

History

of the Church of God

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Chapter XIV

TWELFTH AND THIRTEENTH CENTURIES.

TWELFTH CENURY—During the twelfth century a still deeper darkness enveloped the greater part of the Catholic world; but in Southern France, Northern Italy, Western Germany and Bohemia, some gleams of bright starlight burst through the thick clouds, and irradiated a part of those districts with a degree of clear, cheery, heavenly light. This century was marked by the doctrinal completion of Catholic sacramentalism and sacerdotalism, by the virtual substitution of tradition for Scripture, by the fearful use of papal excommunication and interdict, by the continuance of the crusades against the Mohammedans, by the establishment of military orders for warring on the Turks and for converting the Pagans to Catholicism by fire and sword, by the increased enthusiastic worship of saints and images and relics, by the multiplication of plenary indulgences and priestly absolutions, by the increase of priestly wealth, power, covetousness, drunkenness and sensuality, by the uprising of a strong, decided, Baptist, anti-sacerdotal movement against the appalling corruptions of Roman Catholicism, and, at its close, by the muttering thunders of the gathering storm of papal wrath against the intrepid "heretics" who dared to strike a mortal blow at the full-grown fabric of medieval superstition. The century thus goes down amid the black and lurid omens of the approaching terrific tempest of Satanic vengeance upon the Albigenses of Southern France and the Waldenses of Northern Italy.

In 1144 the principality of Edessa, in Mesopotamia, the bulwark of the Latin kingdom of Jerusalem, was taken by the Turks; and this led to the second crusade, preached by Bernard of France and by Pope Eugenius III. "The Koran," says Milman, "is tame to Bernard's fierce hymn of battle." The pope, like his predecessor Urban, promised the forgiveness of all sin to those embarking in the crusade. In 1147 twelve hundred thousand men are said to have precipitated themselves from Europe upon the plains of Western Asia, where nearly all miserably perished, the expedition proving a total failure.

In 1187 Saladin, Sultan of Egypt, conquered Jerusalem; and the third crusade was preached by Pope Gregory VIII. In 1189 Frederick Barbarossa, Emperor of Germany, and in 1190 Philip Augustus, King of France, and Richard Coeur-de-Lion, King of England, set out personally with powerful armies for Palestine. Frederick was drowned, and Philip and Richard quarreled, the former returning to France and the latter capturing Acre, with a loss of three hundred thousand lives, butchering three thousand Saracen prisoners, and obtaining from Saladin permission for "Christian" pilgrims to visit Jerusalem.

Without the elevation of woman there is no true civilization; but the Military Orders of Knights formed in this century substituted the worship of woman, along with other idols, for the worship of God. These Orders became rich, proud and oppressive. The "Teutonic Knights" and the "Brothers of the Sword" aided in conquering, desolating and forcibly converting from Pagan to Catholic idolatry the provinces of Pomerania in Prussia and Finland and Livonia in Russia.

The doctrine of the Immaculate (or Sinless) Conception of the Virgin Mary was broached, about 1140, by certain canons of Lyons, in France. It was opposed by Bernard and Thomas Aquinas and other leading Catholic theologians of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, as being in conflict with the doctrine of Original Sin; but it was defended by Duns Scotus and adopted by the Franciscans in the fourteenth century, impliedly sanctioned by the Council of Trent in the sixteenth century, and finally affirmed by Pope Pius IX in 1854.

Roman Catholicism has substituted the unscriptural term "sacrament" for the ordinances of the Christian religion; and, in utter defiance of the New Testament and of the true nature of vital godliness, has defined a "sacrament" to be an indispensable and efficacious means in the hands, however, only of popish priests or Bishops who may be the vilest sinners, of conveying Divine grace and salvation. In the "Sentences" of Peter Lombard, about the middle of the twelfth century, Rome fixed the number of "sacraments" at seven, as follows: Baptism, confirmation, the Lord's Supper, penance, extreme unction, ordination and marriage. Thus to the two beautiful emblematic ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, instituted by Christ, Rome has added three institutions of her own invention—confirmation, penance and extreme unction and two other institutions—marriage and ordination—which, though of Divine appointment, are nowhere in the Scriptures called church ordinances.

