

ART. II.—THE CONSTABLE NUN'ALVARES.

SENHOR OLIVEIRA MARTINS, the gifted Portuguese author who has so graphically pictured us to ourselves in his *Inglaterra de Hoje*, has, among other and numerous works, left us a picture of his own too little known country in the Middle Ages, in the shape of a life of Nun'Alvares, the celebrated Constable of Portugal in the fourteenth century.

The name of Nuno Alvares Pereira is about as little known in England as that of the most obscure individual that ever existed, but his life covers such a wide sketch of the manners and customs of the age in his own country, and is so replete with adventures that took place in the stirring times that helped to make history, that we ought to feel deeply indebted to the author for the picture he has drawn of his country, and the framework in which he has set it.

On the 22nd October, in 1383, died King Ferdinand of Portugal without heirs, and the crown of that country devolved upon the house of Castille, very much in the same way that on the death of Elizabeth the crown of England devolved upon the Scottish house of Stuart; but, unlike England, that let things take their course, and submitted to the Scottish monarchy, the Portuguese would have none of Castille at any price, right or wrong, so they set up an illegitimate son of the late king and placed him on the throne, and he and his posterity ruled the country well and successfully as the House of Aviz; and in the maintenance of his usurpation against the Castilians, King John, for that was the name of the first of the line, was manfully helped by his friend, the Constable Nun'Alvares.

This might pass as a mere event of little interest, if it were not for the fact that the surroundings of the life of the Constable form a series of quaint pictures in the life and manners of the age, and are so intimately connected with our own country that the study of the book would repay those who are able to read it themselves, and for those who are not, the following pages purport to reproduce some of the scenes that it unfolds.

Among the orders of knights that took their rise from the necessities of pilgrims to the Holy Land, was the order of Knights Hospitallers, and these existed in Portugal as elsewhere. In the fourteenth century their occupation was gone, like that of the Templars, on account of the completeness of Mahometan conquest in Palestine, but the Knights Hospitallers themselves remained, without their special work to do. The Prior of the Hospital, as he was called, who had been a sort of abbot and colonel combined, was now useless, but rich, and instead of having hard work to do in a foreign land, he now vegetated in the house of his order at home. Now, therefore, we find that the Priory of the Hospital was seen to be a good place to provide maintenance for the illegitimate son of a king or an archbishop, and accordingly we find that Gonçalo Pereira, Archbishop of Braga, who had already made somewhat of a name for himself when Dean of Oporto by getting his bishop expelled, dedicated his son, Alvaro Gonçaves Pereira, to the life of a military knight, and getting him appointed Prior of the Hospital at Crato, the headquarters of the order in Portugal, at the early age of eighteen.

At his new post, Prior Alvaro Gonçaves occupied his time in diffusing liberal hospitality, in practising astrology, and in giving the rein to himself in the contrary direction to that in which his vows should have led him, to such an extent that he had thirty-two natural children by at least three different mothers, one of whom, in penance for her sins, it is but fair to relate, spent the last forty years of her life in fasting and alms deeds, never eating meat or drinking wine. One of the sons, Pedro, became Prior of Crato himself, and another, Nuno, became Constable of Portugal.

A word as to the retention of the military orders in the Peninsula. Their occupation was gone in Palestine, but by no means so in the Peninsula, which was not yet entirely free from Mahomedan occupation or even fear of further invasion, Spain yet having the Moorish kingdom of Granada in the south, and both Spain and Portugal having the Moors in force as hereditary and still powerful enemies on the other side of the Straits of Gibraltar. The crusades lay more at home than abroad, hence

the necessity for the retention of forces devoted to the object of defence from the Moors; and hence the reason why King Denis of Portugal centralised the military orders as a national force, retaining the Templars under the new form of the Order of Christ, after they had been formally dissolved by the edict of the Pope, Clement the Fifth, the tool of Philippe-le-Bel of France, the ruthless persecutor of their order. The headquarters of the Order of Christ were at Thomar, where their immense monastery is still to be seen.

Another powerful order was that of the Hospitallers, their headquarters in Portugal being, as we have seen, at Crato. It was subject, in so far as military matters went, to the Crown, but in matters spiritual it was permitted to retain allegiance to the Grand Master of the Order at Rhodes, whither the Prior Alvaro Gonçalves betook himself in great state to render his allegiance.

A third order was that of the Military Knights of St. Benedict. It had its origin in the vow of a few knights on the eve of the battle of Ourique, where the Moors were defeated, binding themselves to die for their country and their faith. At a council at Coimbra they received the Cistercian rule; they had their headquarters first at Evora, and afterwards at Aviz, but they owed spiritual obedience to the Prior of the Cistercian monastery at Alcobaça. The name of Aviz arose from an accidental circumstance. When fixing on a lonely place to build a new house for their order, the knights could not find that the place was called by any particular name; so, from the mere chance that two birds happened to be standing on the proposed site, they gave it the name of 'Aves,' or 'Aviz,' hence the title of 'Master of Aviz' for the head of the house.

As the Hospital served for the fruit of the errors of an archbishop, so did Aviz for that of those of a king, and we accordingly find John, illegitimate son of King Pedro by Thereza Lourenço, installed at the age of thirteen as Master of Aviz, and afterwards conforming to his vows with not much greater fidelity than Alvaro of the Hospital.

John, Master of Aviz, is indeed the central figure of the time in his own country. He seems to have been a man of incompar-

able ability, of great resolution, of considerable patriotism, not very particular as to ways and means, and of much tact and prudence withal, just the man suited to the times—brave, wily, and politic, and with a good sense of the advisability of helping those that helped him. He was brought up in dissolute and unscrupulous times, and what he saw or heard of at the court of King Ferdinand could not have contributed to his respect of people in high places. His murder of the queen's favourite shows how he did not stick at trifles when it was advisable to get an awkwardly placed man out of the way, and at the same time affords an illustration of the way in which history repeats itself, the assassination being, in point of the actual perpetration of the crime, very like that of the murder of Rizzio, the favourite of Mary Queen of Scots.

