

# THE INQUISITION

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In the Light of Historical Perspective

## PART I—THE EARLIER INQUISITION.

IT is not my intention to attempt an outline of the history of the Inquisition. That would be an undertaking of considerable length and complexity, referring, as it does, to a period of three and a half centuries, more or less, with very great national complications; with a society so different in tone and constitution from that existing today that it requires almost a special education in him who would intelligently transfer himself into that society and understand it; and with legal customs and a penal code quite different from ours. Moreover, a general survey of the Inquisition would rightly include, I think, some distinction between the normal or legalised, and the abnormal or irregular functioning of the institution. What I mean is that in the course of the three and a half centuries or so during which it operated in close association with the temporal rulers, it was inevitable that at times powerful political pressure was brought to bear upon its deliberations, and deflected them into abnormal channels. This political intervention often caused acute embarrassment to the Popes. This was notably the case in the time of the Emperor Frederick II. and later in the times of Ferdinand and Isabella, rulers of Castile and Arragon, and of Philip II., King of Spain. But it would be a lengthy task to elucidate this point and others of the kind in the limited space of this pamphlet.

My object, then, is to wander round the subject with the idea of seeing the Inquisition in its historical setting; not to praise, nor yet to blame; but to try to understand, however imperfectly, the state of things that caused to arise among our Christian ancestors an institution which is in itself a difficult problem to our modern minds, and which, moreover, has been obscured by persistent misrepresentation.

## WHAT IS THE INQUISITION?

By the Inquisition I mean that tribunal which was established, with Papal sanction in or about the year 1230, and which functioned chiefly in France, Germany, and Northern Italy, and which, two and a half centuries later, Ferdinand and Isabella, rulers of Castile and Arragon, re-established in Spain under Torquemada, where its operations were particularly drastic. We have, therefore, an earlier and a later Inquisition. Part I. deals with the earlier. The later, or Spanish Inquisition, presents special problems, and will be dealt with in Part II.

Referring to the bibliography of this subject, I would specially recommend "The Inquisition," by Nickerson, an American Episcopalian, whose work is characterised by the latest historical methods, and which skilfully refers the Inquisition to its proper historical setting; Maycock's work on the Inquisition is the latest, and is also excellent. The Abbe Vacandard's work, in my opinion, is badly arranged, and is often out of focus, and so is almost worthless, except to a reader who has already the correct orientation of the whole subject. Henry Hales Lea has gone over the history of the Inquisition in great detail, and with much learning, and, as Nickerson says, he would have been a great historian "had he possessed, a grain of imagination, or the least spark of sympathy with the Middle Ages." The article in the "Encyclopedia Britannica," largely based on the mendacious Llorente, belongs to the now discarded dust heap of exploded historical methods. "A Brief for the Spanish Inquisition," by Eliza Atkins Stone, a Protestant writer, is a remarkably clever little work, and exhibits an accurate regard for the best historical methods. Lecky, always conscientious, has apparently no sense of humour, and no understanding of the real life of the Middle Ages. Vermeersch, in his erudite work on Tolerance, presents the Catholic view of the Inquisition with great power.

A proper treatment would include the following two points: facts and perspective, or correct historical setting. It should be perfectly just—that is, not influenced by the controversial hatreds of centuries and the great poisoned stream of the anti-Catholic tradition: nor, on the other hand, should it be a white-washing of the institution. It should be an attempt to state exactly what it was, and—as this is not enough—to gut it in such a way that we can understand it. This is not easy.

"History," says Belloc, "may be scrappy and superficial, and yet on the whole, right; but if its whole orientation is warped by a wrong appreciation of the past, then, however detailed and full of research, it is worse than worthless; it is harmful and it had better not have been written at all . . . . I say (he continues) that the main task of an historian writing in the English language is the shovelling away of rubbish; and this is particularly true of the rubbish which has accumulated over the record of the Dark and early Middle Ages.

### **FACTS IN FOCUS.**

The great point, then, in dealing with the Inquisition, or with any other notable institution of the past, is to present facts in focus, in their proper perspective—that is, in their historical setting. If this is not done the facts will be entirely misjudged and misrepresented. This is so important a point that I will dwell on it. In fact, it is the principal matter I wish to insist on throughout these considerations. Let me enforce it by some illustrations.

My first illustration is a purely fictitious one. Suppose among a certain people in the distant past an influential individual is responsible for the institution of slavery. Through the influence of that imaginary individual prisoners of war and other captives are for the first time in history sold into slavery. Judged only from the standpoint of today, the aforesaid individual will be branded as one of the world's greatest villains, because the institution for which he is responsible inflicts untold misery and degradation on countless thousands of human beings, generation after generation.

Let us now transfer the new institution to its historical context, which, I repeat, is purely imaginary. Slavery, among the people I refer to, was not hitherto in vogue; but cannibalism was. It was the custom, let us say, among the people I am considering, either to massacre their prisoners or to eat them. The influential individual I am referring to brings about the change. He says to his fellow-citizens: "Citizens, the practice we have hitherto followed of keeping prisoners to serve as food is barbarous; it degrades us; let us be more humane and civilised; let us keep our captives to work for us." In other words, let us be slave-owners instead of cannibals. Now, this man, considered, in his historical setting, instead of being a monster, should rather be regarded as a great reformer. He might conceivably have had to face frightful opposition; he might have undergone a painful persecution while promulgating his new ideas, and might even have been done to death. In such a case, this originator of slavery in that nation would not only be one of its great men, and one of its glorious apostles of progress, but a martyr hero in the cause of humanity.

In giving this illustration, and the others that are to follow, the only application I ask for is this: that events and personages of a somewhat distant past can only be judged correctly when examined in the fullest available light of their historical setting.

Let me take a second illustration in which we try to picture a future generation sitting in judgment on ourselves.

Prolonging certain tendencies of the present day into the future, it is, I think, quite reasonable to prophesy that two hundred years hence war will be already a thing of the past. It is quite conceivable that the very idea of war as a method of settling international controversies will be utterly abhorrent to the generations of men I am considering. Those men will probably read with amazement and horror the details of former battles, where masses of men in the prime of life fling themselves on to other masses of men, and, with "reeking tube and bursting shard," with thrust of bayonet and slash of sword, and thundering charges of cavalry, cover the plain with bleeding and mangled bodies in a conflict that suggests the most primitive savagery. It is conceivable that the very thought of it all will be a nightmare to men from whose lives all experience of actual warfare has passed away. And the verdict they will pass on the generations to whom war was—and is—a recognised method of settling international disputes is hardly likely to be of a flattering description. Now, take our own generation. Despite the recent tendencies in the direction of pacifism, the idea of war is still normal to our thoughts. Apart from apprehension of national downfall or other great disaster, war lies lightly on the public conscience. It is not an exaggeration to say that where war is considered fairly safe, it is regarded by our own generation not as an enormity but as an adventure. Our ballads, our songs, and our fiction almost universally present war to us as a field for the display of noble qualities and picturesque achievements. Just think of the great novels and stirring poems of Sir Walter Scott, with their glorification of battle. In the stories of our boyhood the innumerable shootings and hackings on the fields of battle

