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The Horrors of the Inquisition

Joseph McCabe

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THE HORRORS OF THE INQUISITION

CHAPTER I

THE MASSACRE OF THE ALBIGENSES

By modern history we mean a record of past events which is based upon a larger knowledge than the world ever had before and, above all, a critical use of the original documents. It is a science, and it is just as drastically opposed to religion as is the science of evolution. It entirely eliminates the supernatural from the chronicle of man's development; it shows that in the events in which we should most confidently expect the intervention of God, if there were a God—the human events—there is not the faintest trace of anything but man's own virtues and frailties: and it completely shatters the version of the human epic which Christianity had imposed upon the world.

But modern history has not excited the rancor and hostility of theologians in the same way as modern science. The reason is simple, and it is is not wholly creditable to historians. Those human events which the historian studies are in very large part religious. The scientist may ignore theology when he describes his nebulae or his dinosaurs, his orchids or his diatoms. But religions and churches and all the phenomena of their life for five or six thousand years are a part, and a very important part, of the material of history. And a deadly conflict has been avoided only by the stratagem

of distinguishing between sacred and profane history.

Historians do not now, of course, observe this distinction as rigorously as they were compelled to do in the days of Bossuet. Voltaire and Gibbon have not lived in vain. We have, in fact, a special branch of science and history combined—hierology, or the science of comparative religions—which seems to ignore the distinction; and the masters of *ancient* history talk to us about the religions of the Egyptians and Babylonians as freely as they discuss the costumes or customs of the old civilizations.

But observe how cautious, how diplomatic, they become the moment they must state something which contradicts the Old Testament or the current Christian version of history! As to Christ and the cardinal events of European history which depend vitally upon religion, how many historians dare even touch them? They are "sacred history." At the most there is a formal recognition of the convention that Christ was "the most sublime moralist" that ever appeared; that the stream of history somehow changed its color after the "acceptance" (you never read of the cumpulsory enforcement) of Christianity; and that everything sinister in the ages of faith must be generously interpreted as the very natural conduct of a people quite different from ourselves.

Against these timid conventions of history, wherever religion is concerned, these Little Blue Books are protesting. They tell the truth. They show that the common belief that civilizations were vicious and stupid and brutal before Christ is founded upon a lie. They prove

that the enforcement of Christianity was followed by such a clotted and sordid mass of coarseness and brutality as had never been known before in civilized history. And this book shows that it is no less mythical to suppose that Europe clung to Christianity until modern times; they prove that even these brutalized ancestors of ours, the moment they settled in more or less orderly civilizations, rebelled against the doctrines of the Church and the usurped authority of its corrupt clergy and had to be bludgeoned into submission.

I devote a special Little Blue Book to witchcraft (No. 1132), though it is only a small part of this revolt, because our discovery of its real nature has a singular interest. In order, however, to show its position in history, I must give a slight sketch of that evolution of heresy in Europe which culminated in the bloody horrors of the Inquisition, the secret organization of witchcraft, the humanist culture of the Renaissance, and the large open revolt of the Reformation.

The year 1000, was a very real turning point in the history of Europe. My friend, Professor Robinson, the very able historian of Columbia University, does not agree with me that there was a widespread expectation of the end of the world in the year 1000, but I once made some research in the chronicles of the time and I found much evidence of that expectation. At all events, the Iron Age, the tenth century, the low-water of civilization was ending. Rome and the Papacy, it is true, continued in their squalid degradation for another fifty years,

but no one who knows history regards Rome as the center of light in Europe at any time after it ceased to be pagan. I do not forget its artistic distinction during the Renaissance because, as we shall see, it was then pagan once more for a season.

Enlightenment came into Europe along two paths which were very far away from Rome. One was the road leading from the east along the valley of the Danube. The other was a strangely circuitous route, starting in the east, crossing the whole of north Africa and the Straits of Gibraltar, entering Christian Europe by the Pyrenees and the south of France.

This second and most important culture-bearing stream I fully describe in another book, *Moorish Civilization in Spain* (Little Blue Book No. 1137). It must suffice here to say that during the darkest age of Christendom, the tenth century, there was a brilliant and tolerant Mohammedan civilization in Spain, and that rays of its wonderful culture were passing the Pyrenees to enlighten the barbarians of Europe. The one scholar of the tenth century, Pope Silvester II (Gerbert), belonged to the south of France and learned his science in Spain; and he lasted four years as Pope and died in an odor of sulphur. It was, naturally, in the south of France that the Moors had most influence. They even occupied it for a time.

Meantime the second stream was crossing Europe and reaching the south of France and the north of Italy. Heresy—revolt against the Christian religion—had taken deep and strong root in the Armenian district of the

Greek Empire while the Latin world was too utterly brutalized to think at all. This heresy was Paulicianism, a mixture of Gnostic and Manichaean and primitive Christian ideas. Although one priest-ridden empress of the ninth century had, as all historians admit, slaughtered no less than 100,000 of these rebels, an emperor of the tenth century found it necessary to transplant 200,000 of them to the desolate frontier of his empire, next to Bulgaria.

The heresy soon reappeared in Bulgaria in the sect of the Bogomil's ("Friends of God"), who would have won the entire nation and spread over Europe if the Church had not used its customary spiritual weapon: bloody persecution. As it was, the Bogomils, a most earnest and ascetic sect, sent missionaries over Europe, and from the beginning of the eleventh century onward we find various shades of this semi-Manichaean religion (the true basis of witchcraft) appearing—on the scaffold, of course—in various parts of Europe.

It may be useful to point out the fascination of the Manichaean ideas which reappear in most of the European heresies. The fundamental idea was, as I said, that there were two great creative powers: one who created all that is good and one who was responsible for evil. It is usually said that the Persians believed in "two supreme principles," but the evil principle (the creator of matter, darkness, the flesh, sin, etc.) was not actually equal to, though at present in deadly conflict with, Ahura Mazda, the real God; because in the end Ahura Mazda would destroy the material world

and judge all men. But it was an enticing explanation of the origin and power of evil, and it removed from God, the pure spirit, the responsibility for matter and flesh. It was more reasonable than Christianity. It rejected the Old Testament and all its moral crudity, regarded Christ as a wonderful spirit (but not God), scorned the priest-created scheme of sacraments and the whole hierarchy, and loathed the consecrated immorality of most of the priests, monks, and nuns of Christendom.

It was, in all its shades, a rival religion to Christianity, and I say confidently that it would in some form have ousted Christianity if it had not been brutally and savagely murdered. You never even heard of it? Well, that gives you the value of the history of these things as it is usually written. The facts I give in this book will enable you to form your own opinion. A few of the new writers will talk to you very learnedly about the Priscillian heresy (also semi-Manichaean) in Spain, and the Arian (or Unitarian) heresy which was widely adopted by the barbarians. But the Priscillianists had vanished—murdered, of course—by the seventh century, and a little astute political bargaining had induced the Teutonic princes to adopt the Trinity (and large slices of Europe with it) and compel their people to do the same.

The story begins in the eleventh century. Christendom at large, or its Popes and bishops, were still, as a rule, too much interested in wine and women to bother about formulae, and too ignorant to understand them. But we pick

significant bits out of the chronicles. In 1012 several "Manichaeans" are prosecuted in Germany. In 1017 thirteen *canons and priests* of the diocese of Orleans are convicted of Manicheeism and burned alive. In 1022 there are cases at Liège. In 1030 they bob up (and down) in Italy and Germany; in 1043 near Chalons in France; in 1052 again in Germany. In the early part of the twelfth century some "Poor Men of Christ" are burned in Germany.

In short, by the middle of the twelfth century Europe was seething and bubbling with heresy. The general name for the more important heretical sects, the Cathari, is the Greek word for "the Pure"; and it indicates the practical features in which all agreed. They regarded the Church as a corrupt human institution, generally scorned its sacraments, ritual, and hierarchy, despised its dissolute monks and nuns, and tried to get back to the pure teaching of Christ: voluntary poverty, strict chastity, brotherly love, and ascetic life.

Such were the Beguines and Beghards who, founded by a Belgian priest in the thirteenth century, spread a net work of ascetic communities, more like the ancient Essenes and Therapeuts than the Christian monks all over Europe. They were severely persecuted, though their only heresy was that they did as Christ bade men do. Substantially the same were the Fourteenth centuries. They called themselves the "Poor in Spirit," and literally obeyed every word of Christ; and so they were branded as heretics and burned in batches, sixty at one time being committed to the

flames in Germany in 1211, and some being burned in Spain even earlier. The famous Flagellants of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries fairly come under the same general heading. The modern psychologist wastes his ingenuity upon them. The world and Church were so corrupt that they expected a speedy end of the world and they did penance for their sins and those of others. The Fratricelli, a detachment from the Franciscan Order whom the clerical corruption drove into heresy, belong to the same period, and were fiercely persecuted.

More important were the Lollards, the followers of J. Wyclif in England, and the Hussites of Bohemia. Wyclif's heresy—he was at first supported by his university and the nobles—was really a return to primitive Christianity; and it took such root in England that in the middle of the fourteenth century one tenth of the nation, some historians estimate, were Lollards. It paid the usual penalty of being true to Christ.