Leonor Telles, the notorious wife of King Ferdinand, now on his death-bed, had a favourite named Andeiro, Count of Ourem. The Master of Aviz had the throne in view on the death of Ferdinand, and a possible rival, and one that offered a good excuse for being got out of the way, was Andeiro. One day John bid adieu to Leonor and ostensibly set out to take up a military command in the province of Alemtejo, but instead of going on to his destination, he halted three leagues from Lisbon, at a place called Santo Antonio do Tojal, whence he suddenly returned to Lisbon at nightfall for the purpose of soliciting an interview with the queen on the following day on some pretended business of revising certain details of the instructions given to him. He then went back to Tojal, whence he returned next morning with some twenty followers. They stopped at the gate of the castle, were admitted, and went upstairs.

‘The Master, pale but quiet, advanced with a tragic air at the head of his comrades. He had crime written on his face. No one uttered a word. He knocked at the door of the Hall in which the queen was. The door-keeper who opened it, seeing a crowd of armed men, sought to bar their entrance, but they thrust themselves in, and the Master advanced serenely, bowing reverently before the queen: behind him his comrades formed in a line as immovable as the wall.’ The queen was in mourning for her late husband, and never looked more beautiful; by her

side Andeiro, a fine man of forty, clothed in scarlet, was on his knees at first, but he recovered his composure sufficiently to stand up before long. The queen, directing the master to be seated, said to him: 'Well, brother, what is this? For what purpose did you turn out of your way?'

The Master without taking his eyes off the favourite, replied that the frontier was large and the people few, an apparent reference to the position and defence of his province; and the queen pretending to agree, called her secretary to go over the list of vassals and hand the Master the names of those he wanted.

After these little preliminaries the spirits of the queen and her courtiers rose a little, and the nobles of the court surrounded the Master and began to converse with him, Andeiro inviting him to dinner with him. Another pressed the same invitation on him in favour of himself, but the Master told him in a whisper to get away thence as he had come to kill Andeiro.

'Not I,' was the reply, 'I'll stop and help you.'

'No—go and wait dinner for me, so that when this business is settled with the help of God, I can come and dine with you.'

While this conversation was going on Andeiro, suspicious, gave orders for his men to arm themselves, and the queen, looking at the Master's armed comrades broke out into the exclamation:

'Saint Mary; what a good way the English have: in time of peace they never carry arms but are dressed in fine clothes like ladies; but when war breaks out they then put on their arms and know how to use them too, as everybody knows.'

'Madam,' replied the Master, 'that is true enough; but they do that because they are mostly at war and seldom at peace; but we are mostly at peace and seldom at war. If we do not carry arms when we are at peace we shall not be able to carry them when at war.'

While he was saying this he was glancing now at the favourite and now at his fellow conspirators. The Count of Barcellos left, unwilling to be present at the consummation of the tragedy. Andeiro, pale and green with fright, was growing impatient at

the slow way in which his men were arming, and in a tremulous voice said to the Master :

‘ You, sir, anyhow, must have dinner with me.’

‘ I will not dine—I have done so elsewhere,’ was the answer.

‘ Yes; you shall dine,’ said Andeiro, ‘ and while you are talking I will tell them to get dinner ready.’

But the favourite was to dine no more, nor had he any intention of doing so with the Master : his motive was flight, and as he was attempting to get out of the room the Master caught hold of him by the wrist.

‘ Don’t go,’ said the Master, ‘ I want to tell you something first—now it’s time for dinner.’

The conspirators took their leave of the queen and dragged her favourite into an adjoining apartment, where the Master of Aviz struck him on the head with his dagger, and as he was struggling to get back to the queen’s apartment Ruy Pereira laid him dead with a sword thrust.

The palace gates were then closed and word was sent about the city for the people to run to the help of their popular favourite the Master, who, it was given out, was being murdered at the palace.

Another scene in the tragedy was the murder of the Bishop of Lisbon, but to understand this we must take a glance at a certain religious dispute going on at the time, namely, the question as to whether allegiance should be given to the Pope or to the then anti-Pope.

In 1378 there died at Rome, soon after he had arrived there, Pope Gregory the Eleventh, the last of the rightful line of Popes of Avignon, and the resumer of it at Rome, and Urban the Sixth was elected as the rightful Pope. But an anti-Pope, Robert, Cardinal of Geneva, a Frenchman, was elected by a dissatisfied party, and was recognised by the French as the rightful Pope, and lived at Avignon, under the name of Clement the Seventh—not, of course, the real Clement the Seventh, one of the Medici Popes, who died two centuries afterwards at Rome. There was thus a schism in the Church that affected nations as well, France and Castille holding to the anti-Pope Clement, while Portugal held to the real Pope Urban.

After the murder of Andeiro, Alvaro Paes and his retainers observed that the bells of the cathedral had not been set ringing when the safety of the Master was known, as the other church bells had been. The bishop, a Castilian, who had taken the side of the anti-Pope Clement, had ordered the church door to be shut, and had gone up into one of the towers, but the mob burst the door open, got up into the towers, and threw the bishop out into the street, the Prior of Guimaraens and a notary also perishing at their hands. The dead body of the prelate was dragged along the streets into the Rocio, where God was praised for the 'justice Our Lord ordered to be done to Pope Urban the Sixth against their schismatic and Castilian traitor because he did not go along with Holy Mother Church.'

Urban subsequently issued a brief pardoning the foul business of the murder of the bishop and prior on account of their schism.

The Master of Aviz was eventually set up on the throne of Portugal as John the First, and had to make good his right, or rather his want of it, by force of arms. The Portuguese were eventually successful in the decisive battle of Aljubarrota. In the long military operations, exclusive of Aljubarrota, we have an opportunity of confirming the statement of Ranke, that the wars of the Middle Ages were usually carried on in a desultory fashion in comparison with the more decisive butchery of quite recent times. He is amused at the spectacle of two Italian armies, in some petty squabble, each manœuvring so as to get out of the way of the other. The more warlike races of the Peninsula did not go in that direction so far as unwarlike Italy; they did get near to one another, but a great deal of time seems to have been spent in mere raiding and foraging and long sieges without proper appliances for assault: an instance of this is to be found in the siege of Lisbon by the Castilians in the war that broke out through the King of Castille asserting his claims against the Portuguese usurper. Both were named John, each being the first of his name on his respective throne—John the First of Castille and John the First of Portugal.

