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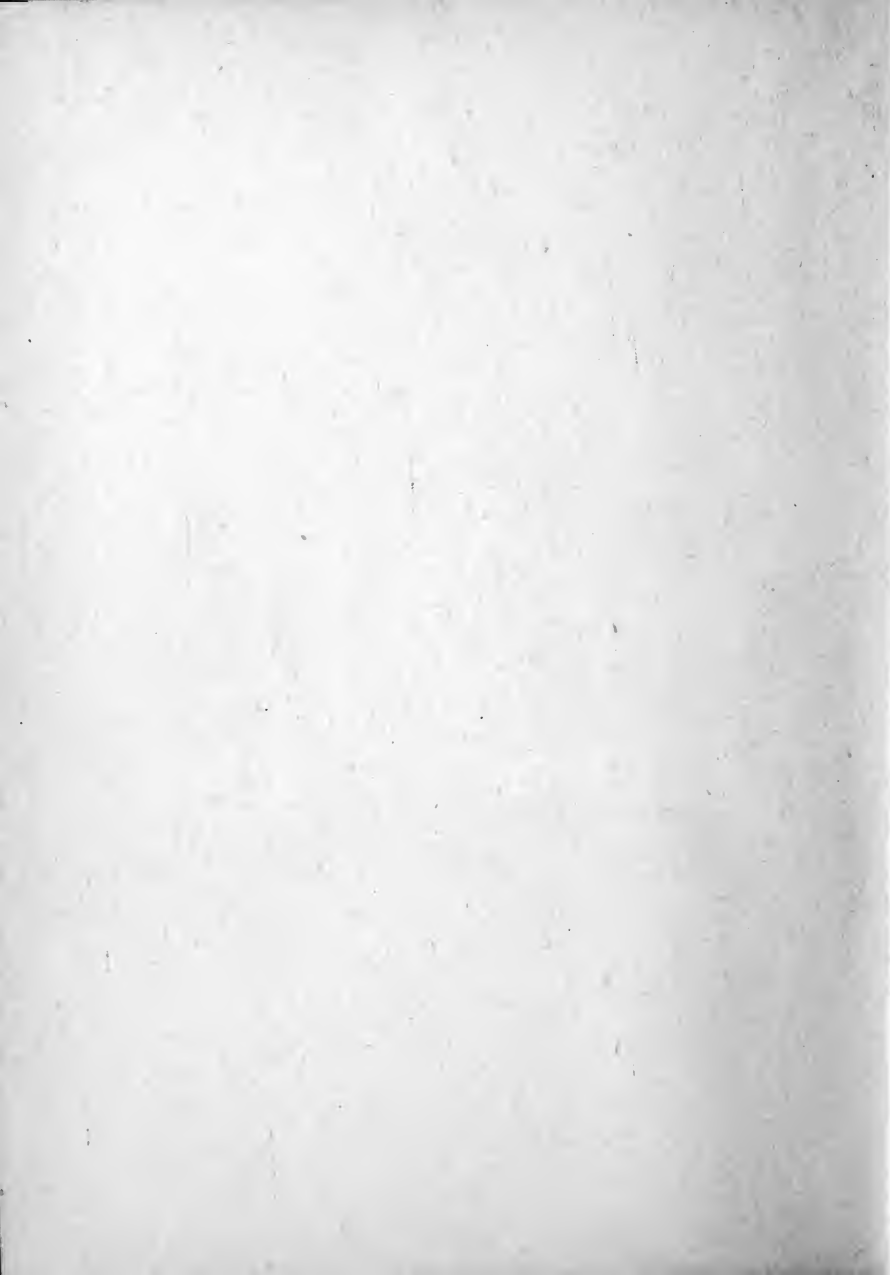


