in Aragon, she could convey the right to her husband or transmit it to her son. On their own principles they ought to have given the crown to John of Castile as the son of Ferdinand’s elder brother. But the countries were not ripe for union. Nevertheless the choice of Ferdinand was a step forward towards union.

From 1412 to 1479 the separation lasted with a growing ap­proximation of the two states whose interests touched one another so closely. In Castile John II. (1406-1454), a man of amiable but indolent character and of literary tastes, was governed by his favourite, Álvaro de Luna, and harassed by his nobles. His reign is full of contentions which were not wars for a principle, but were scuffles for the control of the spigot of taxation. At the end of his life he sacrificed his favourite at the instigation of his second wife, an act which, it is said, justly embittered his last days. Of his son, Henry IV. (1454-1474) it is enough to say that he was called “ the Impotent, ” and that there is every reason to believe that he deserved the description in all the senses of the word. His reign was an inferior copy of his father’s. As the legitimacy of his alleged daughter Juana was disputed, his sister Isabella claimed the succession, and married her cousin, Ferdinand of Aragon, son of John I., in 1469 in defiance of her brother. In Aragon, Ferdinand I. “ of Antequera ” (1412-1416) was succeeded by Alphonso V. (1416- 1458) the Magnanimous, whose brilliant life belongs to Italy. In Aragon he was represented by his brother John, who administered as lieutenant-general, and who reigned in his own right (1458-1479) when Alphonso V. died without legitimate heirs, leaving Naples by will to a bastard son. John I., a man of indomitable energy and consider­able capacity, spent most of his h\*fe in endeavouring to enforce his claims to the kingdom of Navarre as the husband and heir of its queen Blanche. His conflict with his son by his first marriage, Charles, prince of Viana, was settled in his favour by the death of the prince. Then he had to contend with a national revolt in Catalonia, which endeavoured to make itself independent under three successive foreign princes. In the end the pertinacity of John triumphed. At the age of over eighty, blind and unconquerable, he transmitted his kingdom to Ferdi­nand, his son by his second marriage, with Juana Enriquez, of the family of the hereditary admirals of Castile. Navarre went to a daughter, and Roussillon was somewhat fraudulently retained by Louis XI. as security for a debt. Ferdinand conquered the Spanish half of Navarre later, and recovered Roussillon from Charles VIII., the successor of Louis XI.

With the death of John II. of Aragon in 1479 the history of Spain enters on an entirely new period. Hitherto it has been the story of a national development. The process did not cease, but, during the reign of Isabella the Catholic (1474-1504) until the death of her husband Ferdinand in 1516, was carried,