

Olózaga, who, with his other qualifications, is no little of a humourist, sustaining his character successfully all the way, and smoking and tipping enough (as in duty bound) at the ventas on the road for the most rakish Calesero in Spain. At Coruña they remained concealed for some time, till they found an opportunity of embarking for England.

Every favour seemed, in these latter days, to have been lavished on Olózaga to precipitate his descent. He was loaded with honours as if to make his downfall heavier. Unquestionably the most distinguished subject in Spain, he was adorned with decorations reserved for kings. The suffrages even of his old antagonists had raised him to the Presidency of the popular Chamber, and the confidence of his Sovereign had called him to the head of her Government.

He was first, ambassador to France, and next, his Queen's preceptor. All the orders in Spain had been exhausted to decorate him; the favourite of events, the very toy of fortune, he had played sportively, and played successfully, with all situations and with all parties; he had a finger in the downfall of the Regent Cristina, and a hand in the downfall of the Regent Espartero; and, as if to teach him to forget that he was any longer a subject, and make him the companion of princes and of emperors, the Toison de Oro, the Golden Fleece, sparkled on his breast, and assured him that there was nothing in human ambition to sigh for, no glittering prize but he had won. Yet by no fault of his, without an error or omission, without crime, neglect, or levity—such is human security—within a week he was a fugitive from Spain, and an outcast, with a price set upon his head!

“Sábeta, amigo Sancho,” says *Don Quixote*, “que la vida de los caballeros andantes está sujeta á mil peligros y desventuras, y ni mas ni menos está en potencia propinqua de ser los caballeros andantes reyes y emperadores, como lo la mostrado la esperiencia; y pudiérate contar ahora, si el dolor me diera lugar, de algunos que solo por el valor de su brazo han subido á los altos grados que le contado, y estos mismos se vieron despues en diversas calamidades y miserias.” “Know, friend Sancho, that the life of knights-errant is subject to a thousand dangers and mischances, and neither more nor less is it within immediate possibility for knights-errant to become kings and emperors, as experience hath shown; and I could now tell you, if my pain permitted, of some who alone by the valour of their arms, have arrived at the lofty posts I have narrated, and these same saw themselves afterwards in divers calamities and miseries.”

The following most ingenious anagram was circulated by the Moderados shortly after the memorable scene at the palace:—

“Osado! Tu leal y sagaz? No!”

Every letter of the name “Salustiano de Olózaga,” and not a letter more, is to be found in this sentence of fiery reproof; and the anagram may unquestionably rank among the best that have ever been invented. The meaning of the words, arising from the transposition, is—“Audacious man! You wise and loyal? No!”

This notice of the latest victim of court intrigue leads, by a natural transition, to a history of Cama-

rillas themselves—no common subject. To speak in Spanish proverbial language, the honey is not for the ass's mouth, and let those who have marrow in their heads understand. Who puts his finger in the family pot, will draw it forth scalded. Yet will I not spare my gums. I will expose the *calva*,* though the curls be set. *Pardiez!* I will a tale untwist. I am brisk to-day as a canonigo's mule; not a comma shall stick in the ink-bottle.

* Bald place.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE CAMARILLAS OF SPAIN.

THE first great reigns of Camarillas at the Castilian court were those of Alfonso XI. and his son Pedro the Cruel, in the fourteenth century. The mistress of the former, the beautiful and unfortunate Leonor de Gusman, exercised, with her favourites, entire control over her hot-headed Sovereign; and the charms of her person, and her graceful affability, made those who approached Alfonso in her presence too often forget their just grounds of complaint, and retire blinded with admiration. Alfonso's legitimate Queen, Maria of Portugal, dissembled her intense hatred till the monarch's death, when his successor and son, as well as heir, lent himself to his mother's bloody design, with a perfidy and cunning which he derived from his father, and improved, without inheriting one of his virtues. By infernal stratagems and traitorous promises of security they lured Leonor from her safe retreat within the walls of Medina Sidonia, and the moment she entered Seville immured her as a prisoner. Transferred in custody to the palace of Talavera, where the implacable Dowager Queen resided, the beautiful Leonor fell a victim to the she-wolf of Portugal—and was executed in Maria's presence. She devoured her blood with dilated eyes, she feasted on her screams.