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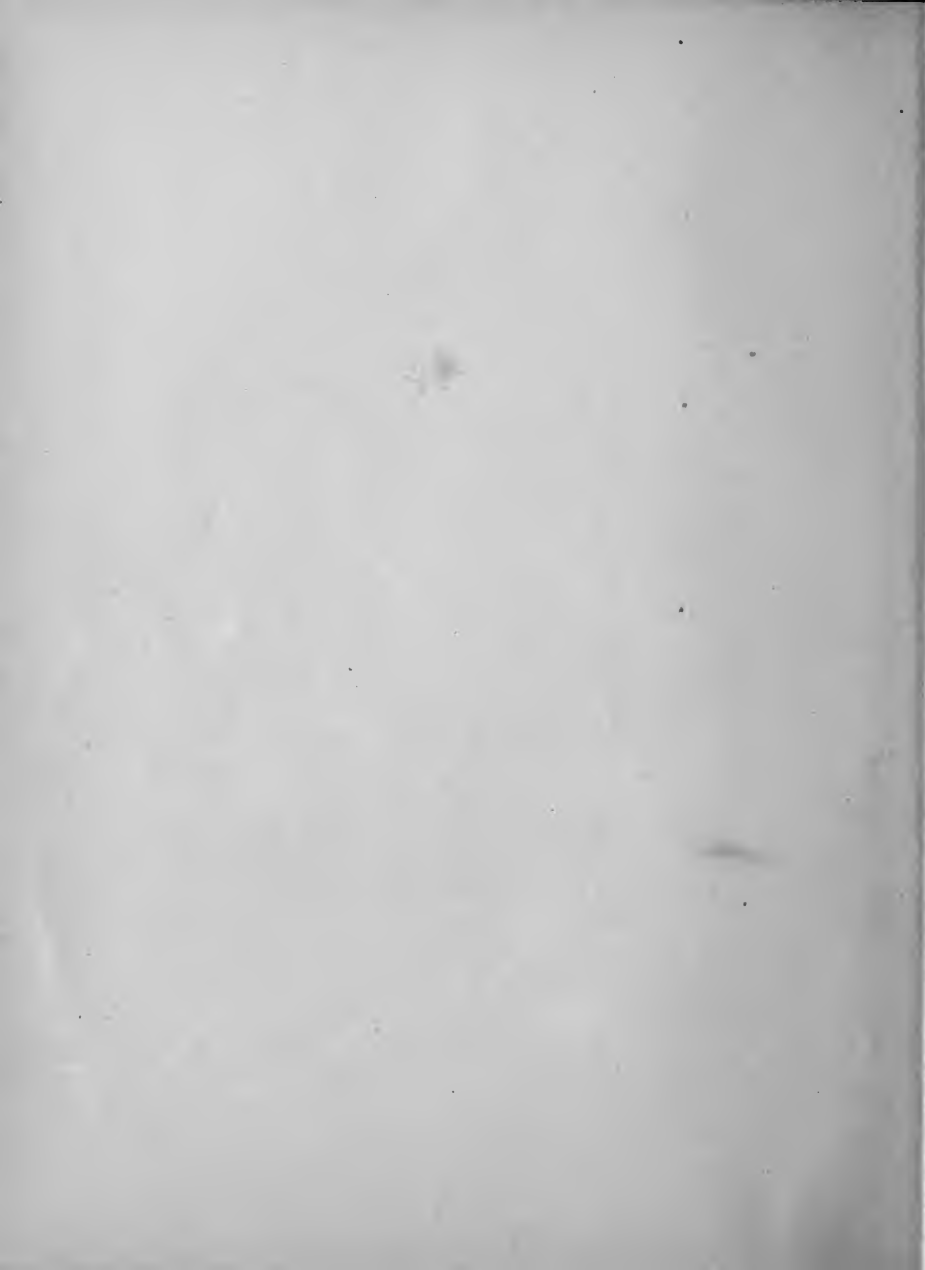