Also about 1150 Rome, in the codification of her canon law, went beyond even the Pseudo-Isidorian positions,—maintaining not only that the pope is the vicar of Peter, but also that Bishops are only vicars of the pope, and that all the greater or more important causes are to be brought before the papal tribunal.

In this century tithes were everywhere demanded by the Catholic priests. About the middle of the century the custom of withholding the wine, in communion, from the "laity" or private members, was begun, on the grounds that either element contained the whole of Christ's body, and that the wine, if handed around to so many, might be spilled, and that it was sufficient for the priest to receive both elements. The communion of children was discontinued during this century in the Roman, but not in the Greek Catholic "Church." The marriage of priests continued during the twelfth century in Hungary, Ireland, Denmark, Iceland and Sweden, notwithstanding papal anathemas. Tradition was now held to be equal or superior to Scripture. In 1170 Pope Alexander III. claimed the sole right of "canonizing saints."

In the eleventh century William the Conqueror, King of England, refused to swear fealty to the pope; but in the twelfth century England was, even

more than France and Germany, subject to the pope. Thomas A. Beckett, the haughty and impracticable "Archbishop of Canterbury," censured and quarreled with Henry II. of England, not for the vices of the king, which were great, but for his futile attempt to make himself independent of the pope; and some hasty and angry words of Henry led four knights to murder Beckett in 1170—Beckett indulging to the last in bitter invectives against his foes, and falling, says Milman, "as a martyr, not of Christianity, but of sacerdotalism." Two years afterward the pope "canonized" him, and Beckett became for several centuries the most popular "saint" in England, his worship superseding that of God and even of Mary, and as many as a hundred thousand pilgrims at one time visiting his tomb. Henry himself, in 1174, underwent a public and humiliating penance there, walking three miles with bare and bleeding feet on the flinty road, prostrating himself at the tomb, scourged, at his own request, by the willing monks, and spending a night and day in prayers and tears, imploring the intercession of the "saint" in Heaven.

In 1160 was the first persecution in England for "heresy". Thirty German Cathari, men and women, were tried and condemned at Oxford for denying some of the Catholic superstitions, such as purgatory, prayer for the dead, and the worship of saints. They were branded with a red-hot iron in the forehead, and whipped through the streets of the town. Then their clothes were cut short by their girdles, and in the depth of winter they were turned into the open fields, and perished with cold and hunger,—all persons being forbidden, under the severest penalties, to shelter or relieve them.

The great anti-sacerdotal movement of the twelfth century in the hearts and lives of "the inferior and more numerous classes," is reckoned by Mr. Hallam as an important "source of moral improvement during this period, and as among the most interesting phenomena in the progress of European society. An inundation of heresy," says he, "broke in that age upon the church, which no persecution was able thoroughly to repress, till it finally (in the sixteenth century) overspread half the surface of Europe." Mr. Joseph Henry Allen is said to be one of the two or three men in America who understand Church History. In his recently published lectures, before Harvard University (*Christian History*, in three volumes), he pointedly and

accurately remarks:—"The form of heresy which we meet at this period (during the twelfth century) is very radical. It deals not with surface opinions, or with points of detail. It strikes, knowingly and boldly, at the very root of the sacerdotal theory itself, to which the 'Church' was so thoroughly committed by its Decretals. Its five points touch with fatal logic the very essentials of ecclesiastical faith: the baptism of infants, the Lord's body in the Eucharist, sanctity of the priestly order, worship of the cross, and invocation for the dead. No mystic rite, said these daring heretics, could do away the original curse, unless there were penitence, conversion and faith. No priest not of holy life could give the sacrament effect, to the saving of the soul. The font was but a bowl of water; the bread nothing but a baker's loaf; the mass a form of idle words; the temple a convenient enclosure; the cross an idolatrous sign, a memorial only of torment and horror; the priesthood a class of sinful men, more arrogant and corrupt (probably) than other men, with no miraculous virtue in their word or touch. This position was the revival of an old, we may say a quite forgotten, gospel. It claimed to be simple, primitive Christianity, pure religion and undefiled, without priest, without ritual, such as we find it in the New Testament. Ever since the middle of the third century the (Catholic) 'Church' had been committed more and more to the theory of sacerdotalism. Its priesthood was a consecrated body. Its offices were miracles and spells. Its rite of baptism had the mysterious and awful power of removing the birth-curse of inherited guilt. The elements of its Eucharist were literally the Lord's body, the physical germ of the immortal life. Its excommunication banished the unfaithful and unbelieving to the horror of outer darkness forever. *And ever since that time*, reappearing in various forms of 'heresy' and schism, there had been a *Puritan protest*. The exciting cause had always been some laxity of morals, some corruption of life, covered up under the claim of official sanctity. *The symbol of it had always been the one point of the sacramental efficacy of baptism*. Is that the efficient cause of regeneration, and of itself a passport to eternal life? And shall we say it is just as valid, no matter how impious and unclean the hands that perform the rite? Can an unholy man do a holy thing like that? Or, on the other hand, is baptism a sign of faith and a mark of regeneration? *Then how can it be received by an infant, which knows nothing of guilt, and cannot possibly repent? Baptism is but a sign of personal penitence and faith—a mockery and blasphemy unless it is their*