were considered not so much as horrors as very entertaining reading. In fact, war is quite normal to our thoughts. Previous to the Great War, the spirit was inculcated in Germany in countless publications and in the organisation of public life. In England, a more pacific nation, war, when not notably dangerous, never weighed on the public conscience. In recent times we had the Crimea war, wars in China, wars against various African native peoples, wars in Egypt and the Sudan, and wars against the Boers; and all these, though barbarous and hideous things in themselves—as would be judged, at all events, by a future generation in which war no longer exists—were undertaken in lightness of heart and with scarcely a qualm of conscience, because none of these conflicts involved the danger of national downfall, and because war is normal to the ideas of the age. And so we may hope that a future generation, in passing judgment on the age in which we live, will judge us not according to standards foreign to our modes of thought but in accordance with the actual standards of the day. In other words, if past events—for instance, those of the Middle Ages—are to be really understood by any generation of men, they must be judged in their exact historical setting.

Let me enforce this important matter by yet another illustration.

At the present day a boy is found guilty of stealing a sheep; a man and a woman are convicted of high treason. How does the law deal with them? The boy, if under eighteen, is taken to the Children's Court, and, after a paternal admonition, released; if over eighteen, he is fined a couple of pounds or gets a week or two in a hygienic prison, where he has wholesome food, regular exercise, clean clothes and bedding, and, fresh air. A hundred years ago he was hanged! A severe sentence to our way of thinking, but quite in harmony with the modes of thought of our excellent great-great-grandfathers.

The man convicted of treason nowadays may get six months or a year; the woman is indulgently let off as a harmless lunatic. In the eighteenth century a more serious view was taken of the accused. The man was hanged, drawn, and quartered; the woman was burnt alive!

And that was the law of England, and quite normal to the thoughts of the day. Truly, criminals were not pampered by our legislators in that not far-distant day. They would have regarded with contempt the milk-and-watery mildness of our present mode of hanging, which, by means of a sudden drop, causes instant death. In those days the criminal was slowly strangled to death. Mr. Townley in 1746—one of eight executed on the, same occasion—was hanging for six minutes before he was cut down, while still alive; then the executioner with his knife ripped him open, cast his heart and entrails into the fire and quartered the body. That was the way men were hanged, drawn, and quartered. It marked the execration of the law for the crime, and the execution was carried out in the presence of an enormous gathering of the public. But why was the woman burnt? Was her penalty intended to be more rigorous? No. Her sentence was considered as severe as that of the man, but not more so. The distinguished jurist, Blackstone, thus explains the reason of the difference: "In treasons of every kind the punishment of women is the same, and different from that of men. For, as the natural modesty of the sex forbids the exposing and publicly mangling their bodies, their sentence (which is to the full as terrible to the sense as the other) is, to be drawn to the gallows and there to be burnt alive." (Blackstone iv. ch. 6.)

"When Blackstone wrote (in the latter half of the: eighteenth century) there were no less than 160 offences punishable with death," says Lecky, "and it was a very ordinary occurrence for ten or twelve culprits to be hung on a single occasion; for forty or fifty to be condemned at a single assize." Seventy were executed at Old Bailey in 1732, and eighteen in one day at Cork; and numerous other executions were carried out at other places in the same year. Note, that the population of England. at the end of the seventeenth century, was only a little over five millions.

"The law which condemned a prisoner who refused to plead on a capital charge to be laid naked on his back in a dark room, while weights of stone or iron were placed on his breast till he was slowly pressed to death, was enforced in England in 1721 and 1735, and in Ireland as late as 1740. The law was repealed in 1771." (Lecky.) The torture was prolonged till the resistance of the prisoner was overcome, and might last a week. A case occurred. in England in 1741, and this, I believe, was the last occasion on which a man was subjected to this torture, which was, perhaps, as terrible as any ever included in a penal code. The pillory, which was very common, was often a prolonged torture, and several perished in it. The penalty was rendered more severe when the victim in certain cases had his ears sliced off by the

executioner, or received no protection from the violence of the mob. "Men, and even women, were still whipped publicly at the tail of a cart through the streets, and the flogging of women in England was only abolished in 1820." (Lecky). Women who were guilty of poisoning or of other offences comprised under the heading of high or petty treason were sentenced to be burnt alive by a law which was not repealed till 1790.

All these facts are of common knowledge, and may be read in any detailed history, such as Lecky's "History of England in the Eighteenth Century."

Go back to the days of Shakespeare and the other great Elizabethan dramatists. It was the golden age of English literature. Those writers were, on the whole, a jolly and somewhat turbulent lot of men, not given to worry about the hardness of life. Yet, how severe was the penal code? As Hallam says, "the rack was seldom idle during the latter portion of Elizabeth's reign."

In the Carolina, or penal code of the Emperor Charles V., of the year 1532, the following penalties are included: Blasphemy was punished with mutilation and death; pederasty and sodomy with the stake; comers and those circulating false coins knowingly were condemned to the flames; defaulters of weights and measures to flogging-or, in extreme cases, to death; burglars, however small the thefts might be, to mutilation or death by hanging. Similar severities were found in the penal codes of most other countries of that time.

### **THE INQUISITION DID NOT MONOPOLISE PERSECUTION.**

It would, then, be quite illusory to suppose that severe measures were the monopoly of the Inquisition. They belonged to all the penal codes, and they were used by all the Reformers. To suppose that England, for example, abandoned the ancient Faith through gentle sol: citation, or through the medium of persuasive tracts and pamphlets, would be to nurse a delusion which has no support in history. The new doctrines were everywhere promulgated through violence and proscription. And the same policy was pursued by the Reformers in all countries where the new doctrines secured the support of the civil authorities. "Persecution," says Hallam, in his "Constitutional History," "is the deadly original sin of the reformed churches; that which cools every honest man's zeal for their cause in proportion as his reading becomes more extensive."

Mr. Lecky, who, I need hardly state, was not a Catholic, draws a striking contrast between Catholic and Protestant Intolerance:

"Catholicism was an ancient Church. She had gained a great part of her influence by vast service to mankind. She rested avowedly on the principle of authority. She was defending herself against aggression and innovation . . . She might point to the priceless blessings she had bestowed on humanity; to the slavery she had destroyed; to the civilisation she had founded; to the many generations she had led, with honour, to the grave. She might show how completely her doctrines were interwoven with the whole social system; how fearful would be the convulsion if they were destroyed, and how absolutely incompatible they were with the acknowledgment of private judgment."

But what shall we say of a church that was but a thing of yesterday, a church that had as yet no services to show, no claims upon the gratitude of mankind; a church that was by profession the creature of private judgment, and was in reality generated by the intrigues of a corrupt Court; which, nevertheless, suppressed by force, a worship that multitudes deemed necessary to their salvation; and by all her organs and with all her energies persecuted those who clung to the religion of their fathers?