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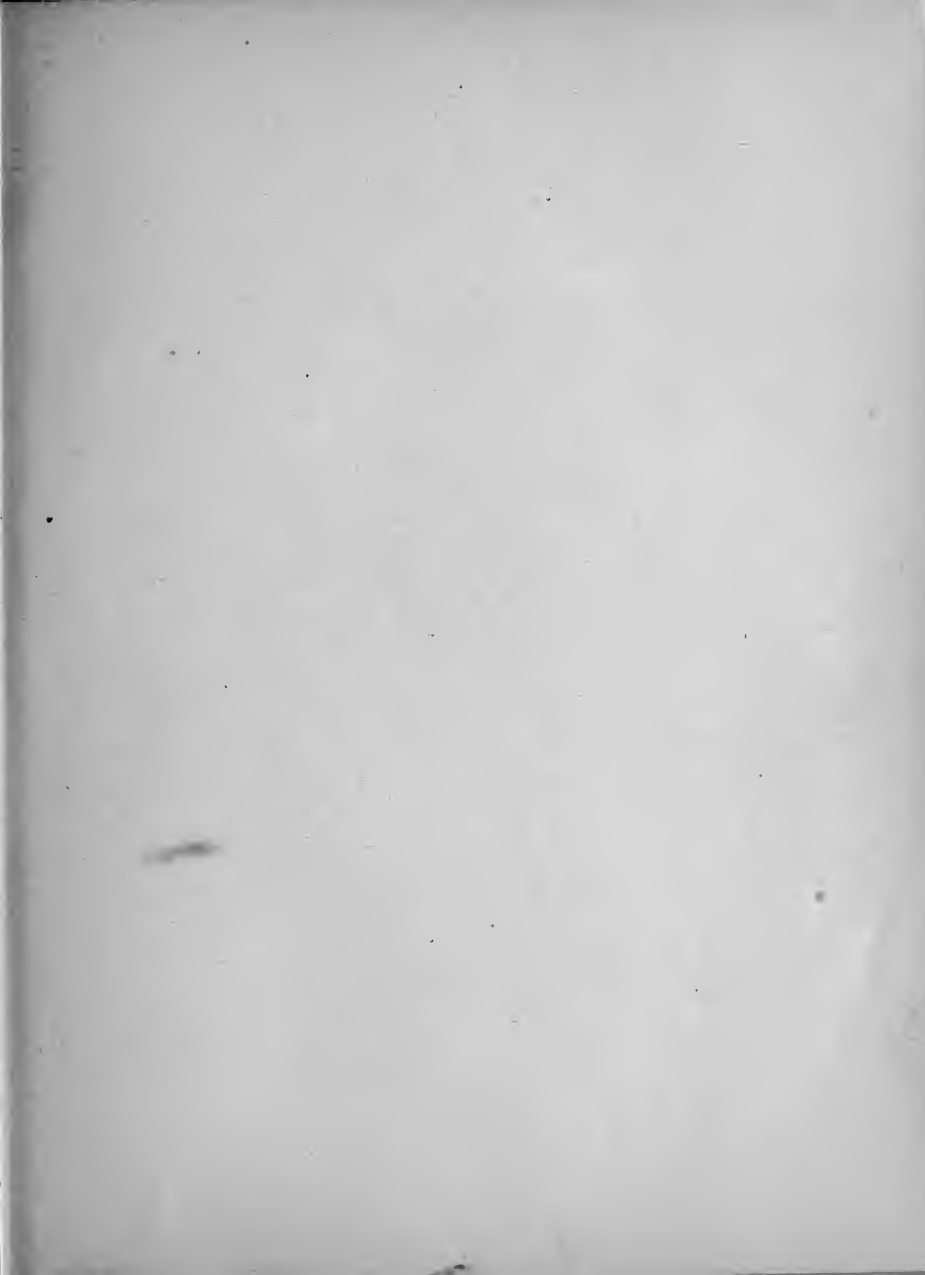