sign. This primitive, obstinate, heroic anti-sacerdotalism, which has made the starting-place of many a radical protest, from the Puritan Novatians of the third century down to the English Independents of the seventeenth, is, in its most logical form, not only Protestant, but Baptist. The early reformers of the twelfth century were both a Protestant and a Baptist sect, appearing at a point of time when the 'Church' had staked its existence and its dominion more thoroughly than ever on the Divine authority of its priesthood; when that theory seemed most completely triumphant in its conflict with the empire at home and the infidel abroad. To the 'Church's' claim that 'heresy' was fatal. The one function of the 'Church' was (pretended to be) to rescue human life from the universal curse by its perpetual sacrifice, that is, by physical acts which none other than she could do. All else turned on that. And her very ability to do that rested on men's absolute, distinct, unquestioning faith that she had both the authority and the power.

"In the first years of the twelfth century Peter of Bruys (Petrobrusius) went forth like another John the Baptist, full of the Spirit and of power, and lived for twenty years as an evangelist in the south of France, which he seems to have filled completely with his doctrine, till he was overtaken by the wrath of the priesthood he had challenged, and was burned alive by a mob of monastics somewhere about 1120. Thus the seed was planted of what widened afterward into the famous and greatly dreaded 'heresy' of the Waldenses and Albigenses." Peter de Bruys was a strong Bible Baptist. The Catholic monk, Peter the Venerable, arraigns him on five charges, for denying infant baptism, respect for churches, the worship of the cross, transubstantiation and prayers, alms and oblations for the dead. He baptized all who joined his communion, whether they had ever been immersed before or not. On one occasion he made a great bonfire of all the crosses he could find, and cooked meat over the fire, and distributed it to the congregation. The followers of Peter de Bruys were called Petrobrusians. Toward the end of his career Peter was joined by an ardent and eloquent younger disciple or fellow-laborer, Henry the Deacon, or Henry of Lausanne, who labored in the same spirit and country for nearly thirty years after the death of Peter de Bruys, and was at last (in 1147) condemned for heresy by the Catholic authorities, and died in prison. His followers were called Henricians. Arnold of Brescia fearlessly and powerfully preached the same anti-sacerdotalism in

Italy, and, for nine years, maintained in Rome itself a republic in open defiance of emperor and pope. Frederick Barbarossa and Adrian IV. were united by their common dread and hatred of republicanism. Their forces captured Arnold, who was, by an officer of the pope, first strangled as a rebel and then burned as a heretic, and his ashes cast into the Tiber (1155). This is said to have been the first time when the Catholic "Church" put a man to death with his own hand, instead of delivering him for execution to the secular power. For its own *nominal* exculpation, it has generally preferred to wield the temporal sword through the carnal hand of some civil magistrate; but the guilt is as much as its own in the one case as in the other.

"In the first half of the twelfth century we have a Reform known to us by the names of its three brave, eloquent and ill-fated prisoners—each a great religious enthusiast, proclaiming his gospel of free salvation; after the middle of the century, we have a broad, popular movement, in two great sects more or less allied—the Albigenses and Waldenses, inseparable in destiny and fame as the earliest champions and martyrs of our modern liberty of thought. The Albigenses were more speculative and vigorous; the Waldenses more simple and practical." The Albigenses are called by Milman *Manichean*, and the Waldenses *Biblical Anti-Sacerdotalists*; and this distinction, *so far as all the extant evidence shows us*, seems to be correct. The Petrobrusians and Henricians he calls *Simple Anti-Sacerdotalists*.