The Castilian lines are described as an 'improvised city.' The king had his head-quarters at Lumiar, about five miles from the then city of Lisbon, and from the centre of the modern one, and

had an army of twenty-five thousand men under Prince Charles of Navarre and the Master of Alcantara. They made light of the business they were upon, and music and festivity resounded throughout the camp. There were money changers, plenty of booths for the sale of drinks, and whole streets of loose women—‘just as in a town,’ the author somewhat quaintly remarks, perhaps as illustrative of one of the Middle Ages, when organisation in the direction in question seems to have been well advanced in more countries than one. The army had plenty of everything they did not want. For instance, they had plenty of rose-water, but were badly off for shoes. Moreover, ‘Nobody thought of assaults; it was almost like a pleasure encampment in the neighbourhood of Lisbon, a magnificent plot of land, an incomparable sky, seductive landscapes, a sunny spring, play, banquets, women, looking on with folded arms at the inevitable collapse through hunger. Not even did they bring any materials for a siege, and scarcely any ladders and mantlets for assaulting the town.’

Horrors there were, but they were not those of battle, but of famine and pestilence.

‘They had expelled from the city the useless mouths, the Jews, and the women of the town, whom’ (the latter we presume) ‘the Castilians received amicably.’ The usual privations of siege arrived, and the author has given us the price to which provisions rose in the city: worked out in British money at the present rate of exchange we get about the following;—

Wheat, £5 16s. a quarter.

Wine, 1s. 1d. to 1s. 9d. a pint.

A hen, £1 14s.

An egg, 10d.

An ox, £65.

The price of wine does not at first show any great apparent extravagance, but when it is remembered that the price of wine at Lisbon is, and very likely was, about that of beer in London, the price it rose to during the siege becomes more conspicuous. It must also be remembered that money then went quite ten

times as far as it does now, and that to obtain the equivalent modern prices we must multiply the above by ten, let us say.

If the condition of the besieged was bad, that of the besiegers was not to be envied, for all their feasting and gaiety. They were smitten with the plague. It was of the bubonic kind; the symptoms were violent pains in the head, the eyes turned glassy, the speech was tremulous, and the walk hesitating like that of a drunken man; then came nausea and vomiting, the eyes got bloodshot all over, and the features deformed: this took several weeks to come on. As the attack got worse and the fever hotter, hæmorrhage and gangrene of the lungs set in, and then a general stupor in which the *black death* came on with tumours under the knee-joints and elsewhere. After death the body was found to be in an indescribable degree of dissolution that poisoned the atmosphere.

The plague was bad in July, but in August it assumed the proportions of a huge epidemic. At first only the rank and file took it, but it now began to spread among the officers, and the attacks became sudden. The admiral, the grand chamberlain, and the marshal that died were cut open, salted, and exposed to the sun, or had the flesh cut away from their bones, and were then sewn up and taken home to be buried. By the end of August the Castilians were dying at the rate of two hundred a day, the total loss amounting to two thousand. The Castilians therefore found themselves obliged to raise the siege both by land and river, and the Constable was able to come to the relief of the city from Palmella on the other side of the Tagus.

To what causes was the pestilence due? Was it to the insanitary condition that a camp of the Middle Ages may reasonably be supposed to be in, added to the torrid summer heat of Lisbon? No; causes there were, but not these. There were two causes at work—at least in the belief of the besiegers. One was an eclipse of the sun, from which the astrologers predicted mortality to the court; and the other was that God was vindicating the rights of the Church against the Castilians, who had invaded them by taking the schismatic side of the anti-Pope, the so-called Clement the Seventh. Such were the causes of the abandonment of the siege of Lisbon.

The hardships were not those of battle, though they were those of war. The desultoriness of the greater part of the campaign, combined with a certain chivalrous element that formed part of the character of the Peninsular from the avidity with which its inhabitants then read the books of knight-errantry, that Cervantes afterwards assigned to the secular arm of the housekeeper to light the fires with, has an illustration towards the close of the campaign of which the siege of Lisbon was the first operation.

'Nun'Alvares, now better' (from an illness) 'went to Evora, and wrote to the Master of Santiago and the Hospital, and to the Admiral and to all the vassals between the Tagus and the Guadiana to meet together and hinder the Castilians from entering the district. He knew that the Master of Santiago of Castille was threatening him with two thousand lances. Nuno had two thousand lances and crossbows on horseback, and five hundred infantry and foot crossbowmen, and on the northern frontier the king had twice as many. While the Castilian general was getting ready, a letter arrived from Nuno informing him of the intended attack, according to the then chivalrous notion of war. As the invaders advanced, they had a series of skirmishes with the reapers who were getting in the harvest from the cornfields where the Portuguese were foraging and capturing. Remembering the critical day of Valverde, Nuno kept his eye constantly on the high ground on the horizon, and in one place saw the dark grey of the mountains dotted over with white. It was the tents of the Castilians, and soon a trumpeter came from the Master of Santiago to the Constable, who was seated on his camp-bed.

"Senhor," said the messenger on his knees, "the Master of Santiago, my master, and Don Pedro Ponce and other lords and knights who are with them yonder at Feira, a league and a half off, send word that you may get ready for battle, and that it is approaching, for they themselves are ready."

"Welcome with such news," was the answer.

Nuno sent an esquire to the enemy, and the trumpeter came back to say that the Master of Santiago was waiting for him, but Nuno would not risk an attack on the heights or on the castle.

"Why so many questions and answers," he said angrily, "if they want battle, it must be there on the flat ground in the valley of the Almeida, that they were treading on."

The battle did not get to much beyond skirmishing, wasting the lands of the Master of Santiago, and pulling down and burning his olive trees, Nuno marching three leagues off to Zafra while the skirmishing was going on. Here there was a disturbance from the wine the foot-soldiers had drunk, and Nuno lost his mantle while quelling it. On the eve of Corpus

Christi he went and encamped at Burguillos, where the enemy had seven hundred lances, and celebrated the feast with a procession in his camp, just as if he had been at home instead of close to the enemy.'