"What shall we say of a religion which comprised at most but a fourth part of the Christian world, and which the first explosion of private judgment shivered into countless sects, which was, nevertheless, so pervaded by the spirit of dogmatism that each of these sects asserted its destructive doctrines with the same confidence, and persecuted with the same unhesitating violence, as a Church that was venerable with the homage of sixteen centuries?

"So strong and so general was its intolerance that for some time it was, I believe, truly said that there were more instances of partial toleration being advocated by Roman Catholics than by orthodox Protestants." ("Rationalism in Europe," Vol. I., p. 51).

## THE MIDDLE AGES.

And now, as we turn our attention to the Middle Ages, let us note a truth too often forgotten: the Church founded by Christ did not enter into an empty world which it at once proceeded to furnish. On the contrary, the world into which the Church was introduced, and in which it continued to labour during subsequent ages, was already elaborately furnished. The churchmen of bygone centuries, despite the fact that they held the same deposit of the Faith that Catholics do at the present day, and subscribed to every article of the same creeds, were, nevertheless, in modes of thought, tradition, and education, the children of their age. Undoubtedly, the Church from the beginning, as the opportunity offered, began to introduce new furniture into the world, and, as her influence grew, to discard here and there objectionable pieces of the old furniture, and to modify others. But, though Christianity, as a leavening process, gradually made itself felt as the dominant influence throughout the whole civilised world, it would be unreasonable to expect that the tone and temper, the modes of thought, the customs and feelings, the legal and criminal codes, and the organisation of society should be the same in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries as in the nineteenth and twentieth. Dean Maitland, in his essays on the "Dark Ages," written nearly 100 years ago, at a time when history—at least, in as far as it dealt with the Catholic Church—was almost entirely on wrong lines, makes the following interesting reflection: "Do what he may, no man can strip himself of the circumstances, and concomitants, which it leas pleased God to place around him. He may say, 'I will be a monk'; and he may call himself, and get others to call him by the name; but if he says, 'I will be a monk of the fourth century,' or, 'a monk of the twelfth century,' we can only assure him that he is mistaken, that the thing is impossible, and that if he is a monk at all nowadays, it must be of the nineteenth century. I am not speaking of either one of those centuries as better or worse than the others, but only mean that whatever character he may assume, he must take it in his own circumstances . . . . Nothing can be more clear than that any man, whether young or old, whether lay or clerical, a nobleman or tradesman, a soldier or sailor, a peasant or mechanic, a man rich or poor, single or married, who is now living in England, is, both as to externals and as to the modification of himself, in very different circumstances from those in which he could have been placed had he lived in the same character and station in the fourth, or in the twelfth century." A most judicious criticism.

And, now, let us go back to the Middle Ages—to the great centuries of growth, to the fiery youth of Europe. It was a great time, a time of impetuous energy and vigorous thought. Accustomed to the shock of battle, and to hard and simple living, men's nerves were like steel. The penal codes were severe, but no one worried. Men had not that sensitiveness to suffering, that horror of physical pain, that dread of discomfort, which are so characteristic of our own times. They worried as little about pain and death (says Henry Adams) as healthy young bears do in the mountains. It was a rough world, but a robust one, full of health and energy—a time of tremendous expansiveness—even of boisterous jollification. In contrast to the old pagan days, it was a happy world, and the secret of men's happiness was the Faith. That Faith was a wonderful thing for individuals and society. It was the great and only unifying principle in European civilisation. At the same time it expanded man's horizon, and opened windows looking out on eternity. The image of the Man of Sorrows and His gentle Virgin Mother assuaged his pains with sympathy and companionship, and sustained his heart with boundless hope. The pagan world of Greece and Rome—for all its mighty achievements failed to lift the shadows from the life of man. The pagan world was radically unhappy, and was heavy with the Groans of millions of slaves. Those who belaud the glories of Greece and the expansive times of the mighty Roman Empire, to the detriment of the Middle Ages, are entirely off the lines of accurate thinking.

## CLASSIC PHILOSOPHY.

The Greek philosophers, and after them the Romans, were always groping in the dark after ideals. But they never found an ideal that satisfied the needs of the human spirit. For them the road of existence wandered through mists and obscurity; and where it ended no man knew, except that it was lost in the dark. Could their philosophers and their moral teachers tell us, in unambiguous language, that love had a future? that sorrow had a consoler? that right had its ultimate triumph? That the scales would be finally adjusted? Not a bit of it. Did any all-embracing love allay the wounds of bruised

hearts and soothe the pangs of heart-hunger? Not in the least. Had the great Thunderer of Olympus a message of hope and deliverance for the slave? Not he! Did Apollo bind the wounds of the leper? Did Venus minister to anything but fugitive passion? Were any of their gods or goddesses associated in men's minds with love for the human race? Was there pity anywhere in that cold and hard sky for the hopeless, the outcast and the fallen? Apparently not their poets philosophers gave no message of assured hope; darkness lay on the face of the waters; and in the depth of man's being was uncertainty and uneasiness.

Broadly speaking ancient philosophy produced two great schools of thought—the Stoics and the Epicureans. The Stoic doctrine may be summed up somewhat as follows: "Life is hard; tribulations abound; but there is no use repining; let us grin—if possible—and bear our fate." The Epicurean concentrated on enjoyment. "Gather the roses while we may," was his watchword; "let us eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow we die." Yes, let us eat and drink, and let us be merry—if we can—for the banquet is coming to an end, the music is dying down, the lights are going out, and the banquet will end in the dark. And what the night will bring no one knows. Under such circumstances mirth must inevitably lack the quality of depth; its laughter is on the lips, but not in the heart; the thrill of true joy is impossible. The philosophy of life as yet gave no firm basis for those resounding guffaws that echo from the Middle Ages.

Then into this dark, bewildered and unhappy world comes the gracious figure of Jesus Christ. The darkness is dispelled. Like an exquisite dawn there comes from the poor stable of Bethlehem, from the little cottage of Nazareth, from the Hill of Calvary, the message of joy and of hope, and of glorious ideals. The poor, the wretched, the drudge, the outcast, the leper, the slave, lift up their hearts. They are enfolded in a mighty love and compassion. A direction and a meaning are given to life; there is now a light on the path; there are outstretched arms at the end of the road; a Friend is at hand with His amazing companionship for the journey; and His words of grace and hope and love fall on the uneasy heart of man like music from beyond the stars. He lifted the darkness and gave us a new world.