Meantime, as the king of Bohemia married an English princess, the Lollard ideas passed to that country, then one of the most enlightened in Europe, and, by the preaching of John Hus, a very large part of the nation embraced and developed them. The Hussites scorned the corrupt priests, monks, and nuns, attacked clerical celibacy, confession, the eucharist, and the ritual—in short, they were the nearest to Christ of all I have so far mentioned, and therefore the most deadly heretics. It took two hundred years of war and savage persecution to suppress them. At one time most of the nobles of Bohemia were Hussites.

But the name of Cathari, or Puritans, was particularly applied to various sects which united a zeal for primitive Christian morals with a tincture of the Manichaean philosophy. They were known as Patarenes in Italy, as Publicans in France and Belgium, and by other names in other countries. Their numbers were prodigious in the century which is precisely chosen as "the great Catholic century," the thirteenth century. Dante himself tells us how prevalent heresy, even radical skepticism, was in Italy in his day. Europe was in a fair way to desert Roman Christianity, and would probably have done so long ago but for that ghastly weapon of defense now devised by the Church, the Inquisition.

We need merely to glance at the story of the Albigensians to realize this. Albi, from which they take their name, was an important town in one of those lovely southern provinces of France which were to the country what southern California and Florida are to the United States. In these southern provinces the brilliant example of the Spanish Moors was known best, and during the eleventh century the heresy of the Bogomils was imported into them by missionaries from Bulgaria or Bornia.

In the Albigeois district the great majority of the population went over to the new religion. St. Bernard of Clairvaux, the most famous preacher of the time, made a campaign there in 1147. He found the churches deserted and was unable to make any impression. The

heresy spread over France, Belgium, western Germany, Spain, and north Italy, and the Papacy was thoroughly alarmed. One has only to read the reports sent to Rome, as given in the *Annales* of Cardinal Baronius. But the sequel will show that these Cathari numbered at least hundreds of thousands in France alone.

Pope after Pope angrily urged the secular powers to persecute them. Alexander III, in the Lateran Council of 1179, urged the use of force against them. To princes he gave the right to imprison offenders and—a ghastly appeal to cupidity which Rome was now beginning to use—to confiscate their property. To all who would "take up arms," as he said, against them he promised two years' remission of penance and even greater privileges. But I will trace this development of the Church's attitude in the next chapter. Briefly, the Cathari were burned or imprisoned in many places, but in the south of France the princes and nobles favored them and were proud of their industry and integrity in a corrupt world. In 1167 the head of the Paulician sect (the mother of the Bogomil sect, which was the mother of the Albigensian sect) went to Albi, held a great synod, consecrated five new bishops, and gave the religion a splendid public triumph.

This was the situation when, in 1198, Innocent III, the greatest of the Popes, donned the tiara. Some of my friends gently chide me because I will not, as historians generally do, speak amiably at least of such profoundly religious Popes as Gregory I, Gregory VII, and Innocent III. In another book I explain why;

and the Catholic would do well to understand that, when non-Catholic historical writers have a complimentary word for such Popes, they strain the evidence in order to conciliate religious readers. For it is just these men who did European civilization, and therefore the American civilization which awaited its development, the most deadly injury.

For nine years Innocent had monk-preachers in the heretical provinces, urging the bishops and princes to persecute, but they were quite ineffective. His chief Legate, Pierre de Castelnau, received instructions in 1207 to arrange a warlike campaign of the princes, and most of the smaller nobles agreed. It is necessary for the reader to bear in mind that in the thirteenth century war meant *unlimited loot*, and the Albigensian towns were amongst the most prosperous in Europe. An acrid spirit was created, and the Legate was murdered. Angrily proclaiming that Raymond, Count of Toulouse, was responsible—Innocent in later life admitted there was no evidence, and it is in the highest degree improbable—the "great" Pope sent out a ringing call to arms, and heavily threatened Christian princes and knights who did not obey it.

There was no need of threats. Imagine President Coolidge informing the gunmen of Chicago—Christian knights in those days had no higher ethic—that he permitted them to invade and sack Los Angeles, Hollywood, and Pasadena, and you have something of a parallel. It is said by a contemporary poet that 20,000 knights and 200,000 foot converged upon

the Albigensians. They were led by the Abbot of Citeax—as bloody a priest as Torquemada—and a seedy English-French adventurer, Simon de Montfort, whose purse was empty. The King of France was not in it—at first—only because his terms to the Pope were exorbitant.

The magnitude of the "heresy" can be guessed when we learn that after two years of the most brutal carnage the Albigensians were still so strong that, when the Pope renewed the "crusade" in 1214, a fresh hundred thousand "pilgrims" had to be summoned. Innocent boasts that they took 500 towns and castles from the heretics, and they generally butchered every man, woman and child in a town when they took it. Noble ladies with their daughters were thrown down wells, and large stones flung upon them. Knights were hanged in batches of eighty. When, at the first large town, soldiers asked how they could distinguish between heretics and orthodox, the Cistercian abbot thundered: "Kill them all, God will know his own," and they put to the sword the 40,000 surviving men, women, and children. Modern Catholic writers merely quibble when they dispute these things. It is the Catholics of the time who tell us.

The Pope's behavior during these horrible years was revolting. I have fully described his twists and turns in my *Crises in the History of the Papacy* (based upon the Pope's own letters), and must here be brief. Raymond of Toulouse, to spare his people, submitted before the crusade began, although the Pope expressly told his legates (*Letters*, XI, 232) to "deceive him and pass to the extirpation of the other heretics." His brutal treatment of Raymond, without any trial, earned the censure even of the king of France. He stopped the crusade after two years of almost unparalleled butchery, then yielded to the fanaticism of the monks and the greed of the soldiers, and reopened it. He was plainly sickened by the slaughter and the vile passions of his instruments, but he made vast material profit for the Papacy out of the monumental crime, and he left the world, which he soon quitted, a gift as deadly and revolting as his massacre—the foundation-stone of the Inquisition.

CHAPTER II

THE ORIGIN OF THE INQUISITION

Before I trace the development of the specific tribunal which we call the Inquisition, it is well to give the reader a word of caution about the literature of these matters. No historian in the world, even Catholic, questions that the Pope summoned this "crusade" and nearly annihilated one of the finest bodies of men and women of the time. But. . . . Were there really 40,000 killed at Béziers, or was it only *ten* thousand men, women, and children (especially women and children) who had their throats cut when the fighting was over? And did not these Albigensians hold opinions which were socially very mischievous? And so on.

Anybody who would ask me to respect the Paulists and Jesuits who trim the edges of

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a great crime in this fashion, and throw dust in the eyes of their followers, asks in vain. But a more serious fact is that these Catholic writers are now worming their way into works to which the general public turns innocently for information, not propaganda (or lies.) Let me give two instances. The *New International Encyclopaedia* is the most accessible work of general reference in America, and is generally good. But the article on "The Inquisition" has quite obviously been written by a Roman Catholic, who gives neither his name nor his initials. It is unreliable from beginning to end, and is, in spite of its Jesuitical form, largely untruthful.

Oh, you say, people may be confined to that in Dayton, but I consult an authoritative work like the learned *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*. This is, in fact, one of the most scholarly of recent encyclopedias. But it has no article at all on witchcraft, and its article on the Inquisition is actually written by a well-known Roman Catholic apologist, Canon Vacandard! But he is quite a scholar, you may say. And I reply that there is not a wholly truthful Catholic scholar in the world, and that Vacandard's article is a disgrace to the Encyclopaedia. Let me quote a passage which will serve as text for this chapter. The canon begins by placidly announcing that the Spanish Inquisition is outside his scope; which is like writing *Hamlet* without the ghost, Hamlet, the King, and Ophelia. The Spanish horror is not treated elsewhere in the Encyclopaedia. Then he says:

> From the twelfth century onward the repression of heresy was the great business of Church *and State*. The distress caused, particularly in the north of Italy and the south of France, by the Cathari or Manichaeans, whose doctrine wrought *destruction to society* as well as to faith, appalled the leaders of Christianity. On several occasions, in various places, *people and rulers* at first sought justice in summary conviction and execution; culprits were either outlawed or put to death. The Church for a long time *opposed* these rigorous measures. . . . The death-penalty was *never* included in any system of repressions.

That passage, occurring in one of the most scholarly encyclopedias of recent times, is one of the basest and meanest that ever came from the pen of an apologist. The death-penalty never included! Why it was, at the dictation of Christian bishops, made a part of European law by the Christian emperors of the fourth and fifth centuries, and for many it remained the law. I have just given hundreds of instances in the twelfth century.

Then we are asked to believe that "the people and rulers" did these horrible things, while the gentle Church tried to restrain them. That is an insult to our intelligence. No ruler or people ever moved against heretics without the impulsion of the Church, and at the period we are discussing the Papacy complained every decade that it could not get rulers to apply its own "rigorous measures": exile, infamy, confiscation, and destruction of the heretic's home. Innocent III, who, as we shall see in a moment, demanded the death-sentence, launched his ghastly crusade of murder and theft precisely *because* he could not get "people and rulers" to proceed otherwise.