Pedro's first amorous exploit was to become captive to the singular charms of Doña Maria de Padilla, whose slender but elegant shape, expressive features, graceful demeanour, and lively imagination and wit, exercised a powerful spell over the youthful Sovereign. Maria was not so dazzled by her suitor's rank as to forget the claims of honour. She insisted upon marriage, and a marriage was celebrated between them secretly, but in due form. At this very moment the Queen Mother was negotiating for him a marriage with Blanche, the sister of the Queen of France. Pedro ratified the contract without scruple or difficulty, and the ceremony was publicly performed with great splendour.

A short period after his public marriage was devoted by him to the new Queen, but Pedro soon returned to Maria de Padilla. So immense was her ascendancy over him, that in those superstitious days it was commonly attributed to magic. Her Camarilla was soon one of the most powerful ever seen in Spain. All her relations were raised from comparative obscurity to posts of honour and confidence. Her brothers were made Grand Masters of the orders of St. James and Calatrava. Pedro's former favourite d'Albuquerque was forced to quit the kingdom, his Queen Blanche was thrown into prison, divorced, and subsequently poisoned. He married next Doña Juana de Haro, who was likewise speedily repudiated.

After a horrible series of poniardings and poisonings, Pedro lost the too potent Egeria, whose charms involved the country in civil war, and with the death of Maria Padilla ended the sway of this first and

most fatal of Camarillas. The murder of Blanche of Bourbon, to which it contributed, led to an invasion from France; from which Pedro was extricated by the prowess of Edward the Black Prince, wherein John of Gaunt unsheathed his maiden sword, and the well-worn pride of Duguesclin was humbled in captivity; but in a second invasion from the same quarter, this Nero of Spain was defeated, ensnared, and poniarded by his own half-brother, in revenge for the murder of his mother and brother!

Juan II. was entirely governed by Don Alvaro de Luna, Grand Constable of the kingdom, whose haughty and imperious demeanour excited the nobles to rebellion. The King took arms in behalf of his favourite, and crushed them for his sake. Alvaro's insolent Camarilla, more powerful and exacting than the court of his royal master, soon excited another rebellion, in which the King of Aragon took part with the discontented, and Juan was forced to dismiss his favourite. Then was established an Aragonese Camarilla, in which the rebels possessed themselves of every lucrative post. A second revolution restored the old position of affairs, but Luna was not yet recalled.

The Prince of the Asturias, successor to the throne, allowed his favourite, Don Juan Pacheco, to establish a new Camarilla, without consulting which no step was taken in the government. Fresh battles;—Luna was recalled, and recompensed for his temporary disgrace by being made Grand Master of the Order of St. James. He formed a company of guards in his own name, and gave the command to his natural son, Don Pedro. The Camarilla was much better guarded

than the Sovereign, but jealousy was, at last, more powerful than the favourite's army. He eclipsed, in splendour, even the heir apparent. The Queen had a rival Camarilla, of which Don Alfonso de Vivaro was at the head, and held the post of Grand Treasurer. Luna's destruction was plotted and nearly prepared, when, aware of the designs of his enemies, he invited Vivaro to a grand entertainment at his palace. Luna conducted him, with all Castilian courtesy, to the summit of a lofty tower, whence he told him he could obtain a magnificent view of the city. But no sooner had they reached the upper esplanade of the tower, than he flung his guest to the bottom, and the Treasurer was dashed to pieces!

The assassin strove to pass off the fall to the King as purely accidental, but the truth was made manifest by the clearest evidence. The murdered man was the Queen's especial favourite, and in destroying hers and the Prince's Camarilla, Luna precipitated his own destruction. He was beheaded in the market-place of Valladolid, his property was all confiscated to the Crown, and he who had been the companion, and almost the equal, of kings, ended with a pauper funeral!

Henry IV., the turbulent prince of this reign, succeeded on his father's death, and Don Juan de Pacheco continued to govern both him and the kingdom, establishing a Camarilla as omnipotent as that of Luna had once been. He received the title of Marquis de Villena, and the citizens were as indignant as the nobles at the insolence and extravagance of this new child of fortune. The King was divorced, upon indisputable

grounds, from Blanche, a Princess of Navarre, and obtained the surname of "Impotent," by which he is known in history. Ambition subsequently determined Juana of Portugal to marry him notwithstanding, and she managed so well, under the protecting mantle of a Camarilla, as to give birth to a daughter five years after.