### **THE MEDIAEVAL ATMOSPHERE.**

The man of the middle Ages, therefore, inherited a happy and friendly universe, and Catholic feeling wrapped him round like an atmosphere. He was on easy terms with the saints, with the Blessed Virgin, with Jesus Christ Himself. Through his faith, whatever else he might lack, he was "at home with God." And the signs of his religion were all about him. The trivialities of existence supplied him with ten thousand pleasant reminders. He was kind to the robin redbreast, because it was the little bird that plucked the thorns from the brow of Christ; the tiny red beetle, the ladybird, was the little creature of the Blessed Virgin; and so he was friendly to it, and neither he nor his children would do it the least harm; the humble ass, the beast of burden of the poor, bore on its back the sign of the Cross, because it had once been ridden by Jesus Christ. Holy days were also holidays and times of rejoicing. Religious festivals were numerous and were celebrated, not only with sacred ceremonies but with all kinds of uproarious jollification. Travel was largely a pilgrimage to some holy shrine. As to hell and the devil, undoubtedly they were regarded as profound matters, but neither the one nor the other depressed the mediaevalist in the slightest. To maintain, as some have done (Mr. Lecky, for instance, who never understood the Middle Ages), that those beliefs laid on his mind an abiding and overwhelming sense of terror is to utter morbid nonsense. In pageants and miracle plays Satan himself was often characterised, and his appearance on the scene was invariably greeted with roars of laughter. Not one of these mediaeval men had the slightest doubt about the existence and fiendish malice of Satan, but they were robust enough to treat him as the comic character of the piece. They knew they could elude his wiles if they liked; and they enjoyed a hearty laugh at the expense of their old and discomfited enemy.

### **THE MEDIAEVAL HORROR OF HERESY.**

From the foregoing considerations we can get some idea, however imperfect, of the attitude of the mediaeval mind towards heresy. Heresy was the evil par excellence. In a universally Catholic society, it never entered a man's mind that the heretic could be sincere. The heretic was a traitor, guilty of treason to God and to human society. In fact, he was an

anarchist. And so the rulers regarded him. And heresy, by threatening the Faith, was a thrust back to the ancient pagan darkness and unhappiness, from which Christianity had delivered the world. Popular feeling, therefore, rose up in execration of the evil. In fighting heresy, man was fighting not only for his happiness but for his very existence.

Moreover, the mediaeval heresies, the principal of which was the Albigensian, were particularly repulsive and anti-social. The Albigensian heresy was an offspring of the ancient Manichean perversion, and laid a horrible and morbid emphasis on the principle of evil. Failure to check it would have been a disaster to society. Among other things, it taught that marriage was sinful, that the marriage act and the procreation of children were crimes. Then, there was the "Endura"—"a barbarous practice," as M. Tanon observes, "which we would scarcely believe unless we had such frequent allusions to it." It consisted in the practice of suicide as a religious rite. It was encouraged by the "Perfect" as being highly meritorious. It has been maintained that the Endura put more people to death in Languedoc than the stake or the Inquisition.

These morbid innovators were everywhere detested, by the people. And the fury of the populace and the indiscriminately repressive measures of the rulers were the impelling reasons for the establishment of the Inquisition. The Inquisition, so far from increasing the number of deaths, greatly lessened them by acting as a restraining influence on the indiscriminate violence of the mob and the rulers. In fact, a tribunal was established which, in its normal functioning, and apart from a few deplorable exceptions, gave to the accused the benefit of a fair trial. It provided an orderly and deliberate trial instead of lynching by the mob or high-handed slaughter by the rulers. It was statute law in place of lynch law.

For a long time the churchmen shrank from the task, but circumstances forced their hands. In illustration, we may mention some cases of civil and mob action against heretics before the Inquisition was established.

#### **HERETICS OFTEN LYNCHED BEFORE THE INQUISITION WAS INSTITUTED.**

When the presence of the Albigenses at Orleans (eleventh century) first became known, King Robert the Pious hastily gathered a council to settle what was to be done. So great was the fury of the common people that the Queen herself was stationed at the door of the church where the heretics were being tried to save them from being dragged into the streets and lynched. Thirteen of the accused, including ten resident canons of the Collegiate Church of the Holy Cross, were condemned to be burnt alive; and as they came out of the church, the Queen, recognizing amongst them a priest who had been her confessor, sprang forward and jabbed him in the face with a stick, putting out an eye. Amid the execrations of the people they were bundled out of the town and condemned to the flames. This outburst of violence (says Maycock) is of interest as being the first recorded instance in European history proper of the burning of heretics.

In 1051 the presence of Albigenses was discovered at Goslar, in north Germany. The Emperor Henry 111. convened a council, and, "with the consent of all, in order that the leprosy of heresy may be prevented from spreading and contaminating a greater number of persons" (Emperor's words), ordered that they should all be hanged. This was an innovation of the law of the Empire and was merely a measure of public safety.

In 1076 a heretic of Cambrai was brought before an assembly of the Bishops and leading clergy of the diocese. They were unable to reach a decision on the matter. But, as he left the council, the unfortunate man was seized by the people and lynched in the manner familiar in the United States in regard to the Negroes.

"Instances of similar excesses could be multiplied." says Maycock, "but the important point to be noted is that in all these cases, extending over a century, the Church either held aloof or plainly manifested her disapproval."

In 1145 a half-witted fanatic proclaimed himself the Son of God, and (in the diocese of St. Malo), made a number of converts among the peasants, who, not content with denying the Faith, began to loot the churches and break into the monasteries. The leader, recognised to be insane, was placed in the kindly hands of the Abbot of St. Denis, and ended his life in a monastery. But his followers were hunted down by the people, and several perished at the stake

## **INQUISITION REALLY A HUMANITARIAN INSTITUTION.**

Events such as these—and there were numerous others of the kind—forced the hands of the churchmen, and, accordingly, in France, in 1430, the Inquisition was established by the authority of the Pope, as an orderly and judicial means of dealing with what was regarded as a terrible social and religious evil. Maycock writes: "In the thirteenth century the secular arm, as a rule, needed no encouragement in the vigorous prosecution of heresy. And, so far as the burning of heretics was concerned, the Inquisition was a damping factor rather than a driving force. Undoubtedly Vacandard is right when he says, 'Taking all in all, the Inquisition in its operation developed a real progress in the treatment of criminals; for it not only put an end to the vengeance of the mob, but it diminished considerably the number of others condemned to death.' "The Inquisitors were not cruel, and had no idea of merely inflicting pain—I speak of normal cases, and not of those unfortunate exceptions which are always found in every system operating in a wide extent of time and place. Their idea was to repress evil, to protect the faith of the people, and to save the heretics themselves. They believed that repressive measures taken against heresy were not only good for society at large but for the heretics themselves. They had intense convictions about eternity, and they held—as seems logical for every sincere Christian to hold—that the life of the body is of no account in comparison with the life of the soul. Every effort was made to persuade the accused to retract his error, and only when that failed was he "relaxed" or handed over to the civil authorities to undergo the sentence of the law. Even Henry Lea admits that comparatively few were sentenced to death.