And the meanest thing of all is that Canon Vacandard, and most of your modern Catholic apologists, raise over the bones of those hundreds of thousands of murdered men, women, and children the smug and lying inscription that they were "dangerous to society." How? You will smile when you hear: like Christ, they advocated voluntary poverty and virginity! We know their ideas only from bitter enemies, and this seems to be the rock of offense.

Yes, but how *could* society persist if there were no private property, no soldiers (they opposed war), no procreation of children. And the answer again is simple: these counsels of Christ were (exactly as the modern Catholic theologian says) for the elect few, the "perfect," as the Albigensians called them, and the great body of the "believers" could own what property they liked, marry when they liked, and bear arms when necessary. They were, as Professor Bass Mullinger says in an article in the same Encyclopaedia, men of "simple blameless life," and were not responsible for the brawls about the churches. Rome murdered a few hundred thousand real followers of Christ because they were not Christians.

In the *Catholic Encyclopaedia* we expect anything, and I will notice only one remark of Professor Weber, who writes on the Albigensians. They were, he says, "offended by the excessive outward splendor of Catholic preachers." That is really rich. Let Professor Weber look up the letter (Migne edition, VII, 75) which Pope Innocent wrote in 1204 to his

Legate. It is a scorching exposure of the general clerical immorality which Professor Weber regards, apparently, as "outward splendor." Innocent talks of the concubines (he uses a word which the modern police would not let me translate literally) of the priests and the monks everywhere, and says that their bishops can hunt and gamble, but are "dumb dogs that cannot even bark."

Let us return to the facts; though I trust the reader perceives the importance of noting here and there the trickery by which apologists divert the minds of the faithful from the facts.

I have given the early stages of the evolution of the Inquisition. Heresy was a crime in European law. Exactly, say some of the apologists; it was in those days thought to be a crime against the State and was punished accordingly. What miserable juggling with words! The Church *made* rulers and peoples regard it as a crime; and what was happening in the thirteenth century, the great age of heresy before the Reformation, shows this very clearly.

The Lateran Council of 1139 violently urged the secular powers to proceed against heresy; and they would not, to any extent. The Lateran Council of 1179 repeated the cry, pleading for the use of force and holding out tempting baits to those who murdered heretics. Pope Lucius II in 1184 made a new departure. He laid down the penalties as exile, confiscation, and infamy (loss of civil rights): threatened unwilling secular rulers with excommunication

and interdict; and enacted that, whereas under current law a bishop was to try a heretic in open court when a man was charged, the bishop must now *seek out* heretics. In Latin the search for a thing is an *inquisitio*. Still very few secular rulers did more than shrug their shoulders. Heresy did not concern them.

Then came Innocent III, who had a perfect arsenal of anathemas, and who, when a prince ducked with a grin at the hurled anathema, set armies in motion and drenched the man's kingdom with blood (as Gregory VII had done). Innocent formulated the new principle of "persuasion" of heretics. There was a papal seat at Viterbo, and the Pope was horrified to learn that not only the consuls (magistrates) of the town, but the chamberlain of his own were Cathari! He soon altered that, and he laid down this grim principle:

> According to civil law criminals convicted of treason are punished with death and their goods are confiscated. With how much more reason then should they who offend Jesus, Son of the Lord God, by deserting their faith, be cut off from the Christian communion and stripped of their goods.

It is Canon Vacandard who gives us that quotation: a perfectly clear demand that heretics shall be put to death! It was, therefore, not "people and rulers," but the great Pope, who, when there seemed to be some doubt amongst the jurists how far the old law against heresy was still in force, demanded death. St. Bloody would not be a bad title for Innocent III, "the greatest of the Popes."

Moreover Innocent—what an ironic name!—

completed the foundations of the Inquisition by reaffirming, with heavier emphasis, that the bishops were not to wait for charges of heresy, but were to seek out heresy, or make an *inquisitio*. They were to have special officials, or "inquisitors," for this purpose. Innocent drew up explicit instructions for the procedure, and between 1204 and 1213 he issued four decretals ordering such searches in various places.

In 1224 the Constitution of Lombardy, to which I return presently, formally enacted sentence of death for heresy, and the next Pope, Gregory IX, endorsed this penalty and founded what is commonly called the Inquisition. Heretics were to be handed over to the secular arm for "adequate punishment"—of which we find the definition in the words I quoted from Innocent III—and, as bishops had shown themselves very remiss in the nasty work of seeking out heretics, the Pope took the job from them and entrusted it to the tender mercies of the newly founded Dominican and Franciscan friars, who took to it like blood-hounds to a scent. Among the wits of the time the Dominicani were known as the *Domini canes*, "the hounds of the Lord," a very neat Latin pun on their name.

Thus the Inquisitio, which meant originally a search for heretics conducted by the bishops, became a separate institution under the direct control of the Papacy. This was not done at one stroke. Its birth is variously put by historians in 1229, 1231, and 1232. By the latter year, at all events, the Inquisition was estab-

lished, and the hounds of the Lord felt the bloody rag at their nostrils.

Rome had discovered the solution of its dilemma. It did not want to stain its own fair robes with bloodshed, but it certainly did not want to leave the detection of heretics to secular powers, or few would be detected. Moreover, if heretics were tried by civil law, the law would not move until a charge was laid before it, and there would be a comparatively fair trial, the accuser facing the accused in open court; and again few would be condemned. In fine, these "confiscations" which Innocent III had recommended were becoming a very profitable source of revenue, and the Papacy wanted its share. The sordid scramble for gold amongst the bones of the dead had already begun.

Hence the Inquisition. These monastic agents of the Pope were to have independent courts, of the most monstrous description, and to ensure the condemnation of secret heretics; and they were then to hand them over to the secular arm and keep a sharp eye on any secular prince or official who failed to do his bloody work.

All this modern talk about heresy as "a crime against the State" is loathsome. There were in the thirteenth century few countries in Europe which the Popes did not claim to be fiefs of the Papacy, and few princes who were not held to be, in the literal political sense, vassals of the Pope. Gregory VII and Innocent III and their successors asserted that they were actually the feudal sovereigns of England,

France, Spain, and other countries. A crime against the State was what they chose to *call* a crime against the State. We shall, in fact, see that the great majority of the secular rulers hated and thwarted the Inquisition—it was never admitted to England—and it was only priest-ridden rulers like Ferdinand and Isabella of Spain or those whose greed was interested, who would carry out the Pope's orders. Christianity was forcibly thrust upon Europe for the second time, as it had been in the fourth century.

The one material exception is the enactment of the death-penalty in the secular Constitution of Lombardy in 1222 and 1224. Here, at first sight, is an historical fact of great value to the apologist: while Canon Law did not clearly prescribe the death-sentence, an Emperor, Frederick II, introduced it. But the joy of the apologist will be brief if he looks up the record of Frederick II. He was sarcely even a Christian. Instead of heresy deeply offending him he hardly concealed the fact that he thought the Mohammedan religion superior to the Christian. What political motive he had for obliging the Pope—it is admitted that clerics induced him to do it—by thus enacting a law which the Papacy had then merely to adopt cannot be studied here. Canon Vacandard observes that Frederick merely copied the common German law in his new constitution. Professor Turberville is frankly puzzled. But it is admitted that the law, savage as it was in form—the heretic was to be put to death or else have his tongue cut out—was not applied

before the Pope adopted it; and that, as Canon Vacandard reminds us, in his first declaration on the subject in the year 1220, Frederick expressly based his law upon the words of Innocent III which I have previously quoted. A skeptical monarch borrowing, for political reasons, the words of one blood-thirsty Pope to oblige another blood-thirsty Pope is not a very good basis for the claim that heresy was regarded as a crime against the state.

Pope Gregory IX had this law inscribed in the papal registry, compelled the secular authorities at Rome and in most of the Italian cities to enforce it, and, as Vacandard assures us, "did his utmost to enforce everywhere the death-penalty for heresy" (*The Inquisition*, p. 132). In other words, as soon as there was a secular law prescribing the death-penalty, the Popes, with great delicacy, handed over heretics to the "secular arm" and tried to get the law adopted everywhere. It was made an imperial law by Frederick in 1237.

Venice almost alone in Italy defied the Papacy. Heretics were burned at Rome and at Milan, and the most fanatical monks were sent by Gregory as Inquisitors to other countries. Conrad of Marburg was sent to Germany, where he burned whole batches of heretics. The king of Aragon, and later the king of Castile, were induced to ask the Pope for Inquisitors. Four Inquisitors were appointed by Gregory to various parts of Italy; and others were sent to Bohemia. As to France, even the sordid and comprehensive massacre had not crushed the spirit of the rebels and

the Dominican monk "Robert le Bougre" (I may not translate the name, but you need know little French to understand that), as he was commonly called, was sent with ghastly powers. In 1239 he burned a hundred and twenty-three "Bulgars" in one town. Mr. C. H. Hoskins has published in America a short account of *Robert le Bougre and the Beginnings of the Inquisition in France.* But you may read all these and further details in the history of the Inquisition by Canon Vacandard: the same gentleman who assures us in the *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics* that "the death-penalty was never included in any system of repression!" It had been included for more than 800 years, and it was merely disputed by canon lawyers how far the old law applied in the Middle Ages.