But the impotence of Henry was not less derided in public. Villena (the *ci-devant* Pacheco), in pursuance of the traditional policy of Camarillas, betrayed his royal master to France, and concluded and executed a private treaty with Louis XI., by which the King of Spain abandoned Catalonia—a conduct almost literally imitated five hundred years after, in all its parts, by the not less infamous Godoy. No sooner had the Castilian monarch signed this agreement, than he felt all the shame of the act, and exiled Villena from his court. The banished favourite forgot the royal bounties of twenty years, formed a league of nobles against his Sovereign, which was joined by the King of Navarre, and was again received into Henry's favour!

The remaining leaguers went through the ceremony of deposing Henry, in one of the most singular passages recorded in history. A vast temporary building was erected outside the walls of Avila, and the effigy of the sovereign was placed on a throne, a crown on its head, a sceptre in its hand, the sword of justice by its side. Articles of accusation against King Henry were read in a loud voice, the charges being that he sought to deprive his brother Alfonso of the succession to the throne, and had deceived the nation by

falsely alleging that Queen Juana's child was his own. The charges were declared proven, and the sentence of deposition pronounced in the presence of a numerous assembly.

After the reading of the first article of accusation, the Archbishop of Toledo advanced, and removed the crown from the head of the effigy; after the second, the Count de Placentia took from it the sword of justice; after the third, Count Benevento took away the sceptre; and after the fourth, Don Diego de Stuniga threw down the effigy from the throne; and at the same moment Don Alfonso, brother of Henry, was proclaimed King of Castile and Léon.

Henry took up arms, but instantly laid them down again, deceived by the disastrous advice of his Camarilla; so complete was Villena's mastery over him. The leaguers had conquered a fourth of his kingdom, when Henry at last was forced into the field; and this disastrous civil war was terminated only by the death of Alfonso. His sister, afterwards the famous Isabella, was then recognised by the king as heiress presumptive, renouncing the pretensions of Doña Juana and her child. The blackness of Villena's ingratitude only caused him to mount higher in his Sovereign's favour. The curse of Camarillas hung over the dawning horizon of Spanish greatness; and Villena's intrigues would have marred that most momentous of marriages which united Ferdinand and Isabella, but for the activity of the Archbishop of Toledo, who carried the Princess to Valladolid, having previously invited Ferdinand thither, and gave them the nuptial benediction.

Ferdinand and Isabella were made, the one of sterner and the other of nobler stuff than that which permits the sway of Camarillas, yet they suffered themselves to be induced by secret influences to treat the illustrious Columbus with the grossest injustice, and sent out the scoundrel Bovedilla to Hispaniola, to inquire into his conduct, by whom the noble Admiral was sent home loaded with chains. This grand benefactor of mankind was very near being hung! After the death of Isabella, Ferdinand took a second wife, Germaine, a Princess of France, but eighteen years of age, while he was fifty-four, and hating the future Charles the Fifth, and resolved, if possible, to mar his succession, he did perhaps the only foolish act of his life—established in his palace a Camarilla of quacks, and took by their advice a potion which was to restore the vigour of his constitution. His youthful and blooming Queen remained sterile notwithstanding, and Ferdinand only shattered his already enfeebled health; a languor stole over him, his intellect became impaired. The Camarilla potion killed him.

This double reign was indubitably glorious, but it cannot be forgotten that in it was established another and a more despotic reign, that of the infamous Holy Office. I saw the mighty palace of these monk-kings pulled down last summer in Seville, an edifice dome-crowned and splendid as the noblest abodes of royalty, yet covering the blackest dungeons and the most hideous regions of torture. I thought of this stain on the achievements of Ferdinand the Politic and Isabel the Catholic, and deemed that their glories should be hymned by a chorus of human groans, topped by the

shrill treble of those changeful Madrileños who twenty years ago cried,

“Viva la Santa Inquisicion!”

When Charles V. came to Spain in his eighteenth year, and landed as king in the Asturias, he brought with him a Flemish Camarilla, which betrayed his inexperience into numerous errors, and commenced with a slight to Cardinal Ximenès, which caused that illustrious statesman's death a few hours after.