The Albigenses were so called from Albi or Albige, a town in Southern France, one of their principal seats. Their history is written in fire and blood. Their books and themselves having been destroyed, we have to glean our views of their sentiments from the distorted and unreliable statements of their Catholic enemies. *It is thus impossible for us to know what their real doctrines were.* The general account given of them by the latest and ablest historians represents that their doctrinal system was a strange compound of many gross errors with some simple and important truths; that, besides being severely moral and anti-sacerdotal, they held views that were strongly Manichean, like those of the Bogomiles in Thrace and the Cathari in Germany; maintaining that matter is essentially evil, that Satan created the world, and was the God of the Old Testament, that Christ and the Holy Spirit

are only temporary emanations from the true God, and will be finally absorbed in Him, that the body of Christ was not real flesh, but only phenomenal and ethereal, that the fleshly bodies of the saints, being essentially evil, will not be raised from the grave, etc. These unscriptural errors no believer in the Bible can receive; and we do not know that the Albigenses held these views. It is said, even by their enemies, that their speculative opinions were very diverse; and, in that age of darkness, when there were scarcely any Bibles, and exceedingly few persons who could read, it is not wonderful that errors abounded even in the minds of the people of God. While the Albigenses are said to have received the New Testamenti[1]ii as the oracles of God, Rome, with all her learning, substituted her own traditions for the entire Scriptures, and especially antagonized the fundamental spiritual tenets of the New Testament, and thus she committed worse doctrinal errors than those whom she stigmatized and persecuted as heretics.

The Waldenses, it is held by many of the most learned authorities, were so called for Peter Waldo, a merchant of Lyons, who about 1160 expended his wealth in giving alms to the poor, and in translating and distributing the Scriptures. His followers were called Poor Men of Lyons, or Leonists, or Sabbatati (from their wooden shoes), or Humilitati, the Downtrodden; also Waldenses, Vallenses, or Vaudois—the latter name being supposed to have been derived from the valleys of Piedmont,iii[2]iv in Northwest Italy, where these lovers and students and adherents of the written word of God abounded. When driven by Catholic persecution from France, Peter Waldo fled to Piedmont, and afterwards to Bohemia in Germany, where he is said to have died in 1179. As in the case of the primitive church, persecution disseminated the truth until it was found in nearly all the countries of Europe. The Waldenses were very industrious, honest, modest, frugal, chaste, and temperate, according even to the universal testimony of their Catholic enemies. They held the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the only standard of faith and practice; and they consequently rejected the authority of the “fathers” and the Catholic traditions, and the doctrines of purgatory, indulgences, and transubstantiation, monasticism, sacramentalism and celibacy. They held that there were only two Christian ordinances, Baptism and the Lord’s Supper, and that these were but

emblems and signs of inward grace. They were very familiar with the Scriptures, very many of them being able to repeat entire books of the Bible from memory. They condemned all taking of oaths, shedding of blood, capital punishment and military service. The "Church of Rome" they declared to be "the whore of Babylon." They maintained the universal priesthood of believers, and they allowed all their members, both male and female, to preach and administer the ordinances; their preachers worked with their own hands for their necessities. They taught that God alone can forgive sin. Some practiced infant baptism, and some did not; they who did baptize infants had probably been Catholics, and thus retained that unscriptural and traditional error. The *earliest* Waldenses are believed to have been *Anti-Pedobaptists*. It appearsv[3]vi that the early Waldenses were not established in the doctrine of predestination, and of the redemptive work of Christ, and of our full and free justification by faith in Him; their prevailing type of doctrine is less that of Paul than of James. In the darkness of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries they were more Arminian than Augustinian in their views. They were babes in Christ, and were gradually led into the doctrine of grace. It is highly probable, and is believed by many eminent historians, that the *Waldenses* in Northern Italy were the spiritual descendants and successors of the *Novatians*—like them, stigmatized as *Anabaptists*, rejecting the superstitions and corruptions of Rome, and re-immersing all who joined them from the Catholic communion.