But let me complete the account of the establishment of the Inquisition, and we will later consider it in action. In every history you will read that the secular rulers of the thirteenth century were, unless they had a sordid eye on "confiscations" or had some political reason to oblige the Papacy, reluctant to carry out the ghastly and, as we shall see, most mischievous law.

H. C. Lea's monumental works (*A History of the Inquisition of the Middle Ages*, 1887, and *A History of the Inquisition of Spain*, 1906) are still the standard authority. Professor A. S. Turberville (*Medieval Heresy and the Inquisition*, 1920, the best small history, though it has only about a hundred pages on the Inquisi-

tion) rightly says of Lea's books: "While in detail he may be open to criticism and his attitude is quite clearly Protestant, the great bulk of his work remains unshaken" (p. 248). The Catholic criticisms of it are ludicrous. The critics merely crow over such incidental errors of detail as will be found in any man who writes a seven-volume history, and there are few of those in Lea.

Lea, Turberville, and Vacandard—to speak only of works available in English—make it clear that there was a stubborn reluctance of "princes and peoples" to persecute. Innocent IV—a new "innocent"—therefore set out to complete the sanguinary machinery and compel secular authorities to use it. In 1245 he commanded them to do so, but this bull seems to have had little effect. In 1252 he issued one of those monstrous bulls (*Ad extirpanda*) which cause the apologists for the Popes to rival Hindu metaphysicians in their verbal gymnastics.

Secular rulers were to take an oath to enforce the law, and any who refused were to have their realms illumined by the spiritual lightning of interdicts and excommunications, and personally to pay heavy fines. Civil magistrates were, within three days of their appointment, to form a committee of twelve men, four of whom must be friars, to search for heretics. The secular authority—this was the most sordid and stupid innovation—was to use torture to make heretics confess or accuse others. Let Canon Vacandard translate this

for us: "The podesta or ruler is hereby ordered to force all captured heretics to confess and accuse their accomplices by torture which will not imperil life or injure limb." There is only one touch of Vacandardism in this: the restrictive phrase is not "injure limb," but "cut off a limb" (*diminutio membri*), and, as we shall see, it allowed and enjoined the most brutal torture. Finally, the condemned heretic was to be "dealt with" (invariably executed) by the secular authorities within five days. It seems that still secular rulers and officials shrank from the sordid task, and Pope Alexander IV repeated the bull in 1259 and Pope Clement V in 1265.

So the Inquisition was founded in all its ghastly features by the Popes. Innocent III (its virtual parent), Gregory IX, Innocent IV, Alexander IV, and Clement V—all within about half a century—created it, and used every weapon and implement at their disposal to compel a generally reluctant world to adopt it. Crime against the State! Peoples and rulers dragging the gentle Papacy into heretic-hunts! There seems to be no limit to the audacity and unveracity of men who defend religion; which is, of course, the sole fount of truth and truthfulness. But let us see a little more closely what the machinery of this Inquisition was before we consider its appalling activity. It was precisely the features given to it by the Popes that made it the most sordid travesty of a tribunal that has ever existed outside savagery.

CHAPTER III

THE INFAMY OF ITS PROCEDURE

Late last night I concluded the preceding chapter with a very florid description of the Inquisition. The sun went down upon my wrath. The gentle hand of sleep soothed the throbbing nerves, and I return to the task in all the serenity and freshness of morning.

Shall I erase the strong language of last night? No, deliberately I expand it, and say that the Inquisition is an indelible disgrace to the religion which created it; that the horrors of the Roman amphitheater were in comparison only a misguided exhibition of manliness; that the amorous license of Paphas or of Corinth was, contrasted with it, an amiable and innocent indulgence of human nature; that in its procedure this holy court, presided over by the holiest of men, under the direct control of their holinesses the Popes, was the most infamous instrument of injustice and the worst fomenter of murderous cupidity that the world has ever seen. And I will prove this from the two chief living Roman Catholic authorities on the subject.

These little books cannot, particularly in this historical section of my program, give more than a few of the details. Those details will not be selected in the sense that the virtues of Christendom will be ignored and its vices exhaustively described. I write for people who

are not forbidden, as Roman Catholics are, to read both sides. But I am mainly concerned with principles, with correct general statements, with new discoveries, with the exposure of apologetic lies. I give in each case the authorities in which the reader will find all the details.

In this case of the Inquisition it is particularly necessary to keep a sense of principle and proportion. From the educative and positive point of view of this series of books the real interest of the Inquisition is, as I said, that it shows us Europe rebelling against the Christian creed and hierarchy as soon as it returns to a moderate level of civilization and, as in the fourth century, being compelled by brutal force to accept that creed and hierarchy. That is a most important historical truth which you will in vain seek in most histories. Except in the brutalized early Middle Ages the world never did hold to "the treasure of faith."

Any reader who will reflect carefully on what I have told him—from ordinary history—about the growth of the Paulicians (of whom 200,000 are transported hundreds of miles, after two hundred years of such persecution that one woman slew 100,000), the Bogomils (almost equally numerous), the Italian Cathari, the Albigensians (from whom "500 towns and castles" are taken, the Pope says), the Lollards (estimated at one time to number 500,000), and the Hussites (just as, or more, numerous in Bohemia and Moravia), will realize this. Suppose those "sects" had been allowed a free growth during the twelfth, thirteenth, four-

teenth, and fifteenth centuries. . . . Half of Europe would have deserted the Christian creed, and the Renaissance and Reformation would have assumed different forms and would have completed the work.

The Papacy knew this. Its doctrine was so utterly unchristian, its ethic so derided by its own officials, its hierarchy so gross a usurpation of authority, its clergy and monks and nuns so comically corrupt, that argument with heretics was as effective as the tap of a child's toy hammer on a granite wall. From the first it used brute force. It killed its rivals in the fourth and fifth centuries; it stifled in succession the Pelagians, Priscillianists, Paulicians, and all the other rebels I have mentioned. That "the blood of martyrs is the seed of Chrisitans" is one of the hollow phrases inspired by the totally false view of the early history of the Church. When a hundred men are threatened with death for a religion, one dies and ninety-nine quit it. That had been Christian experience. Yet the Christian creed was so repugnant to Europe that the revolt grew to formidable proportions. The massacre of the Albigensians, the Inquisition, and the wholesale murder of witches are three ways of measuring that revolt.

And, lest any be tempted to think, as the simple-minded believer thinks, that, after all, these repressions merely removed, let us say, a million rebels, and thus proved the remaining fifty million Europeans to be orthodox and docile Christians, we must study the procedure of the Inquisition more closely. Its methods

were so barbarous and stupid from the juridical point of view that we really cannot say how many of its "heretics" were real rebels. We shall see that in one respect the situation was simple: if you were denounced for heresy to the Inquisitors, the best thing you could do was to go at once and declare yourself a heretic and abjure your supposed heresy. Denial meant, whatever your views really were, horrible torture and, if you still honestly denied the charge, certain death. We must make allowance for this. It is, in fact, part of the indictment of the Inquisition that it must have fined, imprisoned, tortured, and even slain a large number of Christians.

However, even allowing for this, the figures are significant. The modern apologists for the Inquisition, who ask us to smile and rub our hands and acquit the Church because they discover (they say) that the men and women murdered numbered only 50,000 instead of 300,000, take the line of proving that the Inquisitors generally tried immensely more prisoners than they executed. Vacandard points out how the famous Inquisitor Bernard Gui had 930 cases in one district between 1308 and 1325, and he handed over only 42 to the secular arm. At Paniers five out of forty-two accused were put to death. And so on. What this really means is that nine-tenths or nineteen-twentieths of the men and women charged with heresy confessed that they were heretics and abjured the heresy. In other words, there were at least ten times as many heretics as those executed; the Inquisition was a monument of intimidation to

put an end to the growth of rebellion against Rome.

Its procedure will make this clear, and the account I give of it in this chapter is based entirely upon Canon Vacandard's book *The Inquisition* (1908) and the article on the Inquisition by the Jesuit Father Blotzer in the *Catholic Encyclopaedia*. The Jesuit, of course, Jesuitizes here and there, but fortunately the Canon, unconsciously, gives away his colleague. It will be seen that, in spite of all the Catholic reviling of Lea's historical works, these writers have to agree with him in every word in this most important section. In fact, Vacandard bases his own work largely upon Lea's most careful research, and Blotzer generally follows Vacandard.

When the friar-inquisitors arrived at a town, they convened a solemn meeting of bishop, clergy, and people and announced that secret heretics were to be reported to them. There would be a "time of grace," usually a month, and heretics who voluntarily came forward, and confessed and abjured, during that period received only the lighter penances: prayers, fasts, pilgrimages, fines, etc. Meantime the Inquisitors, who were to "act with the bishop" (though he had no power), had to choose an advisory council of "good and experienced men"—twenty to fifty in number—and come to a decision only in conjunction with these.