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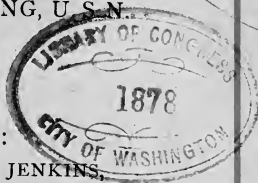
FIRST QUEEN OF CANARY,

*Ancestress of the Family of Eugenie, the late Empress of
the French,*

AND HER REMARKABLE AND SUCCESSFUL

COUP D'ÉTAT.

By WILLIAM B. WHITING, U. S. N.



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ANDAMANA:

THE

FIRST QUEEN OF CANARY.

IN 1844 the writer, Commodore William B. Whiting, U. S. Navy, then a lieutenant, visited the island of Gran Canaria and was much interested in the legends of Andamana, originally a village maiden and afterwards Queen of Canary, which prevail there. The unanimity of these traditions proves that their foundation rests on truth, and Spanish histories also confirm their correctness; though the works of other nations, at least English histories, make no mention of her name; and to correct this deficiency, and to place it, where it de-

serves to be, on their record, among historical narratives of the heroines of the world, is the object of this notice.

It is supposed that the Canary islands were peopled long before the Christian era, and that the ancient Phœnicians traded with them, but that the first inhabitants were driven out by the violence of the volcanic eruptions which were prevalent throughout the islands, traces of which mark every portion of them at this day. The Greeks and Romans knew of their existence, designating them as the Happy islands, the former locating in the sylvan regions of that far-off archipelago, their celebrated Elysian Fields; and among the latter, Pliny makes mention of them, but says that at his time they were uninhabited, though vestiges of former buildings

still remained. If so, and at the time of Augustus Cæsar they were uninhabited, we may infer, from the absence of all trace of Mohammedanism in the religion of the inhabitants of the islands at the time of their conquest by the Spaniards, that their progenitors (who probably came from Northern Africa, to which the islands are very near; the easternmost, indeed, being within sight of the main land) migrated from the continent between that period and the conquest of the States of Barbary by the Arabs.

Plutarch also speaks of them nearly half a century later, and mentions their inhabitants (by which it appears that they were re-peopled about the time that Pliny first wrote of them), though he seems to have no other precise knowledge concern-

ing them, than of their mere existence, and, indeed, it is difficult to tell from his remarks whether Madeira or Canary is indicated.

The existence of the Canary Islands seems to have been forgotten until their rediscovery in the fourteenth century by a French vessel which was wrecked on their coast, at which time they were peopled by a warlike race, brave, chivalrous, gallant, and generous to an extreme. They scorned to attack an unarmed foe, or to injure women or children, and esteemed treachery and falsehood as the greatest of crimes.

The central and principal of the group is the island of Gran Canaria, so named, not because it is the largest, which it is not (Teneriffe being larger, though containing a less inhabitable area of land,

and Gran Canaria second in size), but because of the bravery of its inhabitants, which, for a long time, baffled every attempt of the French or Spaniards to subdue it. It contains 758 square miles, and at the time of the Spanish invasion numbered 14,000 fighting men, a larger force than any other island of the group possessed.

The men were celebrated for their tall stature, and Humboldt styles them the Patagonians of the Old World; and, indeed, fabulous stories are told of their stature by some of the early Spanish writers—one asserting that a chief of Gran Canaria was fourteen feet in height, and another nine.

An old account says: "The women of Gran Canaria are represented as very

beautiful, and the men as well-formed, of good stature, active and athletic—some of them exceedingly strong, cheerful, good-natured, and strictly faithful to their promises. In complexion they are dark like the inhabitants of the other islands, but not much more so than the Spaniards and Italians.”

In illustration of their great strength, Don Juan de Abreu de Galineo tells the following story of Adargoma, a chief of Gran Canaria, who was taken prisoner by the Spaniards and transported as captive to Spain. His reputation for great strength and skill as a wrestler was noised abroad in that country, and a Spaniard, noted for his immense strength, challenged him to a wrestling match. Adargoma replied that he would accept the challenge with great

pleasure, but wished to premise a preliminary trial. He would have a glass placed on a table at his side, and filled with wine to its utmost capacity, and he would then raise it slowly from the table to his lips without bending his body, and his challenger should in the meanwhile endeavor, by every means in his power, to make him spill one drop. If he could not do it, he would advise him to withdraw his challenge, and not tempt further discomfiture. The preliminary trial having taken place, and the Spaniard having been unable to disturb the equanimity of Adargoma's arm, wisely took his advice, and withdrew from further contest.

The island of Gran Canaria, in early times, was divided into ten petty districts or villages, called respectively, Galdar,

Telde, Aquimez, Tejeda, Aquejata, Aguate, Tamaraceita, Artibirgo, Ateacas, and Arucas.* Each district was governed by a chief called Guanartemé, who maintained a body of armed warriors under his control, and united in himself the offices of dictator, legislator, and executive; framed the laws, and appointed magistrates to enforce them; calling, however, at his option, an advisory council of the old men of the village, who also met at his death to choose his successor.

This subdivision into petty independent sovereignties, and the naturally warlike character of the inhabitants, were the occasion of many internal dissensions and wars, which were frequent and bloody.

