

should return to Castile with great honor and great gain.' ”<sup>28</sup>

Some of the touches of manners in this little passage, such as the allusion to the judgment-seats at his gate, where the Cid, in patriarchal simplicity, had administered justice to his vassals, and the hint of the poor augury gathered from the old woman's wish, which seems to be of more power with him than the prayer he had just uttered, or the bold hopes that were driving him to the Moorish frontiers,—

\* 156 such touches give life and truth to \* this old chronicle, and bring its times and feelings, as it were, sensibly before us. Adding its peculiar treasures to those contained in the rest of the General Chronicle, we shall find, in the whole, nearly all the romantic and poetical fables and adventures that belong to the earliest portions of Spanish history. At the same time we shall obtain a living picture of the state of manners in that dark period, when the elements of modern society were just beginning to be separated from the chaos in which they had long struggled, and out of which, by the action of successive ages, they have been gradually wrought into those forms of policy which now give stability to governments, and peace to the intercourse of men.

<sup>28</sup> The portion of the Chronicle of the Cid from which I have taken the extract is among the portions which least resemble the corresponding parts of the General Chronicle. It is in Chap. 91; and from Chap. 88 to Chap. 93 there is a good deal not found in the parallel passages in the General Chronicle (1604, f. 224, etc.), though, where they do resemble each other, the phraseology is still frequently identical. The particular passage I have selected was, I think, suggested by the first lines that remain to us of the “Poema del Cid”; and

perhaps, if we had the preceding lines of that poem, we should be able to account for yet more of the additions to the Chronicle in this passage. The lines I refer to are as follows:—

De los sos oios tan fuertes mientre lorando  
Tornaba la cabeza, e estabalos catando.  
Vio puertas abiertas e uzos sin canados,  
Alcándaras vacias, sin pieles e sin mantos,  
E sin falcones e sin adtores mudados.  
Sospiró mio Cid, ca mucho avie grandes cuidados.

Other passages are quite as obviously taken from the poem.

## \* CHAPTER IX.

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EFFECTS OF THE EXAMPLE OF ALFONSO THE TENTH.—CHRONICLES OF HIS OWN REIGN, AND OF THE REIGNS OF SANCHE THE BRAVE AND FERDINAND THE FOURTH.—CHRONICLE OF ALFONSO THE ELEVENTH, BY VILLAIZAN.—CHRONICLES OF PETER THE CRUEL, HENRY THE SECOND, JOHN THE FIRST, AND HENRY THE THIRD, BY AYALA.—CHRONICLE OF JOHN THE SECOND.—TWO CHRONICLES OF HENRY THE FOURTH, AND TWO OF FERDINAND AND ISABELLA.

THE idea of Alfonso the Wise, simply and nobly expressed in the opening of his Chronicle, that he was desirous to leave for posterity a record of what Spain had been and had done in all past time,<sup>1</sup> was not without influence upon the nation, even in the state in which it then was, and in which, for above a century afterwards, it continued. But, as in the case of that great king's project for a uniform administration of justice by a settled code, his example was too much in advance of his age to be immediately followed; though, as in that memorable case, when it was once adopted, its fruits became abundant. The two next kings, Sancho the Brave and Ferdinand the Fourth, took no measures, so far as we know, to keep up and publish the history of their reigns. But Alfonso the Eleventh, the same monarch, it should be remembered, under whom the “Partidas” became the efficient law of the land, recurred to the example of his wise ancestor, and ordered the annals of the kingdom to be

<sup>1</sup> It sounds much like the “Partidas,” beginning “Los sabios antiguos que fueron en los tiempos primeros, y fallaron los saberes y las otras cosas, tovieron que menguarian en sus fechos y en su lealtad, si tambien no lo quisi-

essen para los otros que avien de venir, como para si mesmos o por los otros que eran en su tiempo,” etc. But such introductions are common in other early chronicles, and in other old Spanish books.



continued, from the time when those of the General Chronicle ceased down to his own; embracing, of course, the reigns of Alfonso the Wise, Sancho \* the Brave, and Ferdinand the Fourth, or the period from 1252 to 1312.<sup>2</sup> This is the first instance of the appointment of a royal chronicler, and may, therefore, be accounted as the creation of an office of consequence in all that regards the history of the country, and which, however much it may have been neglected in later times, furnished important documents down to the reign of Charles the Fifth, and was continued in form, at least, till the establishment of the Academy of History in the beginning of the eighteenth century.<sup>3</sup>