A most beneficent provision, says the Jesuit! Actually the beginning of the jury-system in Europe, says the Canon! But who were these men, and what did they do? They were, as a rule, mostly priests and monks, with a few very orthodox laymen. In a few places quite a number of local pious lawyers—the decree stipulated that they must be "zealous for the faith" —were found amongst the "good men." They considered the names of the accusers, says the Jesuit; and, being local men, they might thus detect enmity or cupidity.

But Vacandard gives the show away. He quotes two of the leading Inquisitors telling us that it is the common practice to conceal the names of the accusers even from these men, and that they usually saw only a summary of the evidence carefully prepared for them. "Very few of them," the writers of the time say, "ever knew the name of the accused or the accuser, or saw all the evidence." An abstract case and selected evidence are laid before them. "They did not," says Vacandard, honestly, "have data enough to decide a concrete case." In point of fact, they did not decide it. They gave their opinion, and the Inquisitors decided. And when the Jesuit and the Canon assure us that the Inquisitors usually adopted their opinion, unless it was too severe (!), their only authority is another modern apologist.

The "jury" never hampered the Inquisitors. They took up their quarters, generally in a Dominican monastery, and received secret denunciations. At an early date it was decided by the Popes that two accusers sufficed. These are generally called "witnesses," but that is a parody of a judicial term. They were secret

accusers, and, not only were they never confronted with the accused, but their names were concealed. "Boniface VIII," says the Jesuit, "set aside this usage . . . and commanded that at all trials, even inquisitorial, the witnesses must be named to the accused." That statement of the *Catholic Encyclopaedia* is a lie. Vacandard gives the words of Boniface, and I will translate them: "*Where there is no such danger*, the names of accusers and witnesses must be published, as is done in other trials." What danger? There is the rub. The Inquisitors pretended that there was always danger of revenge, and Boniface's words would not affect their procedure in the least.

The accused are notified, and the terror begins; it has begun, in fact, the day the terrible monks have marched with their golden cross into the town. The Inquisitors had three ways of influencing the accused before it came to torture. The fear of death was the first. Do not imagine a man going to face a trial as he does today. *If he was denounced, he was guilty.* Impossible, you say; no Catholic writer, at least, would admit that. But it is a truism. Listen to the Canon: "If two witnesses, considered of good repute by the Inquisitors, agreed in accusing the prisoner his fate was at once sealed; whether he confessed or not, he was at once declared a heretic" (p. 128). Trial by the Inquisition did not mean an examination to find out if a man was a heretic. If two secret witnesses said that he was, he was; and all the "third degree" and torture were merely to make him confess that he was

and abjure his heresy. Bernard Shaw's theatrical representation of a trial is quite absurd.

If this certain knowledge that he would die a horrible death unless he came and abjured his (perhaps imaginary) heresy did not move a denounced man, he was confined to his house and harried and weakened in various ways. If this was not enough, two visitors were sent to put him through what is now known as "the third degree." If he still denied that he was a heretic, he received the grim summons to the Inquisition.

It was no use asking who accused him. Gregory IX, Innocent IV, and Alexander IV forbade the Inquisitors to tell the names; and the declaration of Boniface VIII did not alter matters. All that the man could do was to name any enemies he had in the town. By another refinement of clerical procedure, unknown in mere human law, slaves, women, children, and convicted criminals could lodge an accusation. Religion alone listened to such witnesses; but then religion is so very important, the apologists say. Moreover, it was no use the man protesting that he had attended mass regularly, and so on. Outward conformity did not count. He was denounced for *secret* heresy; he was guilty of it—all that he had to do was to abjure it.

He could not bring a lawyer. That good and great Pope, Innocent III, had in 1205 sternly forbidden lawyers to help heretics "in any way"; and any lawyer who ventured to do so would very soon be on trial. A saintly friar in France who defended a rich and pious pa-

tron of his order, whose goods the Inquisitors wanted (and got), ended in prison. Father Blotzer, it is true, tells us that the rule of excluding lawyers was soon relaxed, and "universal custom" allowed a legal adviser. And Vacandard, the real authority, explains that this is the opposite of the truth. Pope Innocent had referred to *confessed* heretics, and at first Inquisitors allowed lawyers to suspected or accused, but the law was soon taken to apply to all heretics.

A man could not bring witnesses: or they would be on the list of heretics the next day. On the other hand, witnesses could be put to the torture to give evidence against him. If one witness cared to say that his charge could be supported by so-and-so, the man was brought and tortured until he told the desired lie. In practice one witness would suffice; and in Spain, at least, he got his share of the spoils.

Unless, therefore, a man had in him the rare stuff of a real martyr, he meekly acknowledged that he was a heretic, and he abjured the heresy. He was then required to denounce others, or "name his accomplices." If he thus confessed his heresy and named a few others, he merely got a heavy penance: fast for years, a pilgrimage, build a church, pay a heavy fine, wear a hideous cross sewn on his clothes, etc. If he persisted in denying that he was a heretic, or refused to name others, he was taken into the next room.

The Inquisitors, with great humanity, always showed the man (or woman) the instruments of torture first. These were, as a rule,

a horrible scourge for flogging, a rack (for pulling out the limbs until the joints cracked), a *strappado*, and a brasier of burning coals to be applied to his bare feet. The *strappado* was a pleasant little arrangement by which a man was suspended by the wrists from the ceiling, and jerked downward whenever he refused to say that he was a heretic. As a further inducement heavy weights would be tied to his feet. Strong men died from it. The Spaniards had other choice tortures, but the curious in such matters may read them in Sabatini's *Torquemada and the Spanish Inquisition*. (See also Little Blue Book No. 824). "The Inquisition," says the *Catholic Encyclopaedia*, "marks a substantial advance in the contemporary administration of justice, and therefore in the general civilization of mankind." But we will come to that later.

I have told how torture was deliberately introduced into the procedure, at the request of the Inquisitors, by Pope Innocent IV. No one disputes that. "The Church is responsible for having introduced torture into the proceedings of the Inquisition," says Vacandard (p. 147). But, says the Jesuit, airily, "curiously enough, torture was not regarded as a mode of punishment, but purely as a means of eliciting the truth; and, of course, it was the naughty civil courts which gave the Pope the idea. What is "curious enough" is that these sleek Jesuits and Paulists of the twentieth century, demanding "liberty" in Protestant countries can write so callously and insincerely about the horrors perpetrated by their Church when it had the

power. "Torture is," says the Jesuit, "seldom mentioned in the records"; and he himself admits that, as it was done outside the court, one would not expect to find it in the records.

Torture was habitual and appalling. "On the whole," says this gentle Jesuit, "the Inquisition was humanely conducted"; and the Canon tells us that Savonarola (an orthodox and most pious Puritan) was tortured seven times, certain witches of Arras were tortured forty times, thirty-six Knights Templars—tough folk, one would imagine—died under torture at Paris and twenty-five at Sens, and so on. The rack, thumbscrews, strappado, and burning coals are certainly "humane" instruments.

But the Popes (who introduced torture) did their best to check the excessive zeal of Inquisitors, both apologists say. Clement V said that the accused must be tortured only once. Yes; and no Pope moved a finger when, all over Christendom, the Inquisitors found that, though torture could not be "repeated," it could be "continued," on the next day and as many days as they thought fit. Clement had spoken only of the accused. Then, said the Inquisitors, we are quite free to torture witnesses, to make them denounce people; and again not a single Pope rebuked or checked them. The Popes at first said that no cleric, being of a holy estate, must be present at the torture; and Alexander IV and Urban IV said that they *might* be present so that everywhere the Inquisitor bent over the writhing victim and shrieked his "Do you confess?" There was generally a political

reason when Popes restrained the local zeal of the Inquisition anywhere.

If the victim persisted in denying that he was a heretic, in spite of torture, he was handed over to the secular arm; that is to say, after Gregory IX had secured everywhere that the secular authorities adopted the death sentence for heresy. In face of the horrible death in front of them many now "confessed," and they were imprisoned for life. Imprisonment was quite a humane business on the whole, the Jesuit says. They often had good cheer, saw their friends, and so on. Yes—sometimes. There were two kinds of prisons, strict and less strict. Rich heretics generally got the latter, and money will buy comforts and privileges in most places. But it is disgusting even in their case to make light of their lot. Without trial, on the mere denunciation of two men who might be enemies or tortured witnesses or men bribed to bring about the confiscation of their property, they have, for a "heresy" which they have abjured, if it ever existed, lost all their property, seen wife and children reduced to beggary, and been imprisoned for life.

A word about this "confiscation." It is, Professor Alphandery rightly says, "of supreme importance for the economic history of the Inquisition"; and Vacandard admits that it was Lea who first brought out its importance. The goods of a fugitive or of a man imprisoned for life or condemned to death were confiscated. Moreover, the Inquisitors within ten years of the establishment of the Inquisition got from the Popes the right to impose fines, or to com-

mute the lighter sentences for money-payments. If you did not want to wear a yellow cross on your coat for life, to spend three years in jail, to live on bread and water for two years—pay up. Then there were the appeals to Rome against excessive sentences: that merciful safety valve against injustice of which the apologists make so much. It meant that you paid at Rome.