Even "Cardinal" Hosius, chairman of the Council of Trent, in the sixteenth century, testifies not only to the existence, but also to the persecutions and cheerful sufferings of the "Anabaptists" ever since the fourth century, when Constantine connected "Church" and State, and the people of God protested against the unholy and corrupting alliance, and were persecuted by the Second Beast.

Ludwig Keller, the present royal archivist at Munster, has mastered, more completely than any other man, the printed and manuscript sources of early Baptist history. In his book, *"Die Reformation und die alteren Reformparteien, in ihrem Zusammenhang dargestellt"* (*"The Reformation and the Older Reforming Parties, Exhibited in their Connection"*), published at Leipzig, by Hirzel, in 1885, Keller proves that, while the Lutherans and

Zwinglians were new sects, the churches of the so-called Anabaptists, or Baptists of the sixteenth century, were but the renewal or continuation of the Petrobrusian and Waldensian churches of the twelfth century; and he gives strong reasons for accepting the old Waldensian tradition of a succession of evangelical churches from the time of the union of "Church" and State (under Pope Sylvester I. and the Emperor Constantine), and so from the time of the Apostles. "While no Scripture, properly interpreted, requires that we should find at all times all of the elements of Christianity represented in any one Christian community, no Baptist can be indifferent to facts which seem to prove the persistence of apostolic teaching and practice, in a form more or less pure, throughout the centuries of ecclesiastical corruption." "The Waldenses, of the thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, repudiated the idea of derivation from Peter Waldo, and insisted with the utmost decision upon direct apostolic derivation." "Except when restrained by temporal power, they practiced believers' baptism."

In the latter part of the twelfth century the popes and councils pronounced repeated excommunications and anathemas against the Albigenses and Waldenses; affirmed the right of the "church" to banish them, confiscate their property and put them to death; and even ordered the temporal sovereigns, under the strong temptations of possessing the confiscated estates and of receiving indulgences, to carry these penalties into effect.

Thirteenth Century.—During the thirteenth century the Roman Catholic Heavens were shrouded in denser and blacker clouds, ghastly illumined by the horrible fires of persecution; while the faint dawn of popular intelligence and civil liberty appeared in England, and to some extent in France and Germany, and in Venice and Genoa. The thirteenth century is the century of the culmination of papal power (in Innocent III.), of papal pretension (in Boniface VIII.), and of papal theology (in Thomas Aquinas); of the continuance and termination of the crusades against the Mohammedans; of the hideous home crusades against the "heretical" Albigenses, and of the exterminating missionary crusades against the Pagan Prussians and Lithuanians; of the destructive wars of the Spanish Catholics upon the Moslems in Spain; of the final Catholic loss of Jerusalem, and of the Latin

conquest and loss of Constantinople; of the futile attempt at a reunion of Greek and Roman Catholicism; of the establishment of the Mendicant Franciscan and Dominican orders as the pope's universal and devoted militia, and of the unparalleled infernal machinery of the INQUISITION; of the papal announcement of the Satanic doctrine of "works of supererogation," and of the papal sale, for not only "good works", but for gold, of plenary indulgences to sin; of the papal prohibition of the reading of the Bible by the private members of the Catholic communion; of the papal condemnation of the Bible, in the mother tongue, as a heretical book, to be consigned, like heretics, to the flames, and of the prohibition of the discussion of matters of faith by private members; of the continuance of fearful papal interdicts, excommunications and depositions; of a great increase of penance by flagellation and by the repetition of "paternosters" with the "rosary"; of the almost universal Catholic persecution of the Jews; of the universal establishment of nominal priestly celibacy throughout Roman Catholic Europe; of the rise of Antinomian pantheistic sects in Italy, France and Germany; of the transference of the political influence over the papacy from Germany to France; of the foundation of English liberty in the Magna Charta and the organization of Parliament; of the proclamation of the Pragmatic Sanction in France by Louis IX. In vindication of Gallican independence of Rome; of the rise of the power of the electoral princes and the free cities in Germany; and finally, in the last year of the century, of the centennial Pagan and pseudo-Jewish Jubilee proclaimed and celebrated by Pope Boniface VIII., granting full forgiveness of all sin to the millions of deluded Catholics visiting Rome in that year, and pouring their gold upon the papal altar.

