

**THE LIFE AND TIMES OF JAMES THE
FIRST, THE CONQUEROR, KING OF
ARAGON, VALENCIA AND
MAJORCA, COUNT OF BARCELONA
AND URGEL, LORD OF MONTPELLIER**

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The Life and Times of James the First, the Conqueror, King of Aragon, Valencia and Majorca,
Count of Barcelona and Urgel, Lord of Montpellier by F. Darwin Swift

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F. DARWIN SWIFT

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OF
JAMES THE FIRST
THE CONQUEROR

KING OF ARAGON, VALENCIA, AND MAJORCA
COUNT OF BARCELONA AND URGEL
LORD OF MONTPELLIER

Francis
BY
F. DARWIN SWIFT, B.A.
FORMERLY SCHOLAR OF QUEEN'S COLLEGE, OXFORD

WITH A MAP

204048
24. 6. 25

Oxford
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1894

TO

PASCUAL DE GAYANGOS

MEMBER OF THE ROYAL ACADEMY OF HISTORY
FORMERLY PROFESSOR OF ARABIC IN THE UNIVERSITY OF MADRID

A TRIBUTE OF RESPECT

FOR HIS WORK AS AN ORIENTALIST AND A HISTORIAN

AND OF GRATITUDE

FOR MUCH KINDNESS SHOWN

TO THE AUTHOR

P R E F A C E

IN its original form this book was written for the Marquis of Lothian's prize, open annually for competition to junior members of the University of Oxford. The subject for 1889 was 'James I of Aragon,' and the present work is an expansion of the unfinished essay which I then sent in to the examiners, and to which they awarded an honourable mention.

The book, however, would never, perhaps, have been completed, had it not been for the kind encouragement and invaluable help of a friend, by whose advice I visited some of the principal archives and libraries of Spain in the years 1889 and 1890.

Of these, far the most important for the purposes of my subject were the Archives of Aragon at Barcelona, which contain over 2,300 parchments and thirty registers of the reign. It is much to be regretted that these valuable archives are not more frequently visited by historians. They are kept in perfect order, the documents are carefully classified, and I received every kindness and attention from the distinguished Archivist, D. Manuel de Bofarull y de Sartorio, and his son, D. Francisco de Bofarull¹.

¹ These Archives contain in all 18,626 parchments of the Counts of Barcelona and the kings of Aragon, and 6,388 Chancery Registers, besides the numerous MSS. relating to the 'Generalidad de Cataluña' and to the proceedings of the old Council of Aragon in the fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth centuries; while other treasures consist of collections of Papal Bulls, acts and registers of the Supreme Junta of Catalonia, processes of the old Cortes, and the libraries of suppressed monasteries. The earliest document dates from 875, in the reign of Wilfred I.

The University library at Barcelona contains the earliest known MS. of James' *Chronicle*, as well as the MS. of Marsilio, and a copy of the 'Furs' of Valencia—the latter an excessively rare book. Here too I was very kindly treated by the librarian, D. Mariano Aguiló, and also by his brother, D. Placido Aguiló Fuster.

At Pamplona the Archives are under the control of the municipal body, and are closed to the general public, though they probably contain many historical treasures. I have to thank his worship the Mayor, and the Archivist, for allowing me to examine the duplicate copies of certain treaties between Navarre and Aragon¹.

In the Escorial I found little of importance, with the exception of James' philosophical treatise, the *Libre de Saviesa*, and certain papal letters which have been published.

At Madrid, in the National Library there is a fourteenth-century MS. of great importance as containing a life of the Conqueror, the text of which would seem to indicate that its author had seen the *Chronicle*. Its existence seems to have been unknown to the historical world till recently, and I believe that I am the first of James' biographers who has examined it. I have to thank the librarian, D. Antonio Paz y Melia, for showing me it. The library of the Royal Academy of History contains a copy of the original MS. of Marsilio, which should be published. My warm thanks are due to the librarian, D. Antonio Rodriguez Villa, for his courtesy towards me. In the Royal Private Library every facility was afforded me by the librarian, D. Manuel Zarco del Valle, but it contains nothing

¹ The treasure of these Archives is an illuminated English 'Ceremonial' of the fourteenth century, containing a minute account of the manner of

crowning, anointing, and burying the kings of England. It was probably taken to Navarre by John of Gaunt.

bearing on James' reign, with the exception of a fifteenth-century MS. of the *Chronicle*.

The National Library at Paris contains a MS. catalogue of the Escorial Library (perhaps the one which disappeared from Spain early in the century); while in the National Archives are to be found the duplicate copies of some important treaties between France and Aragon. In the former I must thank M. Omont, and in the latter M. Delaborde, for their courtesy.

It will be seen that comparatively few documents of the reign are to be found outside Barcelona, most of the municipal archives—and with them the magnificent library of Poblet Monastery—having perished in the disturbances which desolated the country during the first half of this century.

I have to thank Mr. Reginald Stuart Poole, Professor of Archaeology at University College, London, and formerly Keeper of the Coins and Medals in the British Museum, for an introduction, as well as for the kindly interest he has taken in my work; and I am indebted to Mr. E. Armstrong, Fellow and Tutor of Queen's College, Oxford, for help in a chronological difficulty¹.

Above all, I would wish to express my gratitude to D. Pascual de Gayangos, Member of the Royal Academy of History, and formerly Professor of Arabic in the

¹ Some of my chief difficulties have been chronological, and I cannot but complain of the carelessness of the historians of Spain in this respect, from Zurita to M. Tourtoulon. A frequent source of error has lain in forgetfulness of the fact that Spanish documents of the thirteenth century are usually dated by the year of the Incarnation. This peculiarity has been acknowledged by M. Tourtoulon himself (ii. p. 45, note 5); yet he has

at times overlooked it in practice, and other writers have neglected it still more. Even in the *Coleccion de documentos inditos* the date printed in the margin to each document is often given in the old style—sometimes with absurd results, as in vi. 54, where a proclamation by Pedro III is assigned to February 12, 1276, when his father was still alive! The real date is, of course, February 12, 1277.