

Governor's office without another word.

The surprise of all was excited to the highest pitch when they saw the latter coming out to the ante-chamber in person, followed by the Captain General.

"Madame," exclaimed the Governor, addressing the old lady, "why did you not send me word? I would have gone to wait on you in person."

The lady, smiling, reached one hand to the Governor and the other to the Captain General, and the three disappeared behind the heavy curtain of the door.

The bystanders looked at one another with open mouths, and at once began to guess. "Who can this woman be?" they all asked. Some thought that she must be Queen Christina, who had come to Seville to witness the ceremonies of Holy Week.

Meanwhile the crestfallen porter appeared at one of the windows of the Governor's tables, crying out: "The Governor's coach!"

Without doubt the business of Queen Christina, was easily settled; because, ten minutes after entering, she came out again, accompanied by both officials.

"Tomorrow at an early hour," said the Governor, "you shall have whatever news can be gathered. I myself will communicate it to you."

"Thank you," said the lady, deeply interested. "I shall expect you without fail."

Then the Governor informed her that his carriage awaited her at the door. The lady positively refused to accept it.

"At least," said the Captain General, "you will permit me to accompany you?"

"This is such an honor to me that I will not refuse it," answered the old lady. And, leaning on the General's arm, she descended with him the magnificent stairs of the ancient Convent of St. Paul, which is now used for the offices of the Government.

IV.

The Friday of the Seven Dolours, as we have already mentioned, was the last day of the devotions; and the lady arrived at the chapel earlier than usual. The old man's place was vacant.

"He will surely come," thought the old lady. "It is early yet." But time passed slowly by; the devotions had already begun, and the unfortunate old man was not present.

"What can have happened?" mused the lady. "His misfortune is already repaired, his future secured. Can it be that he is one of those many that call upon God in their sorrows, and forget to thank Him in their joys?"

A noise of footsteps was heard. Curiosity impelled her to look around, but respect for the house of God restrained her. Finally two men passed her by, carrying in an armchair a crippled woman; six little children followed, dressed in mourning. The two men set the chair down as near the sanctuary as possible. One of them, who appeared to have been merely hired for the occasion, left the church; the other, the old man of our acquaintance, took his usual place at the foot of the candle. He seemed to have recovered his youth; and although tears flowed from his eyes, they were tears of gratitude and joy—for joys also—has its tears.

The children knelt around the paralytic woman; by a happy chance the oldest of them knelt beside the old lady, who was watching them all closely.

"Is that lady your mamma?" she asked the girl.

"She is my grandma."

"Is she ill?"

"She is a cripple; but the Blessed Virgin has wrought a miracle in our favor today, and she wished that we should all come to thank her."

The lady asked no more questions; she pulled down the veil of her headress as far as she could, and enjoyed in secret that sweet pleasure which the angels look upon as holy; that divine instinct of charity which is intended by God to impel those that have the power to do works of benevolence, but which so many have never tasted in their lives: the pleasure of making others happy.

And yet that old lady was far from being rich. That old lady, who gave alms like a princess, owed it merely to the favor of her powerful friends that she had a home in the palace. That lady, at one time wealthy, now lived barely on the products of her own special talent. That lady, in a word, was the one who had unconsciously portrayed herself when she wrote in one of her charming books: "Knowledge is something, genius is more; but to do good is more than both, and is the only superiority that does not excite envy."

Who was she, you ask? The illustrious Marquesa de Arco Hermoso, Cecilia Boni de Faber, known to all the literary world as "Ferman Caballero."

ISABELLA THE CATHOLIC

Isabella the Catholic, Queen of Castile and consort of Ferdinand of Aragon on the throne of Spain, is one of the most remarkable women in all history.

She united a brilliant intellect and deep erudition with virtues of piety and domestic economy in such a manner that she was not alone a mighty force in the reconquest of Spain and its glorification as an empire, but a leader in cultural movements, a patron of arts and letters, and a staunch defender of the faith. Despite these activities she found time to rear carefully her five children and to attend to her household duties in a manner that made her a model for Spanish housewives. It is related that she mended one doublet for her husband the king as many as seven times.

Isabella was the daughter of John II, King of Castile and Isabella of Portugal, and was born in Madrigal de las Altas Torres on April 22, 1451. She was brought up carefully and piously by her mother until the age of thirteen, when her brother Henry IV, took Isabella, together with her brother the Infante Alfonso, to the court, on the pretext of completing her education, but in reality, it is said, to prevent the two royal children from serving as a standard around which the nobles, discontented at Henry's

imbecility, might rally. They did rally around Alfonso, but were defeated at Olmedo and the Infante died, it is believed by poison, on July 5, 1465.

REFUSES TO TAKE CROWN

The nobles sought to secure the crown for Isabella, but she refused it, declaring that never while her brother lived would she accept the title of Queen. Henry named Isabella as his heir on Sept. 19, 1468.

Isabella had chosen Ferdinand of Aragon for her husband as early as 1465, but Henry made repeated attempts to induce her to give her hand to other nobles, of whom more than a dozen were aspirants to her favor. These included Don Carlos, Prince of Viana, whose sudden death terminated Henry's negotiations, Don Pedro Giron, Richard of Gloucester, a brother to Edward IV., of England and the Duke of Guinne, brother of Louis XI. of France.