"We cannot," says Maycock, "isolate the mediaeval Inquisition from its setting and pass judgment upon it as though the humanitarian feeling of the present day had been prevalent in the Middle Ages. At the present time the Holy Office still performs, with wise and generous use of its authority, that same task of inquiry and supervision which in more turbulent times involved the employment of more vigorous and terrible methods."

## **PART II.—THE SPANISH INQUISITION.**

AS in Part I, I wish to insist on the fact that if we are to understand the Inquisition, we have to perform the difficult but indispensable feat of detaching ourselves from our present historical context and transferring ourselves into a bygone period, differing enormously from ours in its manners, its customs, its attitude towards heresy, its legal procedure, and the severity of the criminal code. We distinguished two phases of the Inquisition—the earlier, and the later or Spanish variety. The earlier, established about 1230, operated chiefly in France, Germany, and Northern Italy, and lasted for about two and a half centuries. That was dealt with in the previous pamphlet. The later, or Spanish Inquisition proper, was established in or about 1480, and was more rigorous in its operations than the earlier institution. Looking back to the origin of the Inquisition, we see that the churchmen were at first very reluctant to undertake the task of inquisitors, but circumstances forced their hands. The mediaeval heresies, notably the Albigensian and other offshoots of the Manichean perversion, were of a repulsive and, anti-social type, and almost everywhere was received by the execrations of both rulers and people. Lynchings of heretics by the mob remind us of what has happened so often in our own day in the United States in the case of Negroes guilty or suspected of certain crimes. The Inquisition, by its careful and orderly procedure, saved many innocent lives by substituting statute law for lynch law, or the indiscriminating violence of the rulers. It lessened the number of deaths and protected many innocent persons.

## **THE MEDIAEVAL EXECRATION OF HERESY.**

In his "History of Europe" (a book recommended by our Melbourne University for students in European History), James Harvey Robinson, Professor of History in Columbia University, writes as follows:

"It is very difficult for us who live in a tolerant age to understand the universal and deep-rooted horror of heresy which prevailed not only in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, but also down at least to the eighteenth. Too much stress cannot be laid on the fact that heresy was considered treason against an institution which practically all—both the learned and the unlearned—agreed was not only essential to salvation but was necessary to order and civilisation. Frank criticism of the lives of the clergy, not excluding the Pope himself, was common enough. But this did not constitute heresy. One might

believe that the Pope and half the Bishops were bad men, and yet in no way question the necessity for the Church's existence or the truth of every one of its dogmas; just as nowadays we might call particular rulers and government officials fools or knaves without being suspected of repudiating governments altogether. The heretic was the anarchist of the middle Ages. He did not simply denounce the immorality of the officers of the Church; he claimed that the Church was worse than useless. He sought to lead people to throw off their allegiance to it, and to disregard its laws and commands. The Church and civil government consequently proceeded against him as an enemy of society and order. Heresy was, moreover, a contagious disease, and spread rapidly and unobserved, so that, to the rulers of the times, even the harshest measures appeared justifiable, in order to prevent its dissemination.

### **WHAT A MAN WILL FIGHT FOR.**

Man is a combative being. There are many matters of varying importance for which he is prepared to die or to kill. Rather than yield a yard of his frontier line, he is prepared to see the blood of slaughtered thousands flow like a river. Few even of those who fought in the Great War could tell exactly why they were killing one another. In a general way, no doubt, men understood that the various combatants were influenced by some such motives as the following:—Desire of political or commercial advantages, fear of a successful rival in trade or territory, expansion of empire, and the like. And for these matters men died in millions. According to Mr. Winston Churchill in his book on the War, five millions of the soldiers of the Central Powers, seven millions of the opposing Allies, were slaughtered, to say nothing of the millions of "minor" casualties, such as the loss of limbs, eyes, and reason. Through some defect of historic judgment, this tremendous accumulation of suffering, concentrated into a period of four years, and embracing so many millions of victims, appears to some minds less noteworthy than the deaths of a few thousand heretics who were tried by the Inquisition during the course of several centuries.

If a thinker of the Middle Ages, endowed with prophetic insight, could have visualised our own times, I can imagine him saying something like this: "Well, well: for some paltry territorial advantage, for some sordid commercial or political gain, through fear of the advance of a rival, or other such motives, you turn the plains of Europe into a shambles and scatter wrecks and corpses on the high seas. And, apart from those who have felt the pangs of bereavement owing to the War, or who have suffered from national humiliation or great financial loss, there is scarcely one of you on whom the Great War presses as a horrible occurrence. You thought these things worth fighting for. And will you not allow us to fight against an evil that we consider far greater than any commercial or territorial loss? Will you not understand that we considered we had good reasons for repressing those who tended to disintegrate civil society, to destroy the faith of our children, and to encumber the road that leads to man's eternal destiny? And do not forget that in one important skirmish of your Great War there were as many victims as the Inquisition claimed in three and a half centuries."

### **THE HISTORY SPECIALIST.**

The writer who specialises in a limited phase of history is a dangerous man when dealing with a remote period. If his speciality is war, he is apt to give to an incautious reader the impression that there was nothing but fighting; if he deals with the criminal law, that there was nothing but repression. This danger is not present when he is dealing with some phase of present-day history, because, from our knowledge of the life that flows around us in infinite variety, we are able to fill up the details omitted by the specialist. If he treats of the wars of our own day, we know that away from the battlefields life went on as usual. While cannon thundered on the various fronts of the Great War, business went its accustomed course in the towns and countryside remote from the battlefields. Harvests were sown and reaped; tailors, bootmakers, plumbers, carpenters, shopmen, lawyers, doctors, and policemen pursued their customary occupations. Cricket and football, dancing, bathing, beer drinking, and even "two up" went on as usual. But when we deal with days long past, we are apt to be misled by the specialist, because, unless we have a rather comprehensive knowledge of the period under discussion, as well as a correct historical imagination, we are unable to fill up the omitted details of the picture. From the specialised details of inquisitorial procedure as given in the elaborate volumes of Henry Charles Lea, the

incautious reader is liable to forget that all the while life was flowing uninterruptedly through its thousands of channels, and that the ordinary citizen usually took as little notice of the doings of the Inquisition as our fellow-citizens nowadays take of the proceedings of our police courts. We cannot judge of the Church's tolerance by the Inquisition alone. We must remember, for example, that the first century of the Inquisition was also the century of St. Francis of Assisi, of St. Dominic, of St. Clare, of St. Bonaventure, and a great many other saints, who were filled with love even for sinners, and in whom we find the quintessence of the Catholic spirit.

### **THE SPANISH INQUISITION.**

As the early Inquisition was coming to an end, having successfully accomplished its main task of freeing Europe from the Albigensian horror, and, moreover, with but little loss of life, the Spanish institution made its appearance (about 1480). Its severity was certainly great, and it had some characteristics not found in the earlier form. Nearly all the uproar about the Inquisition is based on the Spanish brand of it. Now, we are not asked to defend the Spanish Inquisition; we are asked to understand it. Catholics, as much as any others, reprobate and condemn whatever injustice or cruelty may be fairly laid to its account. But the more we enter into the special problems with which Spain had to contend at the time, the more we see that vast layers of controversial garbage have been piled on the institution.