Surrounded by foreigners, he had no practice in the Spanish language, and spoke it most imperfectly, his answers to the Castilian nobles appearing both short and stupid; and this future glory of Spain and of sovereignty was near being indebted at the outset of his career for the loss of his crown to his foreign Camarilla. These rapacious strangers sold all the public offices, and in four months sent home to the Low Countries eleven hundred thousand crowns in gold. His tutor, Chièvres, ruled Charles with absolute sway; and the nephew of this intriguer, before even he had attained the canonical age, was appointed to the archbishopric of Toledo, a post never held before but by a Castilian, and which came next in wealth to the Popedom. Upon Charles' subsequent departure for Germany to assume the imperial dignity, he left a Fleming, Cardinal Adrian, behind him as regent of the kingdom.

The same year that saw Charles crowned emperor at Aix-la-Chapelle, was witness of the conquest of Mexico by Hernando Cortés. But the appointment of a foreigner to the regency, and the feeble or vicious

administration of his Flemish Camarilla, roused the spirit of the nation, and the Holy League of Cities almost deprived Charles of his crown, and was on the point of destroying the monarchy. The rebellion was extinguished and Adrian became Pope, while Charles won the hearts of his Spanish subjects (now that his tutor and the other Flemings were dismissed) by a most generous amnesty.

CHAPTER XV.

THE CAMARILLAS OF SPAIN

(Continued).

PHILIP the Second's was a theological Camarilla—the worst of all. The *mongil* hid no scruples where the object in view was the assumed good of religion. The strong language of the Peninsula correctly characterizes this class of political friars as *espadachins escolásticos*, or “scholastic bullies;” and the popular proverb, with admirable truth, declares, that “*Nunca fray modesto fué provincial.*”

The general policy of Philip was as little subject to the weakness of being guided by back-stairs influence and underhand suggestions as his father's; but these hugely devout and hair-splitting churchmen so far distorted his better judgment, that when his armies repressed the insolence of Pope Paul IV., who ridiculously declared Philip his vassal and his kingdom forfeit, imprisoning the Spanish envoy, he caused his general, the infamous Duke of Alva, afterwards the bloody scourge of Flanders, as he took possession of the Papal towns that capitulated, to do so in the name of the College of Cardinals, with the intention of immediately restoring them, and subsequently to kiss the papal toe.

His return to Spain, after the death of our Queen Mary, was illuminated by the burning of three-and-

thirty heretics together in Valladolid; a spectacle more piquant even than the modern bull-fights. His wife's doings in Smithfield probably gave him a zest for the horrible pageant; and his Inquisitorial Camarilla, with their twenty thousand paid spies, had a pliant instrument, wherever fanaticism intervened, in the gloomy crowned barbarian, who exclaimed, "If my son were guilty of heresy, I myself would carry the wood to burn him at the stake!" He did not burn him at the stake—he only poisoned him. Perhaps the youth was too fond of the Flemish heretics, perhaps too fond of his father's third wife, Elizabeth. Most certainly he died by poison, and the Queen died soon after, it is said, by the same paternal and conjugal hand. Of the Flemings, he judicially butchered eighteen thousand, more than a hundred thousand fled the country for ever, and his tyranny depopulated Granada, and lost the Low Countries to Spain; not, however, till this bloodiest of bigots had the illustrious Prince of Orange assassinated. One of the greatest governing geniuses that ever lived was spoiled by the monks who educated him, and distorted by fanaticism into a Christian Domitian.

Philip III. was governed by the Duke of Lerma with an authority as absolute as that with which his father governed Spain. Lerma's was the most numerous Camarilla ever seen at Madrid; he had his creatures in every class of society, and multiplied offices with such profusion, as to drive the kingdom to the verge of bankruptcy. A general murmur ran through the Spanish monarchy, and the palace itself resounded with complaints of the neglect of agriculture and the decay of commerce.

Spinola arrested for a time the decline of the empire. The ecclesiastical head of Lerma's Camarilla was Bernardo, archbishop of Toledo, his brother, to whom the Duke thus took care to secure the most lucrative post in Spain; and its most active member was Juan de Ribera, patriarch of Antioch, and archbishop of Valencia, a man of learning and ability, but one of the most cruel bigots that ever wielded power for the destruction of mankind. Lerma, duke and layman as he was, aspired to be made a cardinal, and the most fanatical of conclaves was this clerical Camarilla.

It was resolved to exterminate the residue of the Moors; and the charge preferred against them was that, while the Castilian towns were ruinous and deserted, those of Valencia were populous and flourishing, and that the energetic and frugal Moors would soon outnumber the Christian population; in fact, that they were the best subjects of Spain. Six hundred thousand of her most industrious population were sacrificed to this Junta of intolerance, and thrown unprovided on the desert wastes of Africa.