Isabella finally married Ferdinand, who had been proclaimed King of Sicily and heir of the Aragonese monarchy, in 1469. On the death of Henry she was proclaimed Queen of Castile. Immediately a powerful movement was set on foot to gain the crown for Henry's presumptive daughter, Joan, commonly called "La Beltraneja," and a war lasting five years, and ending with the peace of 1479, broke out between Spain and Portugal. At the end of the conflict a double alliance was arranged. La Beltraneja abandoned her claims and taking the veil in the monastery of Santa Clara at Coimbra.

Ferdinand, had, meanwhile, succeeded to the throne of Aragon and thus a definitive union of the two countries was brought about under the two monarchs to whom Alexander VI. gave the title of "Catholic." Still borne by the monarchs of Spain, Ferdinand and Isabella held equal authority in the kingdom.

The monarchs immediately set about to secure their position by restraining the power of the nobles. This they did by the establishment of a permanent military force intended to protect the people against the encroachments of the nobility; by the inauguration of an improved and properly ordered administration of justice; by abolishing the right of coining money and revoking extravagant grants made to the nobles and demolishing their castles. To preserve the purity of the faith and religious unity against the intrigues of the Jews, who were employing the influence of their wealth to pervert Christians, the king and queen solicited of Pope Sixtus IV. the establishment of the Inquisition.

GRANADA RECOVERED

The Government being strengthened at home, the monarchs turned their attention to reconquering the territory wrested from Spain by the Musselmans and Granada, the last stronghold of the Moors, fell on January 2, 1492. Three months later the Jews, whose cities had admitted the Musselmans, and who constituted a menace to the peace and unity of Spain, were expelled.

While carrying on the war against the Moors, Queen Isabella was besought on behalf of Christopher Columbus for his project of reaching the Indies by sailing west. With means procured for him by the King and Queen he fitted out three caravels and discovered the new world.

Isabella was not only the protectress of Columbus, but she took a vital interest in the American aborigines and in 1503 organized the Secretariate of Indian Affairs, which had to do largely with the protection of the Indians against the ill-treatment of colonists. She charged her successors to protect the Indians and to regard them as they did their other subjects and she pointed out Spain's duty in Morocco;—a duty which the Moroccan question has brought to the attention of the world today.

When already a grown woman she devoted herself to the study of Latin; she was an eager collector of books and her Castilian has been ranked as a standard by the Spanish Royal Academy. Before her death in 1504 she had the happiness of seeing the Golden Era inaugurated in Spain, manufacturers developed, commerce and navigation increased as a result of new discoveries, education flourishing and peace and religious unity achieved.

SAINT JOSEPH

There was a man who looked upon a little child shivering in the manger, and adored Him as the Eternal God Incarnate. Therefore is Joseph the great exemplar of faith. That is the lesson which the world today must learn. It needs many things: poverty, humility, chastity, love, peace. But it can have none of them, unless it turns back to faith in God and His revelation. If a man cannot love God without at the same time loving man, His image, how can he have faith in man unless he has faith in God? Today there is little faith among men and nations, precisely because men and nations have little faith in God.

The great paenegyric in the Gospels is that Joseph was a just man. But he was just because of his faith and his works in accord with his faith. He did not see and understand, as our Blessed Lady

saw and understood. She was the sinless one, exempted, by prevision of her Son's merit, from the primal guilt of our race. Not so Joseph. It pleased God to lead him always along the dark and difficult road of Faith. He was "troubled," but faith was his reassurance; not that he understood, but that he believed God. He did not live in an atmosphere of celestial miracles, but in a world of toil and trouble. He knew much of strange and perplexing messages by night, of journeyings across hot sands, of a life in exile. But he never saw the glories of the high mountain, or the blood-red banner of Calvary, or spoke with the angel guarding the empty tomb.

Trial was the portion of Joseph. He was a workingman; he supported his Immaculate Spouse and the Holy Child in the sweat of his brow. He could no higher mission, save one, could the Infinite God entrust to mortal hands, but it was a mission which meant suffering. Joseph was anguished, not knowing as yet wearily made their way to Bethlehem, where he might find shelter for Mary. Doubtless in his after journeys and his days of exile, it was often with difficulty that he could procure food and shelter for the stainless Mother and her Divine Son. If we may dare peer into the unsearchable Providence of God, we may assume that God chose Joseph to take care of His dearest daughter and her Son, the world's Redeemer, because the heart of Joseph was above all else the heart of a father. It possessed the compassionate, sacrificing, guarding tenderness which exists in the heart of every good father, but in an eminent degree. Tender and deep was his love for his Virgin-Spouse. Unfathomable his love for the Holy Child who stood at his knee, while the gnarled and knotted finger of Joseph the carpenter traced on the sacred scrolls the touching story of God's unquenchable love for fallen man. Because he could love much, Joseph suffered much.

To all who still plod through this vale of tears on the way "home," Joseph should be a trusted counselor, a friend dearly loved. Let us turn to him always and with full confidence in our temporal needs. He knew the stings of poverty, all the pathetic little makeshifts of the poor, and he can sympathize with us. But on his feast, and every day of our lives, let us ask him to obtain for us an increase of that great gift of Faith, bestowed upon all unworthy, on our baptismal day. In comparison, nothing else is worth while.—America.

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