There was evidently much of worldly prudence in the character of the Constable, who would not attack the Castilians at a disadvantage to himself. He had shown it earlier in the campaign, when attacking walled towns before the break of day was a favourite stratagem of his.

The battle of Aljubarrota, however, was by no means desultory, the contending parties coming to hard knocks. The two Johns were now face to face to try the question between Spanish right and Portuguese nationality.

Both kings were present in person, but John of Castille was ill, and could hardly be said to be in command; his actual commanders at the front were the Marquis of Villena and the Masters of Alcantara and Calatrava. John of Portugal was himself in command on his side, under him being the Constable and Mem Rodrigues and Ruy Mendes. The Spaniards had immense advantages, including that of sixteen pieces of artillery, the first brought into action in the Peninsula. They laboured, however, under an important disadvantage, as understood at the time; they were in spiritual allegiance to a schismatic Pope—a defect that not even all the artillery of Woolwich could have atoned for; and the artillery decided this, for out of the first three men that it killed one was an Englishman, and two brothers, Portuguese and esquires, killed by the same stone ball, had been known to kill a priest while saying mass, so that the cannon-balls did little but demonstrate that they were instruments in the hand of God and the Church, who could not allow them to be effective weapons in the hands of schismatics against those who followed the lawful Pope. The Archbishop of Braga, moreover, clad in armour, and wearing his rochet over his coat-of-mail, and an image of the Virgin for a plume on his helmet, went about the field of battle confessing and absolving, in the name of the rightful Pope, Urban, and recommending the soldiers to repeat the words, *et verbum caro factum est*, the last three words of which, *caro factum est*, they irreverently translated in *caro feito é este*, meaning *a dear business this*.

The spiritual precaution, too, had been taken to vow the foundation of two monasteries, one by the Master—or King, as we must now call him—and one by the Constable.

King John made good his word by founding the *Convento da Batalha*, or Battle Abbey, upon the battle-field. It took eight architects about a hundred and fifteen years to build it, and was never finished; indeed, one of its chapels is called the *Capella Imperfeita*, or Unfinished Chapel. It was given to friars of the Dominican order, the Black Friars.

The Constable also made good his vow by building the priory and church of *Nossa Senhora do Vencimento*, or Our Lady of Victory, commonly called the *Carmo*, for the Carmelites or White Friars, upon a rocky eminence above Lisbon.

Both churches have now an air of melancholy grandeur about them. The Battle Abbey is tenantless and destitute of internal use or ornament; it stands in a little village as a monument of departed greatness. An occasional pilgrim comes to inspect it from the point of view of its being, like the *Carmo*, a choice specimen of Gothic, the two churches being the only Gothic ones in Portugal, but there are no friars there now to offer him hospitality. He will have to seek the little inn, with the bush over the door, and will have to eat his dinner in the little inn-parlour, amid occasional visits by the hens and chickens, the dog, the cat, and the pig. In the *Carmo* he will see even greater wreck. It is the only building now standing in Lisbon that bears traces of the celebrated earthquake of 1755. The rubbish that was cast down has been cleared away, but with this exception, the building stands just as it did after the earthquake, and the visitor, standing at one end of the nave, and looking up through where the roof once was into the blue sky of Lisbon, and noticing the remaining delicate early English arches, can trace the direction of the waves of the earthquake; where they were in a transverse direction to the arches, the latter have been shaken down or had their stones more or less displaced, but where the earthquake went in the same direction with the arches from pier to pier, the stones that are still standing have not moved from their original position. Both the Battle Abbey and the *Carmo* tell tales of former power and greatness, and present ruin and desolation.

Let us see how the money was got that built the priory and church of the Carmo. John and Nuno, in the course of their warlike patriotism, had not neglected number one. Indeed, it had been hinted that they meant to divide the whole kingdom between them. Property poured in upon them, the causes of its acquisition of it being not invariably very clear. The confiscation of that of Portuguese, who had cast in their lot with the Castilians, who, after all, were in the right, and of that of the Moors, who appear to have been still in the possession of lands near Lisbon, seem to have been two chief sources of acquisition. A Jew, too, seems occasionally to have had an eye to the main chance kept upon him. The Carmo was endowed with, among other property, the goods that Alvares had got from John's murder of the favourite, Andeiro; this inheritance seems to have troubled his conscience, and the donation of it to a priory would help to cover the sin of his friend and master. Another piece of property that went to the new priory had been that of a Jew named David Negro, and was the first that John had given Nuno.

In 1745 there was published at Lisbon the *Chronica dos Carmelitas*, the Chronicle of the Carmelites, by Father Joseph Pereira de Sant'Anna, an authority from whom Senhor Oliveira Martius draws a portion of the information so ably embodied in his book: among other passages is one referring to the endowment of the Carmo, which runs in English as follows:—

'He ordered to endow and to make donation to the said monastery of certain goods and legacies that he possessed, that by the rents of it the said monastery he ornamented with the ornament that for it were better, and for the repair of the fabric of the Church of the said Monastery for the friars or other Religious or women who in it might be for them to always have maintenance and clothing that be suitable for them, the which legacies and goods are those which hereinafter follow. First the governor's house within the district of Ourem and with the properties of Pombal and of Leiria and of Thomar and of Ourem with all the other houses and rents and dues and properties which to the said house pertain, and the properties which were from David Negro, and the water-mills of Corroyos by the house of Ayres Paes that are in the district of Almada, and the salt-marshes of Algonor and of Amora and of Arrentela and of Corroyos, the which salt-marshes and works and lands be said be had from his Lord the King.'

Our own countrymen come in for a good share of the history-making by John and Nuno. John sent news of his victory to England, where his ambassador, Ferninand de Albuquerque, and Lourenço Fogaça were enlisting troops and negotiating an alliance. From this we gather one more evidence that England was then coming forward as a power in the world. Note for instance the chance expression of Queen Leonor as to the way the English used their arms.