By whom this office was first filled does not appear; but the Chronicle itself seems to have been prepared about the year 1320. Formerly it was attributed to Fernan Sanchez de Tovar; but Fernan Sanchez was a personage of great consideration and power in the state, practised in public affairs, and familiar with their history, so that we can hardly attribute to him the mistakes with which this Chronicle abounds, especially in the part relating to Alfonso the Wise.<sup>4</sup> But, whoever may have been its author, the Chronicle, which, it may be noticed, is so distinctly divided into the three reigns that it is rather three chronicles than one, has little value as a composition. Its narrative is given with a rude and dry formality, and whatever in-

<sup>2</sup> "Crónica del muy Esclarecido Príncipe y Rey D. Alfonso, el que fue par de Emperador, y hizo el Libro de las Siete Partidas, y ansimismo al fin deste Libro va encorporada la Crónica del Rey D. Sancho el Bravo," etc., Valladolid, 1554, folio; to which should be added "Crónica del muy Valeroso Rey D. Fernando, Visnieto del Santo Rey D. Fernando," etc., Valladolid, 1554, folio.

<sup>3</sup> Forner, Obras, ed. Villanueva, Madrid, 1843, 8vo, Tom. I. pp. 29, 30, 120.

<sup>4</sup> All this may be found abundantly discussed in the "Memorias de Alfonso el Sabio," by the Marques de Mondejar, pp. 569-635. Clemencin, however, still attributes the Chronicle to Fernan Sanchez de Tovar. Mem. de la Acad. de Historia, Tom. VI. p. 451.

terest it awakens depends, not upon its style and manner, but upon the character of the events recorded, which sometimes have an air of adventure about them belonging to the elder times, and, like them, are full of life and movement.

The example of regular chronicling, having now been fairly set at the court of Castile, was followed by Henry the Second, who commanded his Chancellor and Chief-Justiciary, \* Juan Nuñez de \* 159 Villaizan, to prepare, as we are told in the Preface, in imitation of the ancients, an account of his father's reign. In this way, the series goes on unbroken, and now gives us the "Chronicle of Alfonso the Eleventh,"<sup>5</sup> beginning with his birth and education, of which the notices are slight, but relating amply the events from the time he came to the throne, in 1312, till his death, in 1350. How much of it was actually written by the chancellor of the kingdom cannot be ascertained.<sup>6</sup> From different passages, it seems that an older chronicle was used freely in its composition;<sup>7</sup> and the whole should, therefore, probably be regarded as a compilation made under the responsibility of the highest personages of the realm. Its opening will show at once the grave and measured tone it takes, and the accuracy it claims for its dates and statements.

"God is the beginning and the means and the end of all things; and without him they cannot subsist. For by his power they are made, and by his wisdom ordered, and by his goodness maintained. And he is

<sup>5</sup> There is an edition of this Chronicle (Valladolid, 1551, folio) better than the old editions of such Spanish books commonly are; but the best is that of Madrid, 1787, 4to, edited by Cerdá y Rico, and published under the auspices of the Spanish Academy of History.

<sup>6</sup> The phrase is, "Mandó á Juan Nuñez de Villaizan, Alguacil de la su Casa, que la ficiese trasladar en Pergaminos, e fizola trasladar, et escribióla Ruy Martinez de Medina de Rioseco," etc. See Preface.

<sup>7</sup> In Cap. 340 and elsewhere.



the Lord; and, in all things, almighty, and conqueror in all battles. Wherefore, whosoever would begin any good work should first name the name of God, and place him before all things, asking and beseeching of his mercy to give him knowledge and will and power, whereby he may bring it to a good end. Therefore will this pious chronicle henceforward relate whatsoever happened to the noble King, Don Alfonso, of Castile and Leon, and the battles and conquests and victories that he had and did in his life against Moors and against Christians. And it will begin in the fifteenth year of the reign of the most noble King, Don Fernando, his father.”<sup>8</sup>

The reign of the father, however, occupies only three short chapters; after which, the rest of \* 160 the Chronicle, \* containing in all three hundred and forty-two chapters, comes down to the death of Alfonso, who perished of the plague before Gibraltar, and then it abruptly closes. Its general tone is grave and decisive, like that of a person speaking with authority upon matters of importance, and it is rare that we find in it a sketch of manners like the following account of the young king at the age of fourteen or fifteen:—