There are grounds for believing that this holy Camarilla was not less attached to assassination, as an instrument of sound policy, than Philip II. was, and that it guided the hand of Ravaillac when he treacherously murdered Henry IV. of France, then preparing an expedition against Spain.

Shortly afterwards the Pope made Lerma a cardinal. The superstition of Philip regarded him with such reverence in his new character, and with such worshipful dread as a prince of the church, that Lerma ceased

to be his favourite, and was supplanted by his son, the Duke of Uzéda. Lerma had made a marquis and a minister of his footman, Rodrigo de Calderone, who, being the favourite's favourite, established a Camarilla of his own, of which his father, an old clown, was at the head, and which permitted itself the liberty of insulting intolerably the ancient grandees of Spain. Calderone fell with his patron, was thrown into prison, and eventually perished on a scaffold, while Lerma was exiled to the provinces. His son, Uzéda, the new favourite, amused his sovereign with religious processions, fêtes, and tourneys, while the Dutch ravaged the colonies and intercepted the Eastern commerce of the Portuguese, now subject to the Spanish crown.

Philip IV. dismissed Uzéda upon his accession, but was led, as a Savoyard leads his monkey, by the haughty, ardent, and presumptuous Count-Duke of Olivarès, who aimed at conquering the Low Countries and subjecting all Europe, but only lost Portugal! He affronted Buckingham, and thus occasioned the marriage of our first Charles with Henrietta of France, instead of the Infanta; which led to the coalition of France and England against Spain, and to the expulsion of the latter power from Piedmont. The death of Philip's eldest son is very generally attributed to Olivarès's criminal ambition and jealousy; and undoubtedly his Camarilla was capable of anything.

All the most lucrative employments and honourable charges in the state were accumulated in Olivarès's family, while Van Tromp and his Dutchmen destroyed the Spanish fleet, and the forces of Philip were shamefully defeated in the Low Countries and at Turin. He

grossly insulted the Catalans, and had his army expelled from Catalonia ; the feeble monarch receiving his interpretation, that insults justly levelled against the favourite were directed against himself. His vindictive brutality permitted a licentious soldiery to ravish the wives and daughters of Barcelona almost before the eyes of their husbands and brothers ; and their deputies bearing their complaint to the foot of the throne, were treated by King and Camarilla with equal contempt.

But the head and severed limbs of the Viceroy, San Coloma, soon were carried by the insurgent Catalans in triumph round the city. The successful revolt of Barcelona taught the Portuguese the lesson of freedom ; and the insolent and intolerable Camarilla of the Duchess of Mantua, Vice-Queen of Portugal, lost that country to Spain, while her infamous favourite, Vasconcellos, was torn in pieces at Lisbon as San Coloma was at Barcelona. Olivarès retained his influence over the King in the midst of these disasters, by making himself the companion of his irregular pleasures, leading Philip into debaucheries which scandalised his subjects. The Count-Duke had a natural son called Julian, whom he presented at court under the name of Henriquez de Gusman, with a magnificent equipage, and forced the grand-constable of Castile to give his daughter to this youth in marriage.

The King, proud to copy the licentious example of his favourite, drew likewise forth from obscurity a bastard of his own by an actress named Calderone, recognized him by the title of Don Juan of Austria, a title which afterwards grew famous, and declared

him, when he was only fourteen years of age, generalissimo of Portugal; while the most amiable of Queens was insulted, and the people enraged, to see the heir to the throne, Don Balthasar, living under the tutelage, not of his royal mother, but of the Duchess of Olivares, the female head of the Camarilla. It was not until the Emperor, Philip's kinsman, formally remonstrated through an extraordinary ambassador, that Olivares was exiled finally from the Court.

Philip's next Camarilla was presided over by Louis Haro de Gusman, who crushed the people at home with new and insupportable taxes; and, by still more intolerable oppression abroad, caused the revolt of Naples under Massaniello. The absence of Olivares was a prosperous omen, and the interfusion of the spent blood of the Philips with the vigorous stream in the veins of a plebeian actress, produced in Don Juan of Austria a blooming bully, who was neither a fool nor a madman like his legitimate sires. The military genius of this irregular off-shoot recovered both Naples and Barcelona, the latter after a siege of fifteen months, and the whole of Catalonia returned to its allegiance.

