cessor. But popular opinion is too strong even for princes. The country believed her illegitimate, and on the death of Henry in 1474, Ferdinand V. and Isabella were elevated to the throne of Castille and Leon, it being stipulated that the king and queen should reign conjointly. The king of Portugal at first espoused the cause of Juana ; but the alliance was productive of no event of importance, and peace was restored between Castille and Portugal in 1479. The very same year, Ferdinand, by the death of his father, Juan II., was called to the throne of Aragon. Having received the homage of his Aragonese subjects at Saragossa, of the Catalonians at Barcelona, and of the Valencians in the capital of that province, he returned into Castille.

The reign of Ferdinand and lsabella is distinguished by great events, events of the highest importance, not only to Spain, but to mankind. It was under their auspices that Columbus brought a new world to light, and it was by their arms that the power of the Mahommedans was for ever extinguished in the Peninsula. Their first object was the regulation of the government and the enforcement of the laws, which, from the license of preceding reigns, had fallen into desuetude, or were openly defied. The king and queen were noted for a rigid administration of justice ; neither for money nor favour would they spare the guilty: and there was too much to punish and correct not to give their administration a character of severity, which would have had no existence had the country not fallen into a state of civil and political disorganization almost unprecedented. The local judges were overawed by the nobles, and extraordinary judges or corregidors were appointed to see that they did their duty. This not being found sufficient to eradi cate an evil which had existed for centuries, the aid of the Holy Brotherhood was sought and obtained. This association, which had existed since the middle of the thirteenth century, consisted of a number of confederated cities and towns, which maintained a considerable body of troops, in order to protect travellers and pursue criminals, and took cognizance of all violent offences against the laws, appointing courts and judges in various parts of the kingdom. New powers were reposed in this association, so that it be came a powerful instrument in the hands of government, and alike terrible to robber and rebel. By this means the territorial jurisdiction of the seignoral nobles was materially abridged, while the royal prerogative was greatly extended. The prompt and impartial administration of justice restored tranquillity and order ; and it had been well for the fame of these sovereigns if their salutary severity had been only directed against the disturbers of the public peace. But unfortunately they were equally severe against all who ventured to differ from the established faith. Against apostates, all converts who, after baptism, reverted to Judaism or the faith of Islam, their hatred was impla cable. Their intemperate zeal led them to establish, or rather to reorganize, an ecclesiastical tribunal, which became proverbial throughout the civilized world for its enormous cruelties and injustice This was the court of inquisition.

We now approach what is not only an important event in the reign of Ferdinand and Isabella, but an era in the history of Europe, namely, the conquest of Granada, the last possession of the Mahommedans in Spain. A sovereign so zealous for the Catholic faith as Ferdinand proved himself to be, was not likely to allow such enemies of Christianity to remain long in the Peninsula, if by force of arms he could expel them ; and accordingly he early turned his attention to the subject. Every thing conspired to favour his design ; the Moorish kingdom was distracted and dis united by a civil war between father and son ; and Ferdinand having obtained the bull of Sixtus IV. authorizing a crusade, put himself at the head of his troops, and entered Granada. He continued the war with rapid success ; Isabella attended him in several expeditions ; and they were

both in considerable danger at the siege of Malaga, an important city, which was defended with great courage, and taken in 1487. Baza was reduced in 1489, after the loss of 20,000 men. Gaudix and Almeria were delivered up to them by the Moorish king Alzagel, who had first dethroned his brother Alboacen, and afterwards been chased from his capital by his nephew Abdali. That prince engaged in the service of Ferdinand and Isabella, who, after reducing every other place of eminence, undertook the siege of Granada. Abdali made a gallant defence ; but all communication with the country being cut off, and all hopes of relief at an end, he capitulated, after a siege of eight months, on condition that he should enjoy the revenue of certain places in the fertile mountains of Alpuxarras ; that the inhabitants should retain the undisturbed possession of their houses, goods, and inheritances ; the use of their laws, and the free exercise of their religion. Thus ended the empire of the Arabs in Spain, after it had continued about eight hundred years.

Its overthrow was soon followed by the expulsion of the Saracens from Spain. This expulsion, however, was not entirely effected till the 17th century. Vast numbers of the Moors, indeed, oppressed by their conquerors, abandoned a country where they could not reside with comfort and with freedom. From the reign of Ferdinand of Cas tille, to that of Philip III. of Spain, more than 3,000,000 of these people quitted Spain, and carried with them, not only a great part of their acquired wealth, but that industry and love of labour which are the foundation of national pros perity.

The conquest of Granada was followed by the expulsion of the Jews, under circumstances of great injustice and atro city. This unhappy people had engrossed the greater part of the wealth and commerce of Spain, yet not being allowed to take away the value of their property in the precious metals, they were compelled to barter it for the produce or manufactures of the Peninsula, and this could not be effected except at a great sacrifice. One alternative was left them, to embrace Christianity. The inquisition *ex­hausted* first its art and then its fury to accomplish this object, but with comparatively little success. Many, indeed, to save their property, always dear to an Israelite, outwardly at least embraced the faith of the cross ; but by far the greater number, in profound despair, and stripped of much of their wealth, took leave of the land of their birth. About the same time that this decree was promulgated, their Catholic majesties concluded an alliance with the emperor Maximilian, and a treaty of marriage for their daughter Juana with his son Philip, archduke of Austria, and sovereign of the Netherlands. To this period also belongs the contract concluded with Columbus for the discovery of new countries ; an event which more powerfully than any other attracts the notice of posterity to this splendid reign, and which materially tended to raise the Spanish monarchy above any other in Europe. To Isabella must be ascribed the glory of the enterprise, for she it was who borrowed the sum of money necessary for the armament, and bade the great navigator depart. This great queen died in 1504, leaving her daughter Juana, and after that princess her own grandson (the celebrated Charles V.), heirs to the monarchy, but appointing her husband Ferdinand regent of the kingdom till the majority of Charles. The latter years of Ferdinand’s life were embittered by family dissen sions, which broke out even before Isabella had breathed her last. Juana was undoubtedly queen, for the Salic law, which excludes females, never existed in Spain. This was well known, and is important, as bearing on events which happened in more recent times. Philip therefore prepared to enforce his right, while Ferdinand, fond of power, and backed by the will of his late wife, showed a determination to maintain his position in the kingdom. But just as the affairs of Spain were assuming a serious aspect, Philip died,