Innocent III. was Pope from 1198 to 1216. The papacy reached the zenith of its power in him. He was the Commander-in-Chief of the armies and navies of "Christendom". No other man ever wielded such power in both "Church" and State. He ruled from the Jordan to the Atlantic, and from the Mediterranean to beyond the Baltic.

The fourth crusade was preached by Innocent III. and Fulk of Neuilly. The soldiers were chiefly French and Venetians; and, instead of going to Palestine, they contented themselves with capturing, with circumstances of

horrible pillaging, debauchery and bloodshed, the city of Constantinople from the Greeks (in 1204), and founding there a Latin empire, which lasted till 1261. The dislike of the Greek for the Roman Catholics was thus converted into vehement and perpetual hatred.—As it was concluded by many that none but “innocent” hands could effect the conquest of the Holy Land, it is said that, in A.D. 1212, thirty thousand French boys and girls under the peasant lad Stephen, and twenty thousand German boys and girls under the peasant lad Nicholas, set out for that purpose, but perished miserably by fatigue and starvation and shipwreck and in Mohammedan slavery.—In what is called by some the fifth, and by others the sixth, crusade (1215-1229), Damietta in Egypt was taken, and Frederick II. of Germany, by a treaty with the sultan of Egypt, was crowned King of Jerusalem, which was recaptured by the Turks in 1247, and has remained in their possession ever since.—The sixth and seventh crusades were both French; in the sixth, King Louis IX. lost his liberty in Egypt in 1249; and in the seventh he lost his life before Tunis, in Africa, in 1270. In 1291 Acre was taken by the Mameluke Turks, and a termination was put to Catholic dominion in Palestine.

In 1212 the Catholic kings of Castile, Aragon and Navarre slew one hundred and sixty thousand Moslems in one battle; and, before the close of this century, the Moorish dominion was restricted to the kingdom of Granada, which paid homage to Castile.

After dreadful wars of more than fifty years (1230-1283), Prussia was made almost a desert by the papal knights—“booted apostles,” says Mosheim—and the miserable remnant of the people were forced to submit to Catholic baptism. The similar “conversion” of Lithuania in Russia was begun, but a permanent nominal success was not obtained until near the close of the fourteenth century.

The Catholic crusade against the Albigenses in Southern France (from 1209-1229), under Popes Innocent III., Honorius III. And Gregory IX., was one of the bloodiest tragedies in human history. The crusade was much shorter, easier and safer than that to Palestine, and the temporal rewards were more certain. The popes promised the crusaders, as in the Mohammedan expeditions, the forgiveness of all their sins, and also the

partition among them of the estates of the heretics. An army, variously estimated at from two to five hundred thousand men, assembled from Italy, Germany and France. The leader was the able, rapacious, unfeeling and unprincipled Simon de Montfort, of England. The heretic was regarded as worse than the robber, the traitor or the murder—as a beast of prey, to be exterminated wherever found. “Never is the history of man,” says Milman, “were the great eternal principles of justice, the faith of treaties, common humanity, so trampled under foot as in the Albigensian war. Never was war waged in which ambition, the consciousness of strength, rapacity, implacable hatred and pitiless cruelty played a greater part. And throughout the war it cannot be disguised that it was not merely the army of the (Catholic) ‘Church,’ but the (Catholic) ‘Church’ itself in arms. Papal legates and the greatest prelates headed the host and mingled in all the horrors of the battle and the siege. In no instance did they interfere to arrest the massacre, in some cases urged it on.” “At the taking of Beziers (July 22, 1209), the commander, the Abbott Arnold, legate of the pope, being asked who the heretics were to be distinguished from the faithful, made the infamous reply, ‘Slay all; God will know his own.’”

“The policy of persecution,” says Mr. J. H. Allen, “was adopted by the Roman Catholic ‘Church’ deliberately and with open eyes in the Third Lateran Council of 1179, notwithstanding the opposition of a more wise and humane spirit. Nothing so completely disproves that infallibility to which she asserts so many fantastic, sentimental and rotten claims.”