On the Castilian side succour had been asked from the anti-Pope Clement, and in answer to the request the King of France promised to send two thousand lances; but at the moment this news reached the Castilians there arrived on the field before Chaves, which John and Nuno were besieging, an English messenger who had landed at Oporto with a request for more transport ships, as John of Gaunt was getting ready in force; and orders were forthwith sent to Lisbon for Affonso Furtado to sail for England with six galleys and twelve ships to fetch the English troops: this was at the beginning of 1386.

Not that John sincerely wished for victory by the English over the Castilians: he wanted to play one party off against the other, to use the English to oppose the Castilians but not to set up John of Gaunt upon the throne of Castille, where he would become too formidable. John was circumspect; 'it was necessary to preserve the Castilian throne, but weakened, in the hands of the present possessor, and for that purpose it was necessary to hold out his hand to the English, but to restrain their ambition.'

There arrived at Lamego about the end of July John Gil of Oporto and the esquire Gomes Eannes, bearers of letters from the duke, who had landed at Corunna a few days before. There had arrived Affonso Furtado's squadron that had conveyed to England the news of the battle of Aljubarrota, and along with it there had come a great fleet of powerful ships with some thousands of men-at-arms. The military force is variously stated at from five to ten thousand. There were altogether a hundred ships, each with a hundred and eighty to two hundred oarsmen.

John of Gaunt is described as 'a man in the prime of life, tall and upright as a pine; but he was said to be the most libertine creature in England.' He had brought with him a numerous

court in attendance upon himself and his daughters, who were destined to sit as queens upon the two thrones of the Peninsula. Of the difference between the grandeur of the court of John of Gaunt and the simplicity of that of the Master of Aviz we have the following description :—

‘The splendid court of the English and the plain host of the Portuguese met on a plain formed by the widening of the Minho. John had with him five hundred lances, two thousand men and forty horses in apparel of state, their trappings embroidered with the arms and device of the king. Jackets of white fustian with St. George’s crosses in blood colour were worn by the horsemen to cover their coats of mail, that had got rusty and dilapidated in the exigencies of a long campaign, poorly and rudely decked with designs and coats of arms of very primitive device ; or they wore jerkins of tanned leather or scale-armour enough to cover the trunk but without any attempt at splendour or ornament, a common uniform of that small, tawny, and inexperienced people, accustomed only to the hardship of war and yet ignorant of the pleasures and civilities of life. Only John, in complete armour, but substituting for a helmet the bonnet then worn in the Peninsula, wore a mantle of silk. On the other hand the English, the flower of the knighthood of the world, had fifty herculean barons and knights in blue and yellow, with three hundred men-at-arms and six hundred horse and foot archers under the command of the Constable John. The splendour of the cloaks and mantles, made of velvet from France and cloth from Flanders, brodered and edged with gold and silver over the shining armour ; the imperious attitude of their heads, on which stood erect plumed helmets, and the patronising superciliousness of their looks, filled our people with envious reticence, aggravated by the forced separation imposed by mutual ignorance of each other’s language.

‘This same day the Duke invited the King to a dinner in a tent erected for the purpose, but so resplendent with hangings and tapestries that one would think the feast was being held in one of the opulent palaces of the English. In the banqueting tent crossways at one end appeared the royal table over a carpet of flowers and under a canopy of flags of gold brocade, on which were quartered the arms of England, France, and Castille, lions, fleurs-de-lys, and leopards. The sideboards were loaded with dishes and table furniture guarded by gigantic archers holding bows of the height of a man ; and behind the sideboards were seats, on one row of which were trumpeters and drummers, and on the other singers and minstrels who performed alternately during the dinner ; thundering with the sharp stridour of the metal and the dull beat of the drum, or lulling with the chorus of the singers and the Arab-fashioned songs of the troubadours. In the centre of the high table, raised above the rest, sat the king, and by his side, but lower, the Duke of Lancaster. At their table sat the Bishops of Braga and Oporto and another, and the Constable Nun’Alvares and

John of Holland. Lopo Fernandes Pacheco was cup-bearer to the King, and Sir Thierry de Saussaire of Hainault to the Duke.

'Along the length of the tent were arranged one on each side, perpendicularly to that of the king, two tables for the court. In the centre of the right, as the place of honour, were the Portuguese military orders, though their Masters were absent, the Master of Santiago had died on return from England on the completion of his mission, the Master of the order of Christ lay ill at Thomar, and the Master of Aviz was there as King; but in place of the Masters there were seated Ferdinand Rodrigues, commandant-major of Aviz and future regent of Portugal during the expedition to Ceuta, and old Diogo Lopes Pacheco, now let loose through the revolution from the exile in which he was expiating the murder of Iñez de Castro. One of his sons was on his right, and the other was cup-bearer to the king. On the opposite side were seated Vasco Martius de Mello *the old*, Lopo Dias, whose grandfather died at Aljubarrota, with the chief standard-bearer Gil Vasques and others, old men with their white locks hanging down from their heads, and boys in the heyday of youth, the remains of the Portugal of the past, and the churning-up of the new nation that on that day, shining with the lustre of victory, took its place at the table of the nations of Europe.

'The table opposite to them was for the clergy, presided over by the Abbot of Alcobaça, John de Ornellas, the powerful seigneur of fifteen towns and two castles and the warder of four ports on the coast. There were also seated the Prior of Santa Cruz at Coimbra and several noblemen as well as clergymen. Round the table the English lords waited upon their Portuguese guests, offering them the huge dishes that had been prepared, and through the openings of the hung tapestry entered the pleasant light of an autumn afternoon in the rich plain of the Minho, where the country-folk, unused to such a sight, were elbowing one another, their eyes staring with greed and envy, crowding, listening, sniffing at the fanciful richness and the successive dishes that were offered, extravagant cookery in which the refinement of civilisation was incongruously mingled with barbarism at that undecided and confused epoch between the traditions of cultured antiquity and the practical recollections of the lawless living derived from war and depredation. The grotesque—a type of the Middle Ages—was to be seen in the greediness with which the onlookers received the jokes of the buffoons, calculated to effect digestion in over-laden stomachs.