* Galineo says it was divided into twelve districts, but does not give their names.

In the village of Galdar lived a young girl called Andamana,* who, legend says, possessed extraordinary wisdom. Her judgment was often consulted on the most weighty matters, and her reputation for wisdom, at first confined to her own family and friends, and then to her own district, soon spread to the surrounding country, so that deputations from a distance often came to the village where she resided to consult her opinion on important or disputed points. Litigants appealed to her before bringing their cases before

* Ab Gal calls her Atidamana ; Galineo calls her Antidamana, and other Spanish writers call her Andamada, and some Andamanada ; but the name generally accepted as correct, and the one alone prevalent in the island of Gran Canaria, is Andamana.

the magistrates, and the magistrates themselves often appealed to her before making their decisions, and the invariable success which attended compliance with her counsel induced the people to regard her as inspired.

This popular rumor, which often came to her ears, and the constant reference to her judgment of public matters, seem to have kindled ambition in her breast, and to have prompted her subsequent conduct.

The wisdom of her decisions at first only elicited applause; but when encouraged by the deference paid to those opinions, she proceeded to pronounce decisions also, in addition to giving advice; the magistrates complained of her actions as an infringement on their privileges.

Particularly was this complaint induced, by the fact that their receipts were seriously affected by her course; she charged no fee; but their charges were heavy, and often the litigant who was able to give the largest fee obtained a verdict in his favor, although his adversary might possess the better argument.

Andamana was extremely popular among the people of her district, and the Guanartemé, fearing to take open measures against her, on his own responsibility, called a council to take into consideration her pretensions and encroachments. But instead of quailing before this measure, so fraught with apparent danger to the success of her ambitious plans, she made it a means of advancing her power.

The Council met when the door opened,

and Andamana, splendidly attired, entered, and calmly assumed a seat as presiding officer of the assembly. The members of the Council were struck dumb with astonishment, and none uttered a word. It was commonly reported (as I said before) that Andamana was inspired, and her conduct on this occasion tended to confirm this impression on the members of the Council. After a brief pause, she arose and upbraided them as unworthy of all she had done, and dared them to cite one instance where, in the judgments or decisions she had rendered, she had been swayed by personal interest or personal advantage. She then resumed her seat and waited in vain for a reply, then arose again and pronounced the Council dissolved.

The adoption of this strain of superiority was a bold and successful stroke of policy. From this time no further opposition was made to her assumptions of power, which she henceforth exercised with regal sway.

Her next step was to revise the judicial code of her district, abolishing many laws which she did not approve; altering others, and introducing many new ones. She also established especial punishments for different offences which, before, were left to the discretion of the magistrates; defined the duties of those officers, and appointed punishments for bribery and the perversion of justice.

Pursuing the same course of assumption of power which had hitherto been so successful in her own district, she sent copies

of her code of laws to the surrounding districts, directing its observance in their future administration of justice. In her own province Andamana was almost idolized, but her influence was little felt and altogether unacknowledged beyond it, and her messages and instructions were treated with scorn, and, in some cases, her messengers with punishment.

Immediately on their return she visited Gumidafé, known as the Knight of Facaracas, a nobleman whose habitation was a fortified cave in the neighborhood of Galdar, and who was said to be the greatest warrior on the island, and who had control of a large force of armed men. To him, it is said, she related her grievances, and made an offer of marriage on condition that he should espouse her

cause and fight her battles, which offer he gladly accepted. She then called the people of her district to arms, and when they were assembled, had the marriage ceremony uniting her and Gumidafé performed before the multitude, and installing him in the command of the army, and (knowing the influence of her presence in the expedition she contemplated) placing herself at his side, with his troops united to those of Galdar, swept down on the offending provinces, and soon overrun the whole island. In every place where she went, she proclaimed immunity to all who would join her standard, but destruction to her opponents. In this way her forces increased as she advanced. Many towns received her with acclamation, and she speedily overcame all opposition. Every

province having submitted to her sway, she returned to Galdar and proclaimed herself and Gumidafé queen and king of Canary.

Her reign was a long and a beneficent one, and her first act was to establish a uniform code of laws for the whole island.