Is there even a Roman Catholic business man who does not now see the Inquisition in a new and ghastly light? It was a scramble for gold on a soil red with human blood. Who got the profit? We know quite well. First the secular authority; and that is, in the overwhelming majority of cases, the main reason why heresy was "a crime against the State." That is why the kings of France permitted tens of thousands of their subjects in the south to be imprisoned for life or burned, why Venice dealt with its own heretics, why the Popes (as we shall see) so readily denounced Inquisitors, like the Spanish, who were not under their own control. Secondly, the bishop and the Inquisitors got a share. Thirdly, the Papacy, which published no balance-sheet, got its share. Oh, everybody hated heresy in those pious days! Segni, a distinguished Catholic writer of the sixteenth century, said: "The Inquisition was invented to rob the rich of their possessions."

By a refinement of this "humane" procedure, which did so much for "the general civilization of mankind," the *Catholic Encyclopaedia* says—look it up, article "Inquisition," if you cannot believe me—even dead men could be accused

of heresy. Let two unknown witnesses say that a man, even forty years dead, had been a secret heretic, and his children or even grandchildren were ruined. For him there was no chance of "repentance." He was an unrepentant heretic. His bones were dug up, paraded through the street, and burned. His widow and children were robbed of every dollar. Vacandard tells us of one famous Inquisitor, Bernard Gui, who had 88 of these posthumous cases in 636! But, of course, they were on their guard against any mere feeling of greed. The Popes warned them. Inquisitors and secular rulers sternly resisted temptation. Yet Vacandard quotes the Inquisitor Eymeric bemoaning: "There are no more *rich* heretics, so that princes, not seeing much money in prospect, will not put themselves to any expense."

To finish with the prisons. The common sentence was "strict prison": solitary confinement, often in chains, on bread and water in the foulest dungeons conceivable. I have been in the medieval dungeons at Venice—into which those wicked Voltaireans of the French Revolution let a little daylight—and can imagine the horror of life imprisonment in them. We shall see that the king of France, who had no tenderness for heretics, forced the Pope to interfere with his Inquisitors in the south of France for the barbarity of their prisons. Hundreds died in them.

Finally, the unrepentant heretic—who might be a man who feared God too much to lie and say that he *was* a heretic—was handed over. "Gregory IX had no share, directly or in-

directly, in the death of condemned heretics," says the *Catholic Encyclopaedia.* The Catholic authorities in America had to go as far as Bavaria to find even a Jesuit who would write such things for them. The Church simply "withdrew its protection," and even recommended the heretic to mercy.

But Canon Vacandard has not had the immense advantage of a Jesuit education. I showed in the second chapter that he is no Modernist, no weakling. But he often tells the truth, and, although he is the highest Catholic authority on the Inquisition, he was not invited to write in the American *Catholic Encyclopaedia.* He reminds us that Pope Gregory IX got Frederic's death-sentence inscribed on the statute-books everywhere. He reminds us that Pope Innocent IV in 1252 (in the famous bull *Ad Extirpanda*) threatened all secular rulers with excommunication and interdict if they did not "enforce the laws against them" within five days of the handing over of heretics; and that in the same year, and in 1254, Innocent sent instructions to the Inquisitors that they should see that the law of Frederic II was adopted and carried out everywhere. He reminds us that Clement V and other Popes repeated all this, and he is forced to conclude (p. 147): "It is therefore proved beyond question that the Church, in the person of the Popes, used every means at her disposal, especially excommunication, to compel the State to enforce the infliction of the death-penalty."

The *auto da fe* ("act of faith") is not, as is commonly supposed, the burning of a heretic.

It is the name of the solemn ceremony which closed the work of the Inquisitors. On a Sunday morning they gathered the culprits, the clergy, and the people in some great church or public square, and read out the sentences. The unrepentant were then handed over to the secular authorities with a recommendation to mercy —and a stern assurance, from the Pope, that unless those men and women were burned at the stake within five days the magistrate or prince would be excommunicated and the city or kingdom laid under the appalling blight of an interdict. Then the Dominican or Franciscan agents of the Pope washed their hands, and these modern Catholic apologists ask us to observe how clean they were.

CHAPTER IV

THE ROMAN INQUISITION

It is almost superfluous to prolong this little study of the Inquisition. I have shown its generally overlooked importance as one of the measurements of the growth of the world-wide rebellion, even in the thirteenth century, against Christianity. I have shown that it was so gross, so immoral, so inhuman a weapon of self-defense in the hands of the Papacy that any talk about a divine guidance of that institution is simply humorous. I have shown its procedure in detail, and one hardly needs to glance at the historical facts to know how it worked. And I have shown this entirely from the Roman Catholic authorities on the subject. I have not

once quoted even Lea, who, if anything, is too moderate.

Yes, says the Catholic now, you got the truth from Catholic writers; so they tell the truth even about the Inquisition! They do not. I have *selected* the truth out of—at least in the case of the Jesuit—a tissue of untruths. Many of these unquestionable untruths I have given. Canon Vacandard exposes them for us. And if the sentences I further quoted from the *Catholic Encyclopaedia*—about the "humane" procedure of the Inquisition and the "substantial advance in the contemporary administration of justice"—are not lies, I must have forgotten some of the elements of my clerical education.

Vacandard quotes with amusement the dithyramb of a Jesuit writer of 1853, in the official Papal organ, the *Civilla Cattolica*, that the tribunal of the Inquisition was "a sublime spectacle of social perfection." (Vacandard, by the way, would not have quoted it if a heretic had not quoted it already.) Even Jesuits evolve. Father Blotzer uses lofty language, but he does not reach that height. It is a wicked age. Even Catholics are beginning to read the facts for themselves. Vacandard feels this still more, but he has the incurable itch of the apologist. The Inquisition, he says in the *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, "conformed to a very high ideal of justice!" He forgets that in his book, *The Inquisition* (p. 135) he has said: "The criminal procedure of the Inquisition is markedly inferior to the [secular] criminal procedure of the Middle

Ages." Yet the Jesuit, who takes his facts from the Canon's book, converts this into a "substantial advance."

The criminal procedure of the Middle Ages was grosser than any man can imagine nowadays: as gross as the medical or any other procedure of the time. It has taken two hundred years of criminal and penal reform to give us the system we have today, and that is far from perfect. But the secular criminal procedure of the Middle Ages was innocent and refined in comparison with the procedure of the Holy Church. It tortured the accused, it is true; but no lawyer that ever lived, in the most imperfect civilization, would have admitted justice in the mixture of fanaticism, cupidity, and brutality which the Jesuit and the Canon have just described for us.

This was the Roman Inquisition: the tribunal set up by the Roman Church in nearly every country except Spain, with which I deal separately. England never admitted it, except in one brief episode which I describe later. The Scandinavian countries, which had few heretics, never had it. It failed also to get a firm footing in the southeast (Bulgaria, Bosnia, Dalmatia, Rumania, and Hungary), where the heretics were too powerful to let it settle permanently or act considerably. In Bohemia and Poland it has not a great history. In the former kingdom, where 450 nobles signed a protest against the burning of Hus, the Papacy had to use force on a larger scale—war—to murder heresy; and in Poland there was not much to be done.

In Italy itself rebels against Rome were extraordinarily numerous and strong by the beginning of the thirteenth century. I have related how in the specially papal town of Viterbo the Pope found that nearly all the authorities and his own chamberlain were Cathari. In Florence heretics and skeptics were extremely numerous and outspoken. From the time of Frederick II and Gregory IX onward, therefore, there was a terrible struggle and large numbers were plundered, imprisoned, or burned. One fierce Inquisitor, Peter the Martyr, was assassinated in 1252. Venice, as I said, kept the profits of the business to itself and defied the Popes. In the north the Waldensians were so numerous that the decimating procedure of the tribunals could not check them. In 1488 the Popes flung a force of 15,000 soldiers upon them, and the soldiers were beaten. In 1510 the Inquisition moved further armies against them, but they survived in great numbers in the valleys of the Alps until the terrible Vaudois massacres of the year 1655 contributed their share to the "unity of the Church."

Catholics boast that in Rome itself, where the Popes directly controlled the tribunal, there was singularly little persecution. One Catholic writer who is occasionally quoted goes so far as to say that no man was ever put to death by the Roman Inquisition. One can hardly believe that he never heard of Giordano Bruno! But the truth is that the Papacy has taken good care to keep the records of the Inquisition in Rome from the profane eye of the historian. Dr. L. Pastor, the Catholic historian of the

Papacy, tells us that when Leo XIII, with a flourish of trumpets, threw open to the world the "Secret Archives" of the Vatican, he searched in them for the records of the Inquisition. They were not there. The Pope had had some documents removed before he threw open the Archives!

On the whole, we should not expect to find much burning of heretics in Rome itself, for the simple reason that a semi-Manichaean would hardly choose to go and propagate his gospel under the very nose of Gregory IX or Innocent IV, and in a city that had clerics in every second house. But let us make no mistake about the responsibility of the Popes. The Inquisition in Florence, in France, in Germany, or in Belgium was the Papal Roman Inquisition, as directly controlled and guided by the Popes as was the Inquisition of Rome itself.