As many as four hundred “heretics” were sometimes burned in one great pile, to the great rejoicing of the Catholics. Twenty thousand men, women and children were slain indiscriminately at the capture of Beziers, and two hundred thousand during that year (1209). The number of Albigenses that perished in the twenty years’ war is estimated at from one to two millions. Whoever harbored a “heretic” was to lose his property and be reduced to slavery. Every house in which a “heretic” was found was to be destroyed. A wretched few sought concealment in caves and rocks and forests, or fled to other lands.

The popes founded the Mendicant Franciscan and Dominican Orders and the Inquisition to aid them in counteracting the growing "heretical" sects, either by conversion or extermination. One of the characteristic features of Roman Catholicism is its incorporation of hundreds of religious institutions, male and female, by which to accomplish its purposes. The Military Orders were established in the twelfth century to fight against the Saracens; and the Mendicant (or Begging) Orders, in the thirteenth century, to war against the "heretics"; just as the Jesuit Order was created in the sixteenth century to counteract the Protestant Reformation. Sacerdotal "Christianity" had, in the thirteenth century, ascended a throne so high above the people, teaching them only by the ritual, and neutralizing even the small benefit derivable from that teaching by priestly wealth, pride and corruption; and those communions which it denominated "heretical sects" had drawn so near the people by their moral and lowly condition, and by their private and public preaching of the simple gospel of Christ; that the papists realized and sought to obviate this great disadvantage of theirs in winning and retaining the masses. The Franciscan Order, named from Francis of Assisi (a town in Italy), was founded in 1210; and the Dominican Order, named from Dominic, a Spanish priest, was founded in 1216. The avowed principles of both Orders were poverty, chastity and obedience, the latter to be rendered to the pope through the Superior of the Order. Those who entered the Orders thereby renounced all freedom of thought and conscience, and became absolutely devoted to the papal service, each Order, like a vast army, acting as the instrument of a single will. Their fundamental principle, not to work, but to live by begging, was in point-blank contradiction to the express Divine commandment both of the Old and the New Testament that man should labor. "The begging-friar soon became a by-word for all his ignoble arts, his shameless asking, his importunity which would take no refusal, his creeping into houses, his wheedling of silly women, his having rich men's persons in admiration because of advantage, his watchings by wealthy death-beds to secure legacies for his house, his promising spiritual benefits, not his to grant, in exchange for temporal gifts. Bonaventura, himself the head of the Franciscan Order, and writing not fifty years after Francis's death, does not scruple to say that already in his time the sight of a begging-friar in the distance was more dreaded than that of a robber." These Orders were most successful Catholic missionaries. They spread with

wonderful rapidity, and soon became wealthy, proud and corrupt. It was pretended that each of their founders, Francis and Dominic, performed far more miracles than Christ, and that Francis equaled or surpassed Christ in the glories of his birth, transfiguration, gospel and death, insomuch that, in the minds of multitudes, the idolatrous worship of Francis took the place of the professed worship of Christ. The Dominicans were so eager and successful in hunting and persecuting "heretics" that they were called by the people Domini Canes, dogs of the Lord. Teaching that there is virtue in frequent repetitions of forms of prayer, they invented the rosary, as series of prayers and a string of beads by which they are counted.

The Inquisition, the special and unprecedented enormity of Roman Catholicism, surpassing, in cold systematic treachery and cruelty, the wildest imaginations of romance, "the most formidable of all the formidable engines devised by popery to subdue the souls and bodies, the reason and the consciences of men, to its sovereign will," was founded during the Albigensian war to extirpate those obstinate "heretics," and was afterwards employed against other "heretics" and against the Jews and Moors. The Greek Emperor Theodosius I., in 382, had instituted the first Inquisition against "heresy," especially Manicheism, and had enforced the first death penalty for religious opinion. The Inquisition was revived in more awful form by the Twelfth General Council (Fourth Lateran) in 1215, and its code established by the Council of Toulouse in 1229. It was made a permanent tribunal in 1233, and put in charge of the Dominican Order in 1234. Special Courts (independent of the local authorities) for hunting out and exterminating "heretics" had been established under Dominic and his followers during the crusade against the Albigenses. "The base of the code of the Inquisition," says Milman, "was a system of delation at which the worst of the Pagan emperors might have shuddered as iniquitous; in which the sole act deserving of mercy might seem to be the Judas-like betrayal of the dearest and most familiar friend, of the kinsman, the parent, the child. The Court sat in profound secrecy; no advocate might appear before the tribunal; no witness was confronted with the accused; who were the informers, what the charges, except the vague charge of heresy, no one knew. If the suspected heretic refused to testify concerning himself and others similarly suspected, he was cast into a dungeon—a dungeon the