Andamana and Gumidafé were succeeded by their son, Artemis (or, according to some authorities, Artemi Semidan), who was killed in battle with the French in 1400.

On the death of the son of Artemis (some writers say of that prince himself) the island was divided into two kingdoms between the two sons of the preceding monarch, the northern portion, called the kingdom of Galdar, being assigned to the elder, Egonayche Semidan, and the south-

ern, or kingdom of Telde, to the younger, Bentagoyhe. The king of Telde, whose domain was the largest and most populous, was required to attend with his chiefs annually in council at Galdar; but after assuming his throne he refused to comply with these conditions, which occasioned war between the two brothers.

On the death of Bentagoyhe, the kingdom of Telde was usurped by a powerful noble named Doramus (afterwards killed by the Spaniards), who caused himself to be elected to the supreme authority by the Gayres, or governors of subordinate provinces, in preference to the young son of Bentagoyhe, who was a mere child, and who took refuge on this occasion with his uncle, Egonayche Semidan, by whom he was kindly received and

reared. Whether the young king of Telde, who subsequently killed himself at Ansite, was the son of Doramus or this son of Bentagoyhe, the history of Canary does not inform us.

The descendants of Andamana continued to reign in Galdar until the conquest of the island by the Spaniards under Pedro de Vera, during the reign of Ferdinand and Isabella in Spain. Guaneche Semidan (subsequently killed in battle with the Guanches on the island of Teneriffe) was the last king of Galdar, and had no sons; but his daughter, Teneshoya, was contracted in marriage to the young king of Telde, who hoped by this means to reunite the whole island under one sceptre.

Guaneche Semidan and his daughter

were captured by De Vera and taken to Spain, where they were converted to Christianity and baptized, he by the name of Don Ferdinand, and she by that of Doña Catherina, or Doña Catalina (for she is called by both names by different Spanish writers).

Returning to the island, which De Vera had not yet entirely conquered, Don Ferdinand was instrumental in effecting its complete surrender. The Spaniards had captured all the sea-coast, but the remnant of the Canarians, who still refused to surrender, had assembled in an inaccessible height of the mountains at a place called Ansité. Don Ferdinand ascended to their stronghold, where he was received with shouts and tears by the people, who were overjoyed at the sight of their old

king. As soon as the tumult of their excitement was over, Don Ferdinand addressed them in an eloquent harangue, advising them, if not for their own sakes, at least for the sakes of their wives and children, to renounce the thought of opposition to the Spaniards, which could only end in their own destruction; but who, he assured them, if they surrendered without fighting, would treat them with leniency, and particularly would confirm and continue the nobles in the possession of their estates. He thus persuaded them to throw down their arms, and submit to the Spanish general, which they, with crying and tears, agreed to do. The young king of Telde, seeing his hopes thus blasted, and the old Faycag, or High-Priest of the island, who were among

those present, advanced to the edge of a cliff, and having there embraced each other, and calling with a loud voice, "Atirtisma! Atirtisma!" (which was the Canarian method of invoking God) threw themselves headlong over the precipice, and were dashed to pieces. Don Ferdinand then led the rest of the Canarians down to De Vera, who was pleased to see them thus brought in without bloodshed, as their mountain fastness could not have been stormed and taken, had they refused to yield, without great loss of life. Pedro de Vera feasted the Canarians, and ordered *Te Deum* to be sung on this occasion, which completed the conquest of the island on the 29th of April, 1483.

Doña Catherina (or Catalina) the daughter of Ferdinand, subsequently re-

turned to Spain, and was married to Don Fernando Perez de Guzman, Señor de Batres (or Vates), son of Don Pedro Suarez de Toledo y Guzman, brother of Don Juan Ramirez de Guzman, from whom Eugenie, the late empress of France, is lineally descended.

Juan de Abreu de Galineo says that the daughter of the king of Galdar married Ferdinand de Guzman, son of Alonzo de Guzman, nephew of Ferdinand Perez, lord of Vates and Alcubilleté in the province of Toledo; but the genealogical records of the house of Guzman show conclusively that she married Fernando (or Ferdinand) Perez de Guzman, Señor de Batres (or lord of Batres), after the death of his first wife, who was Doña Marguerita de Avallaneda. These rec-

ords mention no Guzman who was lord of Alcubilleté, but the above-named Fernando Perez de Guzman, lord of Batres, is undoubtedly the same referred to by Galineo, as the dates correspond, and Spanish writers often use indifferently the B and V.