In the south of France the activity of the Inquisition was almost as horrible as in Spain. I have in an earlier chapter referred to the Dominican monk Robert le Bougre (he was supposed to be a convert from the neo-Manichaean or Bulgar religion), and in glancing at the work of this man even the courtly Father Blotzer is moved to say that some of the Inquisitors "seem to have yielded to a blind fanaticism" and "deliberately to have provoked executions *en masse*." On May 29th, 1239, the brute burned one hundred and eighty heretics, including the bishop of the place, in a very small town of the province of Champagne. The "trial" of this immense number of denounced did not last a week. The bishops of central

and northern France had reported that there was no heresy in their territory, but Robert found it everywhere. After a few years of gross and murderous activity he was himself deposed and imprisoned by the Pope.

It was mainly in the south of France that the Inquisitors were active. The fearful massacres of the Albigensians at the beginning of the thirteenth century had by no means extinguished the rebellion. In 1241 and 1242, especially, the Inquisitors provoked such anger by their conduct that one of them was assassinated. The Pope compelled the Count of Toulouse to lead his troops against them, and the war or "crusade" was resumed. They were, however, now not numerous enough to sustain the shock of armies. Their last town was taken from them, and thousands were added to the hundreds of thousands of their martyrs. It would be safe to estimate that there were at least a hundred times more semi-Manichaeans put to death for their religion in fifty years in the south of France than there had been Christians put to death in three centuries in the early Church. And that is the record of one small area in one half-century.

When the soldiers had made the land "safe for heroes," the Inquisitors set to work with redoubled brutality. Their excesses were so great that repeated complaints were sent to the king, Philip the Fair, and it depended entirely on the momentary color of his relations with the Pope whether he intervened or not. In 1290 they, as I have already said, made a victim of a notoriously pious and charitable friend of

the Franciscan friars, Fabri, finding him a heretic when his lips were sealed by death and confiscating his estate. In 1301 the king sent representatives to investigate the charges against the Inquisitors, and they found the prisons so foul and deadly, and the procedure so gross and unjust, that the king complained to Rome. Two of the Inquisitors were suspended, and their powers were curtailed in France. Later Pope Clement V got such complaints from Bordeaux and Carcassone that he had to send two cardinals, and they found a sordid system. Clement had, within the limits of the barbaric ideal of the Inquisition, some feeling of humanity. When he died, the Inquisitors resumed their work with more "zeal" than ever and, as a result of more than one hundred years of bloodshed, robbery, and vile treatment, they persuaded the southern provinces of France to become orthodox.

Unfortunately, says Vacandard, in extenuation of these crimes, heresy in the Middle Ages was generally associated with anti-social ideas. To prove this he devotes a long chapter of his book to the tenets of these heretics of southern France. He finds what I have already described: the inner circle, the elect, of the Albigensians were vowed to celibacy and voluntary poverty—just as the monks were. He does not make it sufficiently clear that the mass of the Albigensians married and held property like all others, and I may add that their teaching the right to commit suicide, of which much is made, is now generally recognized. But the broad historical situation completely discredits this

loathsome way of defending the Popes by libeling the rebels. These southern provinces of France were, after the Mohammedan kingdoms in Spain, the most prosperous and contented in Europe, and they were ruined when the "heresy" was ruined.

Two particular incidents—the burning of Joan of Arc in 1431 and the condemnation of the Knights Templars in 1312—fitly illustrate the spirit and procedure of the Roman Inquisition in France. Whether Joan was a witch or not, she was vilely drawn into a death-trap by having the use of male clothing practically forced upon her, and the recantation she signed was fraudulently replaced by another.

The crushing of the Order of the Templars is one of the grossest single exploits of the Inquisition. The king of France wanted their wealth, and, as Vacandard himself candidly says, the Pope "truckled" to him. This was Clement V, the one Pope in whom, up to the present, I have had to note some semblance of humanity. From the start he had bought the tiara, with the connivance of the French king, and, as his name is the one most frequently quoted by apologists when they would illustrate the liberality of the Popes, I may add that he lived a life of royal sensuality in the papal palace at Avignon and is more than suspected of tender relations with the Countess de Talleyrand-Perigord. He died worth more than $2,500,000. This was the good Pope, the humane Pope, who permitted the Templars to be robbed and murdered after one of the grossest travesties of a trial in history. Large numbers of the Knights died under the fearful torture rather than lie about their own Order.

It was in connection with the trial of the Templars that the Inquisition had its one experience on English soil. It is hardly necessary to say that this does not mean that there was religious toleration in medieval England. The fearful persecution of the followers of Wyclif and the later hanging, burning, beheading and quartering of Protestant and Catholic rivals are well known. The death-sentence was decreed in 1400.

But England dealt with its own heretics; and, in fact, when Edward II was informed of the false and incredible stories told of the Templars, he bluntly refused to believe them. Pope Clement V assured him that the Knights had confessed these things—he probably omitted to describe the tortures—and in 1309 two Inquisitors were admitted into England to conduct a trial. They were refused the right to torture, and, as they could find no proof of guilt without that barbarous instrument, they complained to the Pope. Clement the Humane angrily demanded that the king should permit torture, claiming that Church law was higher than English civil law. In the end he bribed the king, in the customary papal manner, and the Templars were tortured and destroyed. A pretty record for almost the one Pope who is quoted as "checking the zeal of the Inquisitors."

In southern and western Germany the In-

quisitors were at first as bad as in France. Conrad of Marburg, the ascetic friend of St. Elizabeth, was almost as brutal as Robert le Bougre. An accused person was harshly ordered to reply simply "yes" or "no" to the charge, and if he did not at once say "yes," he was condemned and sent to the stake. We read with pleasure that Conrad was one of the many Inquisitors whom the people assassinated, and that the bishops of Germany angrily protested against his Inquisition. When Frederic II died the Inquisition was checked, but later Popes re-imposed it, and large numbers of rebels were put to death.

With the growth of heresy on a very large scale, at the Reformation, the Roman Church had to reorganize its Inquisition. What is now called the Holy Office is its reconstructed successor. It was created in 1542 by Paul III with the title of The Sacred Congregation of the Roman and Universal Inquisition, or the Holy Office. Humor is a thing unknown in the Vatican. Its permanent court of six (later eight, and eventually thirteen) cardinals was supposed to be the final court of appeal on charges of heresy. But the times are evil, and the "sacred" machinery is stored away in the papal furniture repository, awaiting the dawn of that more religious age which (the Italians say) American Catholics are going to inaugurate. The law of the Church is, as we shall see presently, just the same. The civil powers must burn its rebels for it.

CHAPTER V

THE SPANISH INQUISITION

Every good Catholic will note with satisfaction how clearly I differentiate between the Roman and the Spanish Inquisition. His *Catholic Encyclopaedia* informs him that the latter was rather a "political" or semi-political institution; that the kings of Spain jealously controlled it; that the Popes repeatedly protested against it. The Protestant historian Ranke more or less yielded to the Catholic writers of the last century who made this distinction. It is very convenient. Most people know nothing about the horrors of the Inquisition except in connection with Torquemada and the Spanish tribunals. Shocking, you tell them; but, of course, that was a Spanish state-institution, and the Popes earnestly protested against its excesses.

But few of my readers will be under any illusion as to why I recognize the distinction. It is little more than a geographical convenience. The Inquisition in Spain was so characteristic, so rich in its opportunities, so successful in the total number of its murders, that it deserves to be considered separately. As to this plea of political and secular character, even Catholic priests sometimes reject the subterfuge with disgust. Bishop Hefele, one of the most resolute Catholic apologists of the nineteenth century, naturally adopted it in his

Life of Cardinal Ximenes. But when the work was translated into English (1860) and had to face the fire of British scholarship, it had a preface of Canon Dalton entirely repudiating this theory. "The Inquisition originated not so much in political as in religious motives," he says, and "no contemporary authority asserts the contrary." It is mild language. The Spanish writers he quotes emphatically represent it as a purely religious tribunal, and the shades of Ferdinand and Isabella, if there are such shades, must have warmed the atmosphere of cloud-land with their language—which was vigorous—when the first modern apologist raised this mendacious plea that the Spanish Inquisition was anything but strictly religious.

What I said about the economic side of the Inquisition supplies an explanation which will occur at once to the reader. It was a question of the *division of the spoils.* Sixtus IV and his successors greatly disliked the Spanish Inquisition because all the confiscated wealth remained in Spain. The Popes raised a little by receiving at Rome appeals—those humane and beneficent appeals—from the sentences of the Spanish Inquisitors, and remitting penances for a money-payment. But the Spaniards retorted by refusing to recognize the Pope's dispensations, and there was an unholy struggle.

I once heard two Christian evangelists fall into a picturesque slang-match in an American city in the presence of several hundred hoboes. I asked the nearest gunman (or whatever he was) for an explanation, and he coolly replied

that the philanthropic evangelists were "lambastin' each other over de boodle." The protests of the Popes come under that graphic description. Very nobly, we are told, the Pope refused the Spaniards permission to set up their terrible Inquisition in the south of Italy, which they ruled. Yes: he set up the Roman Inquisition instead and got more of the proceeds.