'The Duke ordered a hundred gold nobles to be distributed among the jesters, and the poor people outside were allowed to consume the remains of the sumptuous banquet; then the duke's major-domo entered, and at the sound of the trumpet advanced towards the royal table and cried out "Great! Great! From the most high and mighty seigneur, John of Gaunt, King of Castille and Leon, Duke of Lancaster," which words were echoed in chorus by all the trumpeters and minstrels. The shades of

evening now began to come on, the nobles left the tent to digest their repast, and the people entered in a crowd to devour the remains.

'The following day it was the turn of the Portuguese to entertain their friends. The tent of the King of Castille, which had been captured at Aljubarrota, and had served for conferences, had not arrived, but an improvised one was constructed in the form of an arbour made of branches of trees by the side of the river. Instead of opulence, there was picturesque simplicity. Nuno was the controller of the arrangements, and the feast, though simple, was excellent.'

This description is drawn by the author from the Chronicles of Froissart and those of Ferdinand Lopes. Lopes describes 'John, Duke of Alencastro' as a man of well-made members, tall and straight, and 'not with the amount of flesh that the size of his body required.'

A treaty was concluded by which John was to marry Philippa of Lancaster, the Duke was to renounce all right to Portugal, the King was to advance troops to the Duke, and the Duke was to cede certain towns in Spain—when he got them.

The greater part of this little arrangement did not come off, and John never intended that it should. He seems to have been a consummate politician, not particularly scrupulous, but wise enough to see that if he was to get on himself, he must help others as well, or at least pretend to. 'There can be no manner of doubt,' says Senhor Oliveira, 'that John never believed in the ultimate success of the attainments of the crown of Castille by the Duke of Lancaster.' Nor did he care much for Philippa, though he was wise enough to accept the match. His vows as Master of Aviz did not need to stand much in the way. They had been already partly broken by his relations with Inez, daughter of Pedro Esteves, by whom he had a son, afterwards made Count of Barcelloe and Duke of Bragança, and Beatrice, afterwards Countess of Arundel, and he could be dispensed by Pope Urban from what was left of the vows.

The expedition did not do much towards putting the Duke of Lancaster on the throne of Castille. The military operations were conducted with the usual loitering, and when the summer set in, the heat of the climate and the intemperance of the English played havoc among them; the archers usually went to bed drunk. Twelve barons of England, quite eighty knights,

and two hundred esquires, all gentlemen, and of 'archers and such sort' of people, more than five hundred died.

The net result of the expedition was tolerably satisfactory to both England and Portugal, and is ably summed up by Senhor Oliveira :—

'The two English sisters being queens of the principal states of the Peninsula, contributed largely to the establishment of the new dynasty of Aviz, at first raised upon the shields of the national will by the heroism of the Constable and the tact of the defender of the kingdom. In spite of the accidents that befel John of Gaunt, it did not fail to be profitable, on the whole, to himself, because he got crowns for his two daughters, and to us because the royal sisterhood put an end to a state of tension that had existed for long years, and the fortunate marriage of John the First produced children who reflected credit upon their country.'

The last is an allusion to John's four sons—Duarte, the painstaking and conscientious, if somewhat too narrow-minded king; Pedro, the soldier, scholar, and traveller; poor Ferdinand, the hostage to the Moors; and Henry, their persistent humbler, the setter-down of their piracies, and the sender forth of explorers to the west coast of Africa that preceded the immense colonisation affected by their countrymen. Our English John of Gaunt was the grandfather of the father of maritime discovery.

The rise of the dynasty of Aviz had domestic consequences as well as foreign. The war against Spain had indeed been right against right, for the Master of Aviz was a mere adventurer, but his might was raised upon the rights of his people, and the king could not and did not forget them. 'The throne of John the First, raised by a democracy through the necessities of war, laid its foundations and rested its weight on the ancient institution of the national Cortes.' We accordingly find the rise of law, and of a standing army centralised in the Crown, as consequences of the union between king and people; and, as another consequence, the decadence of the feudal aristocracy. The transition lets in light upon some curious ways in the Peninsula in the fourteenth century:—

'Of the ancient aristocratic society, whose roots could be traced deep down into centuries long past, even up to the remote ages of the conquest by the Visigoths, of that court of barons and knights whose supreme system of rule was a nobility constructed out of brute violence, it might

be said that nothing remained after the dissolution of the former monarchy in the folly prevailing at the court of King Ferdinand. Instead of the dissolute habits of the feudal society in its last process of spontaneous decay, there arose the austerity of new customs, and in place of the disorder and violence of the authority of the feudal nobles of the past, there now arose a royal authority claiming to govern the whole country with texts out of codes of law. Arms had to give place to the toga, and the king, who in the olden times was merely the chief or general of the barons, now appeared in a new character clothed with judge's ermine, and presiding in a court full of lawyers. Government did not now mean just how to fight or to manage a feof; it meant the ultimate and absolute authority of the Crown over all lands and all vassals.'

This legal constitution that was brought about, Senhor Oliveira calls *the new society*. It was not, though, to the taste of the Constable Alvares, who loved kings and knights, and chivalry and war and heroism. Like Don Quixote, he had read books of chivalry in his youth; his king must be an ideal one, and he felt the loss of that ideal. He accordingly felt that he was no longer wanted, and the lofty ideal that his chivalric habits had conceived, were no longer to be realised in this world, and that he must accordingly find it in the next, so Nuno Alvares betook himself to the Carmo, and became first prior of it.

In the priory he often imagined himself in conversation with the Virgin of the Assumption and the Prophet Elijah. He dedicated his sword to Elijah as the warlike prophet, and as the patriarch of the Carmelites, who had been for so many hundred years waiting at the head of the armies of the Lord to descend upon the earth to exterminate the unclean and fearful anti-Christ. His over-wrought imagination figured to him sins to be remitted and crimes to be expiated, and those, too, in a life that had been stainless in its private character, and violent only in so far as it had been passed in the adventures incident to practical loyalty and patriotism.

One day the ambassador of Castille visited the new prior in the Carmo. The prior, in his habit, looked as though dressed in grave clothes.

