The Spanish Inquisition was a department of the royal govern­ment, employed to enforce religious unity and obedience, because they were held to be indispensable in order to obtain national unity and to enforce the authority of the Crown. The Inquisition was at first established (in 1480) in the dominions of Castile only, but it was extended in 1486 to Catalonia and in 1487 to Aragon, in spite of strong protests. The first duties of the Inquisition were to deal with the converted Jews and Mahommedans, respectively known as Marranos and Moriscoes, and with those who still professed their religions. The latter were dealt with by expulsion, which in the case of the Jews was enforced in 1492, and in the case of the subject Mahommedans or Mudéjares in 1502. Both were industrious classes, and the loss of their services was disaster to Spain—the first of a long series of similar measures which culminated in the final expulsion of the Moriscoes in 1610. The converted Jews and Mahommedans presented greater difficulties to the Inquisition. Many of the higher ecclesiastics and of the nobility were of Jewish, or partially Jewish, descent. The landlords who found the Moriscoes useful tenants, and the commercial authorities of towns like Barcelona, who knew the value of the converted Jews, endeavoured to moderate the zeal of the inquisitors. But they were supported by the Crown, and there can be no question that the Holy Office was popular with the mass of the nation. It produced a wholesale flight of the converted Jews to France.

In social life the religious zeal favoured by the Inquisition led to such things as those public processions of flagellants which went on in Spain till the end of the 18th century. It aimed at preserving orthodoxy and developing sainthood on the medieval model. Of ordinary immorality it took little notice, and the triumph of its cause in the 16th and 17th centuries, while producing such types of ecstatic piety as St Theresa *(q.v.),* the Sor Mariade Jesus (Maria Agreda), *(q.v.)* and the Venerable Virgin Luisa de Carvajal *(q.v.),* was accompanied by an extraordinary development of moral laxity. The Holy Office showed equal zeal in extending its jurisdiction, and by the end of the 17th century had provoked a strong reaction. The most honourable passage in its history is the part it took in forwarding the great, though temporary, reform of the monastic orders, which was a favourite object with Queen Isabella.

Between 1481 and 1492 the Catholic sovereigns completed the work of the reconquest by subjugating the one surviving Mahommedan state of Granada. Their task was materially facilitated by dissensions among the Moors, whose princes intrigued against one another, and were to the last ready to aid the Christians in the hope of obtaining a small fragment of territory for themselves. The surrender of Granada on the 2nd of January 1492 was partly secured by promises of toleration, which were soon violated. A revolt had to be suppressed in 1501. Having secured the unity of their territory in the Peninsula, the Catholic sovereigns were free to begin the work of expansion. In 1492 Columbus *(q.v.)* sailed on his first voyage to the west. In 1493 Ferdinand secured the restoration of Roussillon from Charles VIII. of France by the fallacious treaty in which he undertook to remain neutral during the king’s expedition to Italy. The voyage of Columbus had unforeseen consequences which led to diplomatic difficulties with Portugal, and the treaty of Tordesillas in 1494, which defined the respec- tive spheres of influence of the two powers in the New World and in Asia. In 1497 Ferdinand, with the support of his wife, entered on those wars of Italy in which the Spanish regular soldiers first gained their reputation, and which made Spain for a time the dominant power in the Italian peninsula (see Córdoba, Gonzalo F. de). They endeavoured to strengthen themselves against France by marriages with the royal family of England (see Catherine of Aragon) and the Habsburgs. The marriage of Juana, called the Mad, with Philip of Habs- burg, son of the emperor Maximilian (q.v.) brought a new dynasty to Spain. On the death of the queen in 1504 her son-in-law claimed the regency, and was supported by the Castilian nobles. His death in 1506 and the insanity of his widow left the Castilians no choice but to restore Ferdinand as regent. During the next ten years Ferdinand governed with the very able assistance of the archbishop of Toledo, Jimenes de Cisneros *(q.v.).* He annexed the southern part of Navarre, which was held by the representatives of his half-sister. The archbishop organized and directed the expedition which conquered Oran, Tripoli and other points on the African coast. Here beyond all doubt lay the proper field for the expansion of Spain. She was drawn from it on the death of Ferdinand in 1516. He was succeeded by his grandson Charles of Habsburg, and when Charles was elected to the empire in 1519 Spain was dragged into the wars and politics of central Europe.

Only the smaller part of the reign of Charles was spent in Spain. He came to it from Flanders, where he had received his education, unable to speak the language and sur- rounded by Flemish favourites. To him and them the country was only a source of supply from which money was to be obtained in order to bribe the German electors. The disregard which both showed for the interests of Spain and its constitutional rights led to the outbreak of the revolt of the cities—the *Comuneros—*which plunged Castile into confusion in 1519 and 1520 after the departure of Charles for Flanders. The rising of the *Comuneros* has often been spoken of as a struggle for freedom. But it has a very dubious right to the name. In many places the movement was simply an excuse for a revival of private wars between wealthy noble families. In others it was a struggle to enforce the claims of particular towns. It hardly extended as a political movement beyond the two Castiles. If its leaders had acted together, in combination with the nobles, the *Comuneros* could have imposed their own terms, for there was no royal army to oppose them. But they drifted into hostility with the nobles, and were defeated by them at Villalar. The movement then rapidly collapsed. Charles had no part in the suppression of the revolt. Through- out his reign he respected the claim of the Cortes that no new taxation should be raised without its consent, but as he had to deal only with the representatives of eighteen cities, who could generally be bribed, he rarely failed to secure what he demanded.

The outbreak of the *Comuneros* in Castile coincided with the social and agrarian revolt in Valencia known as the *Germania* or brotherhood, from the name of the directing committee appointed by the insurgents. It was in no sense a movement for political rights, but an attack by the sailors, the workmen of the towns, and the Christian peasants on the landowners and their Mudéjar and Morisco serfs. It was accompanied by murder and massacre and by forced conversions of the Mudéjares. After desolating Valencia for some three years it was put down by the help of troops from Castile. The conquest of Mexico by Hernan Cortes *(q.υ)* and of Peru by Francisco Pizarro *(q.υ.)* belong to this reign, but were imme- diately due to the adventurers in America. These conquests and the incessant wars into which Spain was drawn by the Aragonese claims in Italy, and its connexion with the empire, gave to the nation a great European position and to the Spanish soldiers of the time many opportunities to win renown. The capture of the French king at Pavia and his imprisonment at Madrid gratified the pride of the Spaniards, and did much to reconcile them to the sacrifices which the policy of the emperor imposed on them. Except, however, in the case of the successful attack on Tunis in 1535, and the attempt to take Algiers in 1541, his actions were not inspired by any regard for the interests of his Spanish kingdoms. He treated them simply as instruments to promote the grandeur of his house. His indifference to their good, or his utter inability to see where it lay, was conspicuously shown when, on his abdication in 1556, he left his hereditary Flemish possessions to his son Philip, and not to his brother Ferdinand.

The reign of Philip II. (1556-1598) was a prolongation of the reign of his father, both in domestic and in foreign policy. In it the vices of this policy were displayed to the fullest extent. Philip’s marriage with Mary Tudor *(q.υ.)* in 1554 having proved barren, and her death in 1558 having placed Elizabeth on the throne of England, he was left without the support against France which this union was meant to secure. At the same time his inheritance of the Netherlands brought him into collision with their inhabitants, who feared his absolutist tendencies, and with the Reformation.