Let us transfer ourselves into Spain in the closing decades of the fifteenth century, and, above all, let us try to enter into the very soul of the Spanish patriot and Catholic.

In the days of Ferdinand and Isabella, under whom the later Inquisition was established, Spain had just emerged from a terrible experience. That experience, I imagine, must be almost unique in European history. For 800 years the Spanish nation was buried in the waters of a deluge. This proud and, obstinate people had come under the yoke of alien hordes of Asiatic and African blood. Through the deplorable divisions of her Ostro-Gothic chieftains she had quickly fallen a prey to the Moorish arms. Over every citadel waved the Crescent; turbaned garrisons occupied every fortress; the gleaming scimitar was ready to strike at the slightest sign of insubordination; the Mosque threw its shadow over the national Church; the Mahomedan replaced the Christian as the ruler of Spain. And the chains of bondage were riveted for eight hundred years. Seldom has the humiliation of a people been more complete. Few Spaniards can look back to that descent into the abyss without thoughts both deep and dark.

If you have the faintest spark of historical imagination, if your sympathies can be stirred by any problem of the past, enter in spirit the marts of Cordova, Seville, or Salamanca during the Moorish occupation and sound the depths of the Spanish soul. Can you not at least dimly perceive what the Spaniard feels as, striding gloomily through the marketplace, he sees the ever-present signs of his subjection, and notes the tramp of the Mahomedan garrison and the gleam of their arms? Do you note the dangerous glint in his eyes as he passes the mansions and the counting-houses of the Jews -the allies of the Moors? The Jews were more numerous in Spain than in any other country, and nearly all the wealth was in their hands. To the Spaniard the Moor was the alien master, the Jew the traitor within the gates. His feelings towards both can well be imagined.

At last the hour struck and Spain emerged from the abyss. Eight hundred years of humiliation and subjection is a long and perplexing vista. The Spanish nation, dripping with the waters of the flood, found itself, sword in hand, back in the light of freedom, the lost nationality regained. It was the guerilla chiefs, for whom Spain has ever been famous, with their bands of followers, that had maintained the fight for freedom. Men who have lived the lives of outlaws and marauders, and other men who have been delivered from a condition in which they were little better than slaves, are not the most amiable of men. I can well believe that the Spanish character had acquired a dangerous dourness. Rulers and people alike were not in a mood to be trifled with. They were not likely to pamper their former masters and those whom they rightly or wrongly regarded as traitors within the gates. At all events, they would take stern precautions against a return to the abyss.

Though the Spaniard stood erect as a man who had won his liberation by the sword, he was far from feeling at ease in his hour of triumph. His hard-won liberties were not yet assured. The land was still filled with restless Moors and Jews, ready, if the opportunity occurred, to renew the ancient warfare; and, besides, the reconquest of his country was

incomplete. The Crescent still waved menacingly over the fortress of Granada. The nation was obsessed with the problem of self-preservation. The conviction was steadily growing in the minds of both rulers and people that the Moors and Jews must conform to the national religion or leave the country. Ferdinand and Isabella ruled in Castile and Arragon, and it was under these rulers and in the special circumstances described that the later Inquisition was established in Spain. Those circumstances are glossed over, or even entirely omitted, in the usual controversial accounts of the institution, whereas to the Spaniard they explained and justified it.

### **A PARABLE.**

Let us Australians place ourselves for a few moments in a historical context similar to that in which the Spanish nation found itself in 1450. (Those of other nationalities can exercise their imagination on similar lines.) Australians love their country as intensely as the Spaniards loved theirs. They cannot endure the idea of even a small fragment of Australian territory passing under alien rule. But what if the whole of Australia was occupied for ages by armed intruders, who reduced the native sons to the condition of serfs?

To help us to understand Spain, let us suppose that this very nightmare became a reality. An Asiatic conqueror lands on our shores, subdues city after city, and eventually becomes master of the entire country. Australians become the subjects, almost the slaves, of Asiatic overlords, and the chains of their bondage are securely riveted for centuries. The flag of the conqueror floats from the fortresses of Sydney and Melbourne; tribute is exacted from the conquered people; the temples of Asiatic religions are thronged with alien worshippers. The Australian people have sunk into the abyss.

To complete the parallel with Spain, let us suppose two other circumstances: first, that the Australian people are undivided in professing one faith—to which they are intensely attached—let us simply call it Christianity; and, second, that there is another alien race in the country, possessed of enormous wealth, in close alliance with the Asiatic invaders, and universally regarded by the Australian people as traitors, as allies of the alien masters.

We are now in a position to evaluate a dire historical experience through which another nation has passed. From our knowledge of ourselves we know what Australians circumstanced as described would feel; we can understand their dark thoughts, their fierce, but necessarily private, conversations, their "curses, not loud, but deep," the dangerous glint in their eyes as they brood on the arrogance of their masters, and their vows of vengeance on the enemy if ever they shall regain the mastery.

We know that Australians are a good-natured, pleasure loving people. But we also feel—unless we have no knowledge of human nature—that having reconquered their liberties, and still heavy with the memories of their age-long humiliation, the Australian people would give short shrift to their former enemy and his traitorous allies. The intruders would all be bundled out of the country, and, not improbably, their departure would be preceded by numerous bloody massacres. I am inclined to believe that Australia, having passed through such a calamity as described, would be far less lenient to her enemies than Spain was.

### **A FEW NOTES ABOUT THE SPANISH INQUISITION.**

My object is not to describe the operations of the Spanish Inquisition, but to put it in the historical context that explains it. In a very summary manner I add a few points, or rather, mere headings, without developing them.

(1) From the special problems with which Spain was confronted, and from the policy of the rulers, the Spanish Inquisitors were civil functionaries more than Church officials. "A fair way of putting the case is perhaps this" (says Eliza Atkins Stone, a Protestant writer): "The machinery of the Spanish Inquisition was mainly ecclesiastical; the Vatican had more or less voice in its management, but on the lever was always not the Papal, but the Royal hand." This much is beyond question: It began its career under the definite censure of the Holy See, and the latter, perturbed at its severity, constantly urged clemency.

(2) After some vain attempts at milder measures, the Jews were given the option of conforming to the national faith or leaving the country. Most of them left, and, as a result, endured great suffering. Many came back and conformed

outwardly. The Inquisition courts concerned themselves only with the Jews and Moors who had become Christians and relapsed, or who carried on an active proselytism.