If Philip IV. was of a feeble, his successor Carlos II. was of an infantine character. He was but four years old when he succeeded to the throne, and continued an infant when his head was gray. During his long minority, the Regency was vested in his mother, Maria Anna, an arrogant, incapable, and capricious woman, who detesting Don Juan of Austria for his illegitimacy, excluded from her councils the ablest statesman in Spain, and elevated a German

Jesuit named Everard Nilard to the highest position in her favour and confidence. Presumptuous ignorance, intrigue, and hypocrisy, were this man's leading qualities, and from accompanying Maria Anna to Madrid as her confessor, he rose to the posts of Inquisitor-General, Councillor of State, and Chief of Camarilla. His base extraction led to inexpressible arrogance in his elevation; and when the Duke of Lerma complained of his want of respect, he replied, "It is to me that you owe respect—to me who every day have your God in my hands and your Queen at my feet!"

Louis XIV. upon the flimsiest of pretexts invaded successfully the distant dominions of Spain, and the Inquisitor accepted the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, in which Louis had ceded to him all his important conquests in the Low Countries. Don Juan of Austria remonstrated, and the Queen Regent and her Camarilla exiled him from the court.

Don Juan subsequently marched to Madrid at the head of numerous partisans, and demanded Nilard's exile. The Queen first complained that they sought to deprive her of every woman's privilege to choose her own confessor, and next talked of punishing the rebels by force of arms. With difficulty she gathered a few troops together, and the Madrileños loudly exclaimed that she was about to expose them to the horrors of a civil war for the loss of a German Jesuit—a complaint which explained Nilard's omnipotence in her Camarilla. The Jesuit yielded to the thickening storm, and himself retired from court. He proceeded to Rome, and through the influence of the Queen Regent was made a Cardinal.

Maria's Camarilla was still chiefly composed of churchmen; the Cardinal of Arragon was the Queen's new mouth-piece; the Bishop of Placencia held the great lay office of President of Castile; and these ecclesiastics conjointly forced Don Juan of Austria to retire to a distance of thirty miles from Madrid, while the Queen made herself odious to the people by surrounding her person with a regiment of Royal Guards, for the first time in Spanish history, of which she gave the command to the Marquis of Aytona, an important member of her council. But still she wanted a confidant with whom to share the more hidden secrets of her heart; and she speedily made her choice.

Ferdinand de Valenzuela was a native of the kingdom of Granada, of middling birth, but of huge ambition. He cultivated poetry, and to other elegant accomplishments united an agreeable person and a lively wit, qualities fitted to shine in a Queen Regent's Camarilla. He first attached himself to the household of the Duke of Infantado, and next to that of the Inquisitor. Valenzuela soon obtained a knowledge of Nilard's and the Queen's most delicate secrets; and on the Jesuit's downfall, Valenzuela married one of the Regent's bedchamber-women, which opened to him all the doors of the royal palace, and enabled him to console the desponding Regent for the forced absence of her confessor.

Valenzuela and his wife (the latter nowise jealous) now formed the chief section of the Camarilla. His conversation pleased the Regent, his person pleased her more, he was introduced at all hours secretly into

the palace. Scandal seized the topic, and though Valenzuela in his visits to royalty was always accompanied by his wife, the people observed that there were not wanting women in Madrid, willing to share the caresses of their husbands for the sake of worldly advantages. Valenzuela was soon raised to the highest dignities to which a subject can attain; he was made a Marquis, Master of the Horse, and Grandee of Spain. The people loudly complained of his arrogance and rapacity, and the jealousy and hatred of the nobles were unbounded. His administration was to the last degree weak and corrupt.

The South American possessions of Spain were devastated with impunity by the buccaniers—they took Porto Bello by assault, seized and squandered its enormous treasures, and for thirty years were masters of the Spanish Main. The public revenue at home was divided amongst the adherents of the Camarilla, and the Chancellor of the Council of the Indies made by this office alone a revenue of a hundred thousand ducats. Spain became so enfeebled that she could not strike a blow, and without lifting an arm she lost Franche-Comté for ever.

When the King attained his majority, the Queen-mother and Valenzuela continued their influence over him. The latter now thought it needful to conciliate the people, and was the first to make the bloody spectacle of bull-fights universally popular: a cruel diversion, to which may be traced many leading vices of the Spanish character. The Spanish fleets were thrice defeated and broken by the French on the Sicilian coast, and the loss of Naples and Sicily became immi-