“And as long as he remained in the city of Valladolid, there were with him knights and esquires, and his tutor, Martin Fernandez de Toledo, that brought him up, and that had been with him a long time, even before the queen died, and other men, who had long been used to palaces, and to the courts of kings; and all these gave him an ensample of good manners. And, moreover, he had been brought up with the children of men of note, and with noble knights. But the

<sup>8</sup> Ed. 1787, p. 3.

king, of his own condition, was well-mannered in eating, and drank little, and was clad as became his estate; and in all other his customs he was well-conditioned, for his speech was true Castilian, and he hesitated not in what he had to say. And so long as he was in Valladolid, he sat three days in the week to hear the complaints and suits that came before him; and he was shrewd in understanding the facts thereof, and he was faithful in secret matters, and loved them that served him, each after his place, and trusted truly and entirely those whom he ought to trust. And he began to be much given to horsemanship, and pleased himself with arms, and loved to have in his household strong men, that were bold and of good conditions. And he loved much all his own people, and was sore grieved at the great mischief and great harm there were in the land through failure of justice, and he had indignation against evil-doers.”<sup>9</sup>

But though there are few sketches in the Chronicle of Alfonso the Eleventh like the preceding, we find in general a well-ordered account of the affairs of that monarch's long and active reign, given with a simplicity and apparent \* sincerity which, in \* 161 spite of the formal plainness of its style, make it almost always interesting, and sometimes amusing.

The next considerable attempt approaches somewhat nearer to proper history. It is the series of chronicles relating to the troublesome reigns of Peter the Cruel and Henry the Second, to the hardly less unsettled times of John the First, and to the more quiet and prosperous reign of Henry the Third. They were written by Pedro Lopez de Ayala, in some respects the first Spaniard of his age; distinguished,

<sup>9</sup> Ed. 1787, p. 80.



as we have seen, among the poets of the latter part of the fourteenth century, and now to be noticed as the best prose-writer of the same period. He was born in 1332,<sup>10</sup> and, though only eighteen years old when Peter ascended the throne, was soon observed and employed by that acute monarch. But when troubles arose in the kingdom, Ayala left his tyrannical master, who had already shown himself capable of almost any degree of guilt, and joined his fortunes to those of Henry of Trastamara, the king's illegitimate brother, who had, of course, no claim to the throne but such as was laid in the crimes of its possessor, and the good-will of the suffering nobles and people.

At first, the cause of Henry was successful. But Peter addressed himself for help to Edward the Black Prince, then in his duchy of Aquitaine, who, as Froissart relates, thinking it would be a great prejudice against the estate royal<sup>11</sup> to have a usurper succeed, entered Spain, and, with a strong hand, replaced the fallen monarch on his throne. At the decisive battle of Naxera, by which this was achieved, in 1367, Ayala, who bore his prince's standard, was taken prisoner<sup>12</sup> and carried to England, where he wrote a part at least of his poems on a courtly life. Somewhat later, Peter, no longer supported by the Black Prince, was dethroned; and Ayala, who \* 162 was then released \* from his tedious imprisonment, returned home, and afterwards became Grand-Chancellor to Henry the Second, in whose service he gained so much consideration and influence, that he seems to have descended as a sort of tradition-

<sup>10</sup> For the Life of Ayala, see Nic. Antonio, *Bib. Vet.*, Lib. X. c. 1.

<sup>11</sup> The whole account in Froissart is worth reading, especially in Lord Berners's translation (London, 1812, 4to,

Vol. I. c. 231, etc.), as an illustration of Ayala.

<sup>12</sup> See the passage in which Mariana gives an account of the battle. (*Historia*, Lib. XVII. c. 10.)

ary minister of state through the reign of John the First, and far into that of Henry the Third. Sometimes, indeed, like other grave personages, ecclesiastical as well as civil, he appeared as a military leader, and once again, in the disastrous battle of Aljubarotta, in 1385, he was taken prisoner. But his Portuguese captivity does not seem to have been so long or so cruel as his English one; and, at any rate, the last years of his life were passed quietly in Spain. He died at Calahorra in 1407, seventy-five years old.