(3) The Moorish and, Jewish peril having been removed, the Inquisition, midway in the sixteenth century, turned its batteries against the advancing danger of the Reformation. Forty years earlier, Dr. Martin Luther had, nailed his five-and-ninety propositions to the church door at Wittenberg, and soon the greater part of Europe was convulsed. Wars, commotions, revolutions became the order of the day. As time went on these disturbances assumed a frightfully sanguinary character. England was ablaze; Ireland was submerged beneath a vast tidal-wave of religious persecution; France, for a period of forty years, was almost strangled by the frightful struggles of Huguenots and Catholics; Germany, at the end of the Thirty Years War, had lost half her population. Spain was resolved that the conflagration should, not cross her frontiers, or, if it did, that it should be prevented from spreading. She had had her fill of internal way in fact, eight hundred years of it, with disaster to the national existence. And so the machinery of the Inquisition was used to prevent the threatened conflagration. Its success was complete. While the blood of civil war flowed in so many other quarters, Spain was, at peace.

"There was not," says Voltaire, the arch-foe of Catholicism—"there was not in Spain during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries any of the bloody revolutions, of the conspiracies . . . which we see in the other kingdoms of Europe. In fine, except for the horrors of the Inquisition, there would be nothing with which to reproach Spain." Voltaire does not point the moral, but De Maistre does. "That is to say," says De Maistre, "that Spain escaped only by means of the Inquisition the horrors that dishonoured all the others."

(4) The popular supposition, based on the wild assertions of controversialists, that the Spanish Inquisition has a kind of monopoly, or, at all events, pre-eminence in repressive measures, has little support in sober history. The fact is that all the Reformers, whenever they were able to secure the support of the civil authorities, adopted violent methods for the repression of those who were unwilling to conform to their various creeds, and that, too, without the justification which the Spaniards found in the acute national problems with which they were confronted. The Spanish scholar, Balmez, challenged the critics of the later Inquisition to produce the facts and figures of their own repressive measures and compare them with those of Spain. The honours of the comparison, he maintained, would rest with Spain.

Two wrongs do not make a right. If the Spanish Inquisition was guilty of cruelty and injustice, it is no alleviation of its guilt to point out that Protestant persecutors were as bad or worse. At the same time, it helps to correct false views of history to note that the rigour of the Spanish Inquisition is not an isolated phenomenon, and that there were Protestant inquisitions far more terrible than anything that can be charged to Spain. Taking up the challenge of Balmez, let us, for the purposes of comparison, glance at the attempted repression of the Catholic Faith in Ireland, taking our account from Lecky, a non-Catholic historian. It is a terrible narrative, but it helps us to understand the hard character of the times.

### **THE ORDEAL OF IRELAND.**

The repressive measures referred to were begun by Elizabeth, and continued relentlessly for over two centuries. These measures aimed not merely at the extirpation of the Catholic religion but at the extermination of the Irish people. It is a terrible statement to make, but it is a sober fact of history. It cannot be denied. No doubt, the Irish wars of Elizabeth were not ostensibly begun as part of the religious controversy, but in practice it was so, and soon all disguise was thrown off, and the long-drawn record of repression, lasting to the end of the eighteenth century, was openly avowed and recorded in the Penal Code as a measure for the extirpation of Popery. I quote from Lecky ("History of England in the Eighteenth Century"), who was certainly not in favour of the Catholic Faith, and who was a strong partisan of English rule in Ireland. Yet, as a historian of English rule in Ireland, his judgments are carefully measured."

"The great wars of Elizabeth" (says Lecky) "established the complete ascendancy of English law. The suppression of the native race in the wars against Shane O'Neill, Desmond, and Tyrone, was carried on with a ferocity, which surpassed Alva in the Netherlands, and was hardly exceeded by any page in the bloodstained annals of the Turks. A deliberate attempt was made to assassinate the great Irish leader, Shane O'Neill, by a present of poisoned wine. . . . Essex accepted

the hospitality of Sir Brian O'Neill. After the banquet, when the Irish chief had retired unsuspectingly to rest, the English General surrounded the house with soldiers, captured his host with his wife and brother, sent them all to Dublin for execution, and massacred the whole body of his friends and retainers.

"An English officer invited seventeen Irish gentlemen to supper, and when they rose from the table had them all stabbed. A Catholic Archbishop named Hurley fell into the hands of the English authorities, and, before they sent him to the gallows, they tortured him to extract confession of treason by one of the most horrible torments human nature can endure—by roasting his feet with fire.

"But these isolated episodes, by diverting the mind from the broad features of the war, serve rather to diminish than to enhance its atrocity. The war, as conducted by Carew, by Pelham, by Mountjoy, was literally a war of extermination. The slaughter of Irishmen was looked upon as literally the slaughter of wild beasts. Not only the men, but even the women and children who fell into the hands of the English were deliberately and systematically butchered. Bands of soldiers traversed great tracts of country, slaying every living thing they met. The sword was not found sufficiently expeditious, but another method proved much more efficacious. Year after year, over a great part of Ireland, all means of subsistence were destroyed, no quarter was given to prisoners who surrendered, and the whole population was skilfully and steadily starved to death.

"The pictures of the condition of Ireland at this time are as terrible as anything in human history." After various terrible details, Lecky continues: "Long before the war terminated, Elizabeth was assured that she had little left to reign over but ashes and carcasses. It was boasted that in all the wide territory of Desmond, not a town, village, castle, or farmhouse was unburnt; and a high English official, writing in 1582, computed that in six months more than 30,000 people had been starved to death in Munster, besides those who were hung or who perished by the sword. The slaughter of women as well as of men, of unresisting peasants as well as of armed rebels, was openly avowed by the English commanders. The Irish annalist told, with horrible detail, how the bands of Pelham and Ormond killed blind and feeble men, women, boys, and girls, sick persons, idiots and old people; how, in Desmond's country, even after all resistance had ceased, soldiers forced men and women into old barns, which were set on fire, and if any attempted to escape they were shot or stabbed; how soldiers were seen to take up infants on the points of their spears and whirl them about in their agony; how women were found hanging on trees with their children at their breasts." (Lecky says in a foot-note that the substantial truth of the description given by the Irish annalist is only too fully corroborated.)

Similar methods were carried on by Cromwell, and later were enacted in cold blood in the Penal Laws at the end of the Revolution which dethroned the Stuarts.

The reading of those Penal Laws, so cruel, so universal in their operation, and so degrading, is enough to make one shiver at the lengths to which the persecuting spirit can carry men. In the words of Edmund Burke, speaking of the Penal Laws: "It was a complete system, full of coherence and consistency, well digested and well composed in all its parts. It was a machine of wise and, elaborate contrivance, and as well fitted for the oppression, impoverishment, and degradation of a people, and the debasement in them of human nature itself, as ever proceeded from the perverted ingenuity of man." The judgment formed by Dr. Johnson is similar. "The Irish," said he, "are in a most unnatural state, for we there see the minority prevailing over the majority. There is no instance, even in the Ten Persecutions, of such severity as that which the Protestants of Ireland have exercised against the Catholics." Mr. Hilaire Belloc (in "First and Last") says: "The preservation of the Faith by the Irish is an historical miracle, comparable to nothing else in Europe. There never was, and please God, never can be, so prolonged, and insanely violent a persecution of men by their fellow-men as was undertaken for centuries against the Faith in Ireland: and it has completely failed. I know of no example in history of failure following upon such effort. And so amazing is it that they did not attain their end, that perpetually as one reads one finds the authors of the dreadful business now at one period, now at another, assuming with certitude that their success is achieved. Then, after centuries, it is almost suddenly perceived—and in our own time—that it has not been achieved and never will be.