'Shall you never take off that shroud,' said the ambassador.

'Only if the King of Castille again go to war with Portugal,' replied the prior; 'and in that case, if I am not in my grave, I

shall serve at the same time both the order I am professed in and the land that gave me existence.'

At last the end of the Constable arrived. It is graphically related by Senhor Oliveira from Sant'Anna's *Chronica dos Carmelitas* :—

'It was Allhallows' Eve, and the bells were ringing in the Feast of All Saints. The community was praying in the church. By the bedside of the dying man a friar was reading the Passion from the gospel of the beloved disciple. Outside was the populace, who had already considered the Constable as canonised, congregated together in grief in the precincts of the priory, and sobbing when they heard the bell tolling. The clangour of the metal opened up latent thoughts, and a flood of sympathy inundated all hearts. There was the utmost anxiety. Within the cell there were already gathered John and his children. Duarte had been to see him every day. The King was sobbing violently; as soon as he had entered the cell, he had thrown himself upon the bed and cast his arms around the emaciated form of the dying man. Nun'Alvares rose on his pallet; his emaciated face seemed like wax, and his beard fell down on his breast like snow. The embrace of the two friends was long, and of the one that was dying and the one that was living, it was the latter that appeared the sufferer, bathed in tears, with his broad and powerful face agitated, his breast heaving and brain wandering as there came rushing in the crowd of images of the critical moments and the pleasant hours of the long campaign that had made him into a king. He owed the crown to this poor monk in miserable agony on his pallet; he owed him everything, and yet he himself was left living, looking on at his friend dying like a beggar, like those beggars at the gate and in the cloister and church of the monastery, in rags and tatters, halt and lame, who were mourning aloud the loss of their Constable. . . . The friar by his side was reading the Passion in a melancholy tone, and when, at the moment when Jesus shows his mother to the beloved disciple, he came to the words, *ecce filius tuus*, the head of the Constable fell upon his breast, which gave one last sigh, and the end came.'

The Constable had played his part well in life, and had, moreover, helped to bring about more than he had intended, even what he did not approve, the new society, or legally constitutional and centralised government in place of the feudal.

'The throne of John the First, raised by a democracy through the necessities of war, laid its foundations and rested its weight on the ancient institution of the national Cortes, which having acclaimed the king, were recognised as the origin of sovereignty. The lawyers, bringing forward this point of support in order to subdue the old aristocratic society, pro-

ceeded with conscious astuteness, and then claimed as their own, without the necessity of further discussion, the absolutist conclusion almost religiously arrived at in the schools of Italy, where law had long been taught.

'It was a singular thing that after a war lasting ten years, a throne contracted on the battlefield, steeped in blood, and raised on shields and lances, was not an aristocratic and military one; from which it is to be seen what were the native forces at work at the time, while there is also to be seen the natural political insight of the king, who knew from what direction he ought to make it appear that it came. The revolution cast aside once and for all the former animalism of the Middle Ages, and the laws based upon relationship. Portugal rose out of the war inspired by the new spirit, which saw by the light of increasing knowledge the State as an ideal edifice constructed by the art of man. It was a dawn breaking upon the mediæval night.'

One new element was the foundation of a standing army instead of having to trust to the mercy of vassals. John got together on a permanent footing three thousand two hundred lancers, and fifteen thousand efficient men. The permanent force was not entrusted to the nobility; its commanding officers were mostly esquires, while some had the rank of captain; and three hundred, taken from the existing military orders, were naturally under the command of their own masters or priors. Similarly the suits of armour, which were deposited in armouries scattered over the kingdom, were mostly entrusted to the masters and priors of the military orders or to the higher clergy.

Under the heading of *the new society*, there is sketched for us an exceedingly interesting picture of the re-construction in Portugal, as in other countries in the west of Europe, of society out of the violence and barbarism of feudalism. The feudal state came to an end in one way or another, and a centralised Government, able to enforce a law of its own all over the country, came into operation, the king being not merely a sort of chief baron, a mere primate among equals, but the real head of the State. In England the feudal period may be said to have ended with the Wars of the Roses, late in the fifteenth century, but in Portugal it ended nearly a hundred years earlier, at the rise into power of the Master of Aviz. It was then that the civil law got firmly established over the kingdom, though it had been making its way into the country long before, and we are accordingly introduced

to the evolution of the civil law of the land from the canon law of the Church.

From the very beginning of the monarchy in Portugal, the European schools of law had some influence there through the favour shown by King Affonso Henriques to one John the Peculiar, as he was called, Bishop of Oporto, and afterwards Archbishop of Braga, who was said to be learned in *utroque jure*,—that is to say, we presume, in the law of the Church as well as that of the State, though the law of the land was not yet emancipated from the canon law, 'nor had the teachers of it abandoned the Church, or the students of it the cloisters.' Affonso Henriques also had at his court one Alberto, *Professor of Law*, and his successor, Sancho the First, sent to Milan for the celebrated lawyer, Leonard, whom he made his counsellor, and his successor continued the practice of Sancho; but under John the court of law attained a much higher organisation.

'In the two courts of Justice, or Relations, the judges appointed by the King were the superior ones, and between them sat Doctor Mangancha. . . Besides the councillors and officials of the Courts of Relations, the body of legists also counted the licentiate, John Gil, procurator or minister of ways and means; Bachelor Alvaro Pires, canon of the cathedral of Lisbon, who exercised the office of common-law judge; Doctor John Mendes, chief magistrate, and his assistants, Ruy and Vasco Fernandes. Such was the personal staff of the court that was the successor of the Aula Regia of the warriors, before whom the Jewish treasurer crawled on his knees like a fawning spaniel.'

