situation; and order was restored. The methods by which this result had been achieved were the subject of violent attacks on the government in the Cortes, and on the 13th of March Sagasta resigned, but only to resume office five days later. He now returned to the question of the religious orders, and on the 9th of April issued a decree proclaiming his intention of enforcing that of the 19th of July 1901. The attitude of the Church was practically one of defiance. The nuncio, indeed, announced that the papacy would be prepared to discuss the question of authorization, but only on condition that all demands for such authorization should he granted. To avoid a crisis at the time when the young king was about to come of age, the government yielded; and on the 10th of May Sagasta announced that a *modus υiυendi* with the Vatican had been established.

King Alphonso XIII., whose enthronement took place with all the antique ceremonial on the 17th of May, was himself at the outset under clerical and reactionary influences, and his contemptuous treatment of ministers—who at the ceremonial functions were placed wholly in the background—seemed to argue an intention of ruling personally under the advice of the court *camarilla.@@1* This impression, due doubtless to the king’s extreme youth and inexperience, was belied in the event; but it served to discredit the Liberal government still further at the time. Señor Antonio Maura y Montanes, who proved himself later a statesman of exceptional character, seceded to the Conservatives. On the 7th of November Sagasta himself resigned, resumed office temporarily on the 14th, and handed in his final resignation on the 3rd of December. On the 6th of December a Conservative cabinet was formed under Señor Silvela, Señor Villaverde, pledged to a policy of retrenchment, taking the portfolio of finance.

The death of Sagasta, on the 5th of January 1903, temporarily broke up the Liberal party, which could not agree on a leader; its counsels were directed for the time by a committee, consisting of Señors Montero Rios and Moret, the marquis de la Vega de Armijo, Señor Salvador and Count Romanones. The Republicans, under Salmeron, also had their troubles, due to the growing influence of Socialism; and, finally, the Conservatives were distracted by the rivalries between Silvela, Villaverde and Maura. In the country, meanwhile, the unrest continued. At Barcelona the university had to be dosed to stop the revolutionary agitation of the students; in April there were serious riots at Salamanca, Barcelona and Madrid. The result of the new elections to the Cortes, declared on the 26th of April, revealed tendencies unfavourable to the government and even to the dynasty; the large towns returned 34 Republicans. A ministerial crisis followed; Maura resigned; and though the elections to the senate resulted in a large Conservative majority, and though in the lower house a vote of confidence was carried by 183 to 81, Silvela himself resigned shortly afterwards. Señor Villaverde was now called upon to form a cabinet. His government, however, accomplished little but the suppression of renewed troubles at Barcelona. His programme included drastic proposals for financial reform, which necessarily precluded an adventurous policy abroad or any additional expenditure on armaments, principles which necessarily brought him into conflict with the military and naval interests. On the 3rd of December Villaverde was forced to resign, his successor being Señor Maura. Meanwhile, on the 24th of November, the Liberal party had been reconstructed, as the Democratic party, under Señor Montero Rios.

Señor Maura, as was to be proved by his second administration, represented the spirit of compromise and of conservative reform. His position now was one of singular diffi­culty. Though a Catholic, he had to struggle against the clerical *coterie* that surrounded the king, and had not influence enough to prevent the appointment of Monsignor Nozaleda, formerly archbishop of Manila and a prelate of notoriously reactionary views, to the important see of Valencia. His concessions to the demands of the ministers of war and marine for additional estimates for the army and navy exposed him to the attacks of Villaverde in the Cortes; and still fiercer criticism was provoked by the measure, laid by him before the Cortes on the 23rd of June, for the revision of the concordat with Rome, and more especially by the proposal to raise a loan at 4 % to indemnify the religious orders for their estates con- fiscated during the Revolution. Violent scenes greeted the attempt of the government to procure the suspension of the parliamentary immunities of 140 deputies, accused or suspected of more or less treasonable practices, and when, on the 4th of October, the Cortes reopened after the summer recess, Señor Romero Robledo, the president of the lower house, opened an attack on the ministry for their attempted breach of its privileges. Furious debates followed on this, and on the subject of Maura’s financial proposals, which were attacked by the Conservative Villaverde and the Liberal Moret with impartial heat. On the 14th of December Maura resigned an impossible task and King Alphonso made General Azcarraga head of a narrowly Clerical- Conservative cabinet.

*1@@@ Ann. Register* (1902), p. 347.

The new ministry, confronted by a rapidly spreading revolu- tionary agitation and by a rising provoked by a crop failure and famine in Andalusia, survived scarcely a month. On the 26th of January 1905 Azcarraga resigned, and two days later Señor Villaverde once more became prime minister. He was in no hurry to summon the Cortes, partly because the elections to the provincial councils were due in March, and these had to be manipulated so as to ensure the return of a Senate of the right colour, partly because the convocation of the Cortes seemed at best a necessary evil. Already the discredit of parliamentary government was being evidenced in the increased personal power of the young king. Alphonso was now shaking himself loose from the deadening influence of the reactionary court, and was beginning to display a disconcerting interest in affairs, information about which he was apt to seek at first hand. The resignation of the see of Valencia by Archbishop Nozaleda was a symptom of the new spirit. This was none the less distasteful to the Republicans, who thundered against personal government, and to the Liberals, who clamoured for the Cortes and the budget. The Cortes met at last on the 14th of June, and the upshot justified Villaverde’s reluctance to meet it. Attacked by Maura and Moret alike, the prime minister (June 20) accused his former colleague of acting through personal pique; on a motion of confidence, however, he was defeated by 204 votes to 54, and resigned. He died on the 15th of July following, within a few weeks of his former leader and colleague Silvela.

The Liberals now once more came into power under Señor E. Montero Rios, Señor Moret having refused the premiership. The government programme, announced with a view to influencing the impending elections, included financial reform, reform of the customs, modification of the *octroi,* and the question of the concordat with Rome. The result of the elections was a substantial Liberal majority in both houses. The government was none the less weak. Quarrels broke out in the cabinet between Señor José Echeray, the distinguished banker and famous dramatist, who as minister of finance was intent on retrenchment, and General Weyler, who as minister of war objected to any starving of the army. On the 27th of October, scarcely a fortnight after the opening of the session, the government resigned. At the instance of the king, who was going abroad, Señor Montero Rios consented indeed to resume office; but his difficulties only increased. The price of corn rose, owing to the reimposition by the government, before the elections, of the import duties on corn and flour; and in November there was serious rioting in Seville, Granada, Oviedo, Bilbao and Valencia, while in Catalonia the Separatist movement gathered such force that on the 29th martial law was proclaimed throughout the province. The same day the government finally resigned. Señor Moret now accepted the