May I be allowed, in passing, to say it? When one reads, digests, understands, the tragic story of Ireland; when one sees this people "bruised, broken in shards," creeping at last from the desolate trenches in which for centuries they had

withstood the barrage of death, confiscation, and national humiliation, still unsubdued and loyal to the sacred ideals of their traditional Faith—may I be allowed to say it?—if any of my readers has a drop of Irish blood in his veins, he may well be proud of his Irish ancestors..

### **A COMPARISON.**

Now, whenever the Spanish Inquisitors were guilty of cruelty and injustice they deserve to be reprobated, and with all my heart I loathe and condemn any inhumanity that may fairly be laid to their count. But let us not be one-sided in our judgments. When I compare the rigours of Catholic Spain with those of Protestant England, it seems to me claims of Balmez are vindicated. In Spain the measures taken against Jews and Moors, and later against of the doctrines of the Reformation, arose after a historical crisis of almost unprecedented magnitude, and while the nation was obsessed with the problem of self-preservation. In England and in other countries that adopted the Reform there was nothing of the kind. The Irish did not menace the existence of England; they were a separate nation; they had every right to manage their own affairs, and, certainly, to practise their traditional religion. The very liberty of belief claimed by the Reformers would seem to entitle the Irish people to adhere to the Faith of their fathers. But no such concession was allowed them. The whole nation as such was outlawed, and, unless it conformed to an alien creed, practically sentenced to death.

When we compare the two Inquisitions the one that operated in Spain and the other that operated for over two centuries in Ireland—and when, moreover, we weigh impartially the circumstances in which each arose and carried on its work, the Spanish, in the comparison, comes out with clean hands.

### **A FEW FIGURES.**

How many were sentenced to death in the Spanish Inquisition? Llorente, whose figures have been the most quoted, gives the total as 30,000 for a period of 300 years. No one nowadays accepts Llorente's figures; indeed, for reasons we cannot now discuss, he must be entirely set aside as a trustworthy historian. Mgr. Landrieux gives the latest German calculations as 10,000 for three centuries. Lower figures are quoted, but probably 10,000 is near the mark.

How many perished in the French Terror during a period of only three years? Vastly more than in all the Inquisitions during more than three centuries. M. Taine, a distinguished authority, gives the following figures in his "Revolution Francaise": Guillotined, 17,000; shot at Toulon, 2000; drowned at Mantes, men, women, and children, 4800. Then there were the murders by the mob—about 10,000 were killed without trial in the province of Anjou alone. "We may reasonably estimate," says Taine, "that the number of the dead of all ages and both sexes comes very nearly to half a million.

"Figures such as these, as well as Lecky's account of the Penal Laws of Ireland, which we have already considered, and other instances that might be given of the persecution of Catholics, justify the challenge of Balmez already referred to; while, coming to our own day, the "War on the Anti-God Front," in progress at the present moment in Russia, seems to eclipse in its devastating comprehensiveness all the persecutions of the past.

The following passage from "My Magazine," edited by Arthur Mee, who is also the editor of the well-known "Children's Encyclopedia," is not without interest as throwing light on the past. It occurs in an article on Bunyan, author of the "Pilgrim's Progress," and represents a state of affairs which, if substantially true, causes the Spanish Inquisition to pale into comparative insignificance. "The England of Bunyan (says the article in question) was devil-ridden and witch-possessed. Prince and peasant believed it; Bunyan and Shakespeare and William Harvey believed it. The king on his throne, the judge on the bench, Cromwell at the head of his army and in the secrecy of his chamber, all believed that Satan stalked the land with agents in every town and, hamlet, sworn to do his will. Any woman upon whom age had laid a heavy hand, any woman with a curious oddity of any sort, was in danger of being burned, hanged, or drowned as a witch. Elizabeth set up a gibbet at Windsor for the execution of anyone who dared to venture there from plague stricken London; James the First had a gibbet, a fire, or a pond ready everywhere for the agents of Satan and workers of mischief.

"When a storm at sea disturbed his royal digestion, James knew that old John Fian had been at work, a malignant

Prospero, who, for raising the storm, had his nails torn from their fingers and his limbs crushed to fragments in the presence of the king.

"James was most thorough in his ferocious folly, and caused an Act to be passed, extending over the whole lifetime of Bunyan, which made it an offence punishable with death to remove or conjure up an evil spirit; to consult, covenant with, or feed one; to take up a dead body for use in magic, to seek for treasure or lost or stolen goods, or to injure cattle by means of charms. Before Bunyan died, 70,000 people had been martyred under this Act. Cromwell's hosts were not more free from this obsession than James and his creatures. Three thousand witches were put to death by Cromwell's Ironsides, one of them in the still watches of the night before the battle of Naseby."

### **CONCLUSION.**

In these notes on the Inquisition I have endeavoured to throw light on what is really a perplexing problem to modern minds, by referring the earlier and later institutions to the historical contexts which enable us to understand them. The later Inquisition was far more severe than the earlier, and accounted for a greater number of capital sentences. But the Spanish Inquisition is by no means an isolated phenomenon of repression. Moreover, it was connected with special and acute problems, weighted with the memories of 800 years of awful subjection to alien enemies, and the ever-present obsession of a possible recurrence of national disaster. The urgent call for self-preservation may be said, without exaggeration, to have forced the Spanish nation into repressive measures against the Jews and Moors, and later against the advancing peril of the Reformation. This, I think, has been made clear.

But when all is said and done, when we look back to those by-gone days, certain names stand out in golden characters in our recollection of our ancestors of our Faith: Dominic and the other Dominican saints, Francis of Assisi, and the other saintly Franciscans, St. Clare, St. Thomas Aquinas, St. Bonaventure—all of the century in which the first Inquisition was established—and with these we must associate the mighty Dante; and, coming to the period of the later Inquisition, we have the glorious names of St. Ignatius of Loyola, St. Francis Xavier, St. Teresa, St. John of the Cross—all Spaniards—and numerous other men and women of the highest and holiest ideals. These we commemorate; of these we have the happiest recollection; on these we willingly linger; while we only disinter from the past the records of the Inquisitors to examine them as part of a complicated, and, happily, transitional problem of a day that is done. And this is as it ought to be. Because, though the Inquisitors were men engaged in using the stern machinery of the criminal codes of that distant day for what they sincerely regarded as the defence of religion and civil society against the deadly enemies of God and man, still it is in the lives and ideals of those saints who were the contemporaries of the Inquisitors that we find the quintessence of the Catholic spirit by which Catholics strive to square their lives.

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