The Spanish Inquisition was no more a political institution than the Spanish Church; or for that matter, the English Church, which is part of the state. In 1232, when Gregory IX established the Inquisition, James I of Aragon was persuaded by his Dominican confessor to ask the Pope to extend its beneficent action to this country. The bishops were ordered to co-operate with the monks in extirpating heresy. A few years later a Church Council confined the work of the Inquisition to the monks, and Gregory IX confirmed this. All historians say that there was general and angry resistance—in 1325 the *Cortes* (Congress) forbade the Inquisitors to torture—without much effect; but I have some doubt about the later statement. I have quoted Eymeric, the Spanish Inquisitor, saying in 1360 that, as all the *rich* heretics have been killed off, there is no zeal for the work.

The circumstances in Spain were unique. The Spaniards were slowly recovering the country from the Moors, but they were very far below the level of the Mohammedans in tolerance and humanity. For centuries, under the Moors, the Jews had enjoyed a wonderful

spell of honor and prosperity, and even in regard to such Christians as cared to settle in peace in their towns the Moors were perfectly tolerant. Now, as city after city was won back by the Spaniards, the clergy preached their usual doctrine of arrogant intolerance, and Jews and Moors had to embrace Christianity or depart. A removal of that kind of a large mass of people meant ruin, or caused very heavy loss, and the consequence was that large numbers nominally embraced Christianity, while remaining Mohammedan or Jewish at heart.

The Spanish people, every historian tells us, were tolerant and disinclined to quarrel, but the preachers lashed them, especially against the Jews, and from the fourteenth century onward there were frequent pogroms. In 1391 four thousand Jews were killed in Seville alone. But Jews, unless they had once embraced Christianity, did not come under the cognizance of the Inquisition, and, merely reminding the reader that the final expulsion of the Jews in 1492, when (on a very moderate estimate) 200,000 were driven abroad with every circumstance of brutality and impoverishment, must be added to the ghastly account of the Christian religion, we must here ignore them. It is an ironic comment on the supposed "anti-social" doctrines of heretics that these expulsions of Jews and Moors ruined the brilliant civilization they had created in Spain just as the massacre of the Albigensians ruined Languedoc and the massacre of the Hussites ruined Bohemia.

Until the second half of the fifteenth century the Inquisition set up there by Gregory IX had comparatively little influence. Neither people nor rulers wanted its bloody work. With the accession of the fanatical Ferdinand and Isabella, however, and the fall of the last great Moorish city, Granada, a new era opened.

Even in the case of Isabella it is an historical fact that the priests compelled her to act. For a long time she refused the solicitation of the Dominican monks, but she yielded at last to the grim and overbearing Torquemada.

In 1478 she applied for the Pope's authorization. Sixtus IV tried, as usual, to keep the direction in the hands of the Papacy, but Ferdinand and Isabella knew that the Spanish Church could adequately conduct the work, and they wanted no further Roman encroachment. But it was the Roman Inquisition that was set up. Sixtus IV did not merely authorize it, but sent the Inquisitors the rules of procedure; and, if within four years we find him complaining of the severity of the Inquisitors and threatening to depose them, his letters plainly show that his aim was to discredit the tribunals he did not control and persuade the monarchs to fall back on the Dominican Inquisitors previously established by the Popes. Before long the Popes made large sums of money by releasing the victims from their penances. Spain at length refused to acknowledge these pardons, and the wretched people had to make double payment, in Spain and at Rome. The ghastly tragedy culminated in the expulsion and ruin of half a

million descendants of the Moors; and the ruin of Spain itself was only concealed for a time by the gold it derived from America, from piracy, and from exploitation.

The details of the work of the Inquisition in Spain must be read in Sabatini's *Torquemada and the Spanish Inquisition* (1913): a work strangely lacking in picturesqueness and, in its effort at impartiality, falling short of the truth in the general impression its gives. A small history of the Inquisition has still to be written—Lea's seven volumes are sound, but no one today reads a work in seven volumes.

In these little books I have space only for general principles, reflections, and deductions. Naturally we ought, if it were possible, to form some idea of the number of victims of the Inquisition, but even in regard to the Spanish tribunals, whose work falls in a literary period, it is impossible to give even an approximate figure. A few words must be said, however, on Llorente's statement that 341,042 were executed and on the criticisms of this.

The new apologetic, which consists of bluff and rhetoric in equal proportions, yet pretends to be a new scholarship, affably pushes aside Llorente's estimate, and tells you that no one now accepts it. Llorente, these priests say, was a bitter anti-Catholic, so of course. . . . You see the point. Bias against the Church disqualifies: an even stronger bias in its favor does not for a moment lessen a man's authority.

Moreover, when it is said, as is now common in Catholic works, that Llorente has been "quite discredited" by Ranke, Prescott, Hefele, Gams, etc., the statement is at least two-thirds untruth. Ranke speaks respectfully of Llorente as a "well-informed writer," and merely differs from him in the interpretation of certain facts and figures. Llorente was for a time secretary of the Inquisition, and when the French overthrew it, he spent two years studying its archives. No man in the world has ever been in so good a position to estimate its work, but some of the statements on which he builds are not clear.

Hefele and Gams are said in Catholic literature to have reduced the total figure to about 4000. The reader, naturally, is not told that these are two Catholic apologists—a bishop and a priest—but the worse feature is that Hefele not only gives no such figure (in his *Life of Cardinal Ximenes*) but plainly thinks of a far higher figure. After contending that Llorente has put in one year a total of victims spread over six years, he says that he will not imitate Llorente's rashness and plead that he has multiplied all his figures six-fold. The egregious Gams, who reduces the figure from 341,042 to 4000, is not taken seriously. Vacandard admits, following Langlois, that "according to the most conservative estimate Torquemada sent to the stake about two thousand heretics in twelve years." Llorente says 8,800. The "most conservative estimates" of such matters are never right, but whether the victims of the Spanish Inquisition numbered a

quarter of a million, or more, or less, we shall never know.

Let us keep a sense of proportion. The record of Christianity from the days when it first obtained the power to persecute is one of the most ghastly in history. The total number of Manichaeans, Arians, Priscillianists, Paulicians, Bogomils, Cathari, Waldensians, Albigensians, Witches, Lollards, Hussites, Jews, and Protestants killed because of their rebellion against Rome clearly runs to many millions; and beyond these actual executions or massacres is the enormously larger number of those who were tortured, imprisoned, or beggared. I am, as I said, concerned rather with the positive historical aspect of this. In almost every century a large part of the race has endeavored to reject the Christian religion, and, if in those centuries there had been the same freedom as we enjoy, Roman Catholicism would, in spite of the universal ignorance, have shrunk long ago into a sect. The religious history of Europe has never yet been written.

It is unnecessary to add that the Reformers followed for a time in the bloody footsteps of the Popes. But when Catholic apologists eagerly quote the sentiments of Reformers and the executions of Catholics by Protestants, they betray the usual lack of sense of proportion. A twelve-century-old tradition of religious persecution is not likely to be abandonded in a few decades. This particular kind of savagery, the infliction of a horrible death for opinions, had been introduced into Europe

by the Christian leaders—ancient Rome never persecuted for opinion or had any standard of orthodoxy—and it had got into the blood. The killing of men for their beliefs by the early Protestants was murder just as was the killing of men by the Inquisition. It is a mockery to ask us to detect any divine interest in Churches during those fourteen centuries of ghastly injustice and inhumanity.

And there is this further difference. Protestant Churches have abandoned the principle that you may slay a man for heresy. The English law *De Haeretico Comburendo* (for the burning of heretics), framed and inspired by Roman Catholicism, was abandoned two and a half centuries ago, though the English Church retained absolute power in the land. One may speculate as to whether a Protestant Church might at some time revert to the old ideal, if it had the old power. I think not; but, as no Church ever again will have the power, it is idle to speculate.

But death for heresy is the actual law of the Roman Catholic Church today. Vacandard and others convey to their non-Catholic readers that Rome has repented like every other Church. Not in the least: It has not sacrificed one syllable of its teaching about heretics. I am under sentence of death in the Canon Law of the Roman Church. I have in my popular work, *The Popes and Their Church*, shown that about the end of the last century, when the new generation of apologists were busy with their glosses on the past and their pretty appeals for universal tolerance, a new

manual of Church Law, specially authorized by Leo XIII, written by a papal professor, printed in a papal press, was published. It was in Latin; and probably few Catholics in America will fail to be astonished to learn that the author states, and proves at great length, that the Church claims and has "the right of the sword" over heretics, and only the perversity of our age prevents it from exercising that right! More recent manuals of Church Law have the same beautiful thesis. It is today the law of the Roman Church. Remember it when you read these subtle Jesuits and eloquent Paulists and unctuous bishops on the "blunders" of the past and the right and duty of toleration today. The Inquisition (the Holy Office) exists. The law exists. And you and I may thank this age of skepticism that we keep our blood in our veins.