Thus ended the royal line of Andamana. History has recorded many a name less worthy of memory than hers, but its pages, except in Spanish works, make no mention of her, nor of the Napolenonic *coup d'etat* by which she first achieved her supremacy.

The authorities consulted in this account are :

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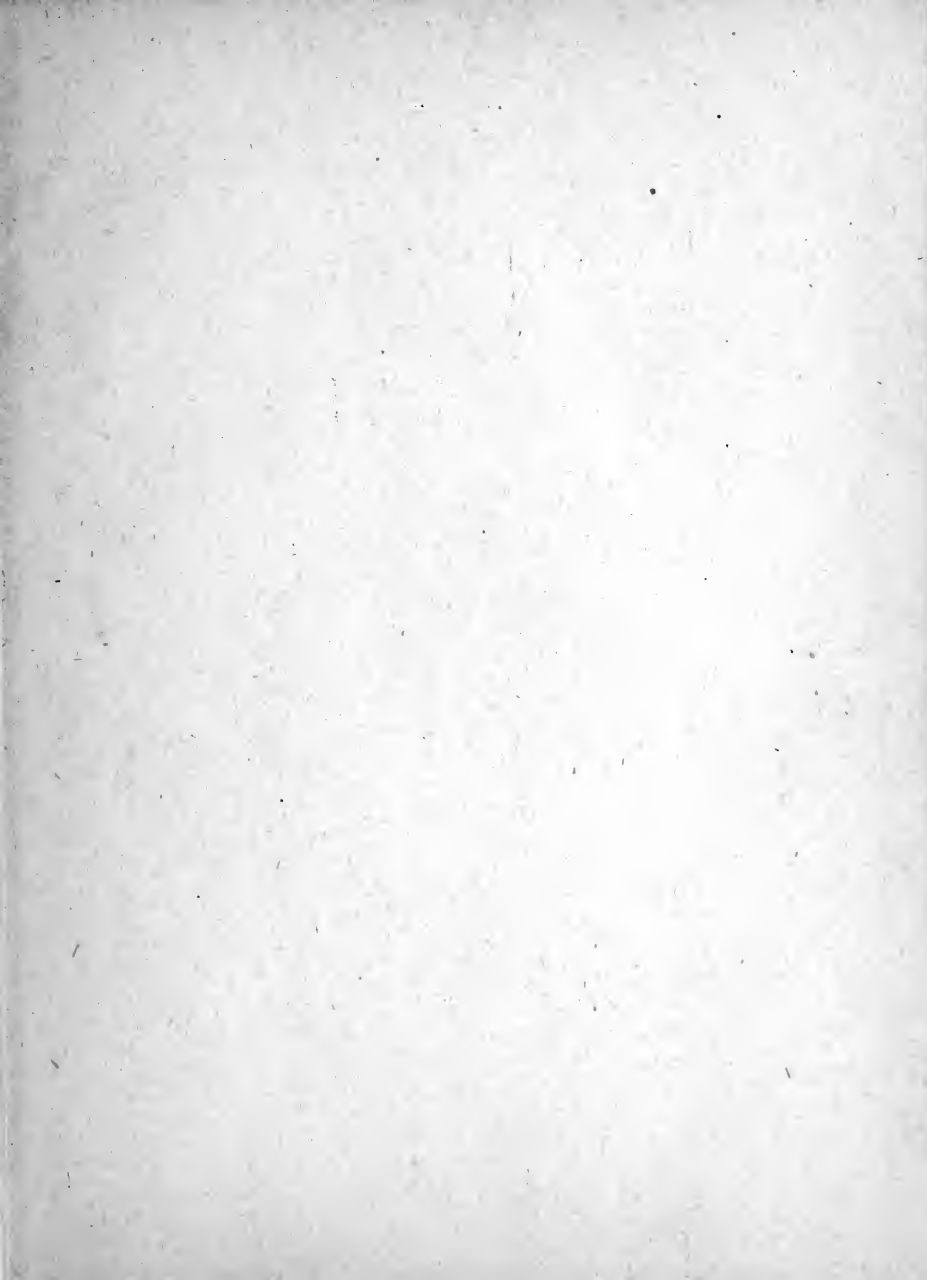
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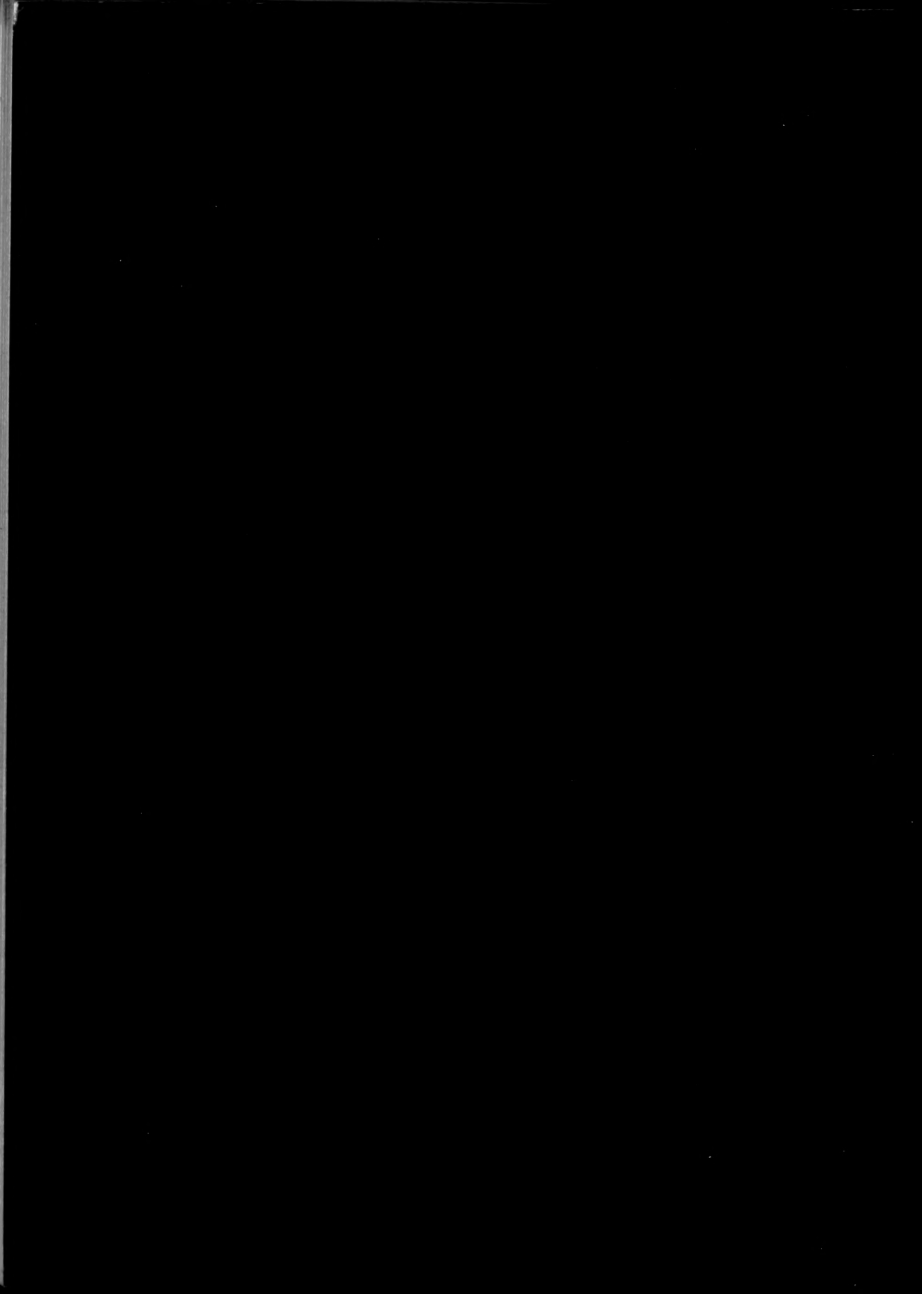












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