"He was," says his nephew, the noble Fernan Perez de Guzman, in the striking gallery of portraits he has left us,<sup>13</sup> "He was a man of very gentle qualities and of good conversation; had a great conscience, and feared God much. He loved knowledge, also, and gave himself much to reading books and histories; and though he was as goodly a knight as any, and of great discretion in the practices of the world, yet he was by nature bent on learning, and spent a great part of his time in reading and studying, not books of law, but of philosophy and history. Through his means some books are now known in Castile that were not known aforetime; such as Titus Livius, who is the most notable of the Roman historians; the 'Fall of Princes;' the 'Ethics' of Saint Gregory; Isidorus 'De Summo Bono'; Boethius; and the 'History of Troy.' He prepared the History of Castile from the King Don Pedro to the King Don Henry; and made a good book on Hunting, which he greatly affected, and another called 'Rimado de Palacio.'"

We should not, perhaps, at the present day, claim so much reputation as his kinsman does for the Chancellor Ayala, in consequence of the interest he took in

<sup>13</sup> *Generaciones y Semblanzas*, Cap. 7, Madrid, 1775, 4to, p. 222.



books of such doubtful value as Guido de Colonna's "Trojan War," and Boccaccio "De Casibus \* 163 Principum"; but in \* translating Livy,<sup>14</sup> he unquestionably rendered his country an important service. He rendered, too, a no less important service to himself; since a familiarity with Livy tended to fit him for the task of preparing the Chronicle, which now constitutes his chief distinction and merit.<sup>15</sup> It begins in 1350, where that of Alfonso the Eleventh ends, and comes down to the sixth year of Henry the Third, or to 1396, embracing that portion of the author's own life which was between his eighteenth year and his sixty-fourth, and constituting the first safe materials for the history of his native country.

For such an undertaking Ayala was singularly well fitted. Spanish prose was already well advanced in his time; for Don John Manuel, the last of the elder school of good writers, did not die till Ayala was fifteen years old. He was, moreover, as we have seen, a scholar, and, for the age in which he lived, a remarkable one; and, what is of more importance than either of these circumstances, he was personally familiar with the course of public affairs during the forty-six years embraced by his Chronicle. Of all this traces are to be found in his work. His style is not, like that of the oldest chroniclers, full of a rich vivacity and freedom;

<sup>14</sup> It is probable Ayala translated, or caused to be translated, all these books. At least such has been the impression; and the mention of Isidore of Seville among the authors "made known" seems to justify it, for, as a Spaniard of great fame, St. Isidore must always have been known in Spain in every other way, except by a translation into Spanish. See, also, the Preface to the edition of Boccaccio, *Caída de Principes*, 1495, in Fr. Mendez, *Typografía Española*, Madrid, 1796, 4to, p. 202.

<sup>15</sup> The first edition of Ayala's Chron-

icles is of Seville, 1495, folio, but it seems to have been printed from a MS. that did not contain the entire series. The best edition is that published under the auspices of the Academy of History, by D. Eugenio de Llaguno Amirola, its secretary (Madrid, 1779, 2 tom. 4to). That Ayala was the authorized chronicler of Castile is apparent from the whole tone of his work, and is directly asserted in an old MS. of a part of it, cited by Bayer in his notes to N. Antonio, *Bib. Vet.*, Lib. X. cap. 1, num. 10, n. 1.

but, without being over-carefully elaborated, it is simple and business-like; while, to give a more earnest air, if not an air of more truth, to the whole, he has, in imitation of Livy, introduced into the course of his narrative set speeches and epistles intended to express the feelings and opinions of his principal actors more distinctly than they could be expressed by the mere facts and current of the story. \* Com- \* 164  
pared with the Chronicle of Alfonso the Wise, which preceded it by above a century, it lacks the charm of that poetical credulity which loves to deal in doubtful traditions of glory, rather than in those ascertained facts which are often little honorable either to the national fame or to the spirit of humanity. Compared with the Chronicle of Froissart, with which it was contemporary, we miss the honest-hearted enthusiasm that looks with unmingled delight and admiration upon all the gorgeous phantasmagoria of chivalry, and find, instead of it, the penetrating sagacity of an experienced statesman, who sees quite through the deeds of men, and, like Comines, thinks it not at all worth while to conceal the great crimes with which he has been familiar, if they can be but wisely and successfully set forth. When, therefore, we read Ayala's Chronicle, we do not doubt that we have made an important step in the progress of the species of writing to which it belongs, and that we are beginning to approach the period when history is to teach with sterner exactness the lesson it has learned from the hard experience of the past.

Among the many curious and striking passages in Ayala's Chronicle, the most interesting are, perhaps, those that relate to the unfortunate Blanche of Bourbon, the young and beautiful wife of Peter the Cruel,