Under John—

'The reform of the military institutions, of which Nuno did not disdain the paternity, brought implicit consequences which he had perhaps not foreseen. As soon as the army became permanent and paid by the king, instead of being the contributions of contingents by the vassals, who were more or less kings themselves in their lands and titles, the military power had to be separated from the civil and both centralised in the king. Hence there came for the civil power the institution of *assizes*, by which the body of judges spread over the kingdom to try cases in the king's name; and on account of the payment of the army it was necessary to augment the revenues of the crown, hitherto limited to the rents of the crown lands and to fees on certain privileges such as seigneurage on the coining of money: hence also the institution of the excise, which became permanent in the crown, to provide for public expenses, also an increase in the land tax, a tax on salt, and legacy dues on the inheritances of the Moors, also

the revision and assignation of the revenues of vacant bishoprics. Meddling with the rights of property, the sacred base of aristocratic society and foundation of sovereignty itself, the temptations increased, and the appetite got whetted through the imperial notions of antiquity, and the idea of annulling the exorbitant donations granted during the war made the mouths water of builders of the new monarchy.

'From this origin came the *lei mental*, excluding from successorship to the royal grants all but the male first-born, and determining the reversion to the crown in default of such. . . . With the institution of the excise came the abolition of internal custom-houses for foreign goods, which could now be freely transmitted over the whole kingdom, centralised economically in the crown. With the *lei mental*, which diminished lordship over property, came the abolition of personal labour by the sons of the farmers. . . . Such was the body of legislation that the chancellor codified during the hard blows of the Castilian war. The legal notions of antiquity had their way, and the new monarchy rose upon a reformed society. The Roman law served as the text book for pleadings; the King sent to the chamber of Lisbon two books containing the Institutes of Justinian and the Comments of Bartolo, *that by them it might be acted and sentence given*. They were enclosed in lead, and hung by chains to the wall as real treasures.

'Military service was detached from ownership of land. The nobles still enjoyed the rents of their lands, but military service, sovereignty, and vassallage were the exclusive appanage of the crown, and to allow nobles to have private vassals would be to re-enter into the olden times with their train of disorders that had just been recovered from. King there must be, one sovereign over all vassals and commander-in-chief of the kingdom. The relations of the nobility to their tenants in all matters such as rents and leases were referable to the law of the land, and must drop all old notions of sovereignty.

'A lease at that time was an assignment paid for in kind, not merely with a fixed and agreed upon rent in money, but also in yield, which rents and yields were collected by the lessor for his own use and profits. It was a civil agreement in which signorial right was recognised in tithe: but to sanction the sovereign and feudal character of this along with military service as the constable wanted, was a thing that could not be.

'The donations of the king were of two classes, allodial or merely signorial; they were *devised* or *reverting to the family*. The first were granted with perpetual and irrevocable title with right to dispose of them by will, or *inter vivos*; they were *hereditary*, and in them the lord alone ruled the inhabitants, and took a part of their produce fixed upon by custom or according to the register. The other grants were called *loans*, *commanderies*, *honours*, and were rarely *feofs* (for pure feudalism never existed among us), words significant of eventuality and conditions in the holding or participation in it by another. All sorts of properties and

rights were granted *hereditarily*, lands, lordships over towns, crown-land rents, commanderships of towns, also of fortresses, though for some time the tendency of the kings had been to grant these last only on *loan* or *lease*, because military authority, the basis of sovereignty, was already getting along the road to the point it now reached of exclusive possession by the crown. . . . If property was granted, as it often was, without express stipulation of reversion, the grantees soon became hereditary, although their titles to the properties did not specify it.'

It is curious to see how war and feudalism—though not perhaps 'pure'—worked out the destruction of the latter. John had laid his hands on all the property he could get, and had shared it with Nuno, who in his turn had scattered gifts among his followers. Patriotism paid the pair of them very well. At the end of the war, an immense booty in the shape of landed property was found to be in the hands of the leaders. There had been vastly too much plunder in the whole thing, and John, as soon as he was pretty firm on his throne, saw that a good deal of it would have to be disgorged by the grantees of the property. Hence the support of the courts of law, or civil power, by the king against the power of the nobles.

Among the means found by the chancellor, John dos Regras, to get back some of the property, was that of purchase by the state of grants made hurriedly during the war, and this was one of the proposals made by the king at a convention of his nobles at Paço da Serra, and many of the nobles were expropriated of their properties by purchase. The prices paid for some of them are recorded:—John Fernandes got 8,000 doubloons, or about £5,000, and his brother Lopo 1,500 doubloons, or about £938, and Martin Vasques, father-in-law to the chancellor, got 7,000 doubloons, or about £4,375. Reckoning their not more than ten years' service during the length of the war, and the then probably tenfold value of money, the above amounts represent the respective payments for the services rendered, and give £938 to £5,000 a year, not bad pay for military officers, even though deferred. As soon as these three worthies had realised their booty in cash they went over and joined the Castilians.

It sounds curious to describe a book written before another as a sequel to the latter, yet such we may fittingly term *The Sons of Dom John*, though written by the same author before *The*

Life of Nun'Alvares. *The Sons of Dom John* narrates the events in the reign of the Master of Aviz as John the First, including those of the greatest period of European geographical discovery, in which Henry the Navigator, one of his sons, played so important a part.

The two books together show an interesting picture of the rise of a modern state out of the ashes of feudalism.

C. J. WILLDEY.

ART. III.—MR. GROSS ON SCOTTISH GUILDS.

The Gild Merchant: A Contribution to British Municipal History. By CHARLES GROSS, Ph.D. 2 Volumes. Oxford. 1890.

AMONG the institutions of the Middle Ages, few were of greater importance, and are more deserving of careful study than the *Gilda Mercatoria* or Merchant Guild. Though by no means exciting, its history is intensely interesting, and throws a flood of light upon the social as well as upon the industrial and commercial life of mediæval Europe. In our own country it has not attracted that amount of attention which it rightly deserves. Though the list of authorities which Mr. Gross has printed at the end of his first volume is somewhat formidable, the number of works it includes which have been written by English authors on the history of Guilds in general, is remarkably small. On the Continent the institution has been more fortunate. In France and Germany and elsewhere there is a fairly large literature in connection with it. Among others may be mentioned the contributions of Wilda, Gierke, Karl Hegel, Georg von Bulow, and Vander Linden. Across the Atlantic, also, the subject would appear to be attracting a considerable amount of attention. Mr. Gross himself, though his work issues from the Clarendon Press, and in its original form appeared at Göttingen, is the Instructor in History at the