darkest in those dreary ages—the most dismal, the most foul, the most noisome. No falsehood was too false, no craft too crafty, no trick too base, for this calm, systematic moral torture which was to wring further confession against himself, denunciation against others. If the rack, the pulleys, the thumbscrew and the boots were not yet invented or applied (as they were afterwards), it was not in mercy. It was the deliberate object to break the spirit. The prisoner was told that there were witnesses, undeniable witnesses, against him; if convicted by such witnesses, his death was inevitable. In the meantime, his food was to be slowly, gradually diminished, till body and soul were prostrate. He was then to be left in darkness, solitude, silence. Then were to come one or two of the faithful, dexterous men, who were to speak in gentle words of interest and sympathy—‘Fear not to confess that you have had dealings with those men, the teachers of heresy, because they seemed to you men of holiness and virtue; wiser than you have been deceived.’ The dexterous men were to speak of the Bible, of the Gospels, of the epistles of Saint Paul, to talk the very language, the scriptural language, of the heretics. ‘These foxes,’ it was said, ‘can only be unearthed by fox-like cunning.’ But if all this art failed, or did not perfectly succeed, then came terror and the goading to despair. ‘Die you must—bethink you of your soul.’ Upon which if the desperate man said, ‘If I must die, I will die in the true faith of the gospel,’ he had made his confession; justice claimed its victim. The Inquisition had three penalties; for those who recanted, penance in the severest form which the Court might enact; for those not absolutely convicted, perpetual imprisonment; for the obstinate or the relapsed, death—death at the stake, by the secular arm. The Inquisition, with specious hypocrisy, while it prepared and dressed up the victim for the burning, looked on with calm and approving satisfaction, as it had left the sin of lighting the fire to pollute other hands.”

In case of sickness, however severe, no “heretic” was allowed the services of a physician. “Friends and relatives were admitted to testify, but only against the prisoner, never in his favor.” The property of the condemned heretic—often even before condemnation, pretendedly to pay the expenses of the mock trial—was confiscated, the most of it being given to the accusers and judges. The Inquisition (which was never established in England) was established in France, Spain, Italy and Germany during the

thirteenth century, steadily increased in power and vigor through the fourteenth century, became the most terrible at the close of the fifteenth and during the sixteenth centuries, steadily declined during the seventeenth century, abandoned torture and was almost abolished during the eighteenth century, and has been partially revived, with the old murderous will, but with little power for harm, on account of the separation of "Church" and State, in the nineteenth century. Its last capital punishments were those of a Jew who was burnt, and a Quaker schoolmaster hanged, in Spain, in 1826. Roman Catholic writers of the present century acknowledge the horrible deeds of the Inquisition, and seek to justify them; and large numbers of Catholics, especially the Jesuits, yearn for the re-establishment of the Satanic institution, with all its original powers. The Prince of Darkness and his worshipers still passionately love the old deeds of darkness of the darkest ages of the world. But God is mightier than Satan, and has never left Himself without witnesses on earth.

The Lateran Council of 1215, under Pope Innocent III., adopted seventy canons, exalting the papal supremacy to the highest point, and containing a summary of papal doctrine and polity, justifying, among other things, transubstantiation, indulgences, works of supererogation, and the extirpation of "heretics." The doctrine of "works of supererogation" was founded upon the alleged distinction between the precepts of the law and the exhortations of the gospel, the former being considered obligatory, and the latter non-obligatory; so that, when a person performed the latter, he laid up a stock of merits; and all the merits of the saints, with the merits of Christ, formed a vast treasury, from which indulgences might, on certain conditions, be granted to persons of deficient merit or of positive sinfulness. This doctrine was defended by the famous Schoolmen, Alexander of Hales, Thomas Aquinas, Albertus Magnus, and Bonaventura; and it was implicitly decreed in the Council of Trent in the sixteenth century.—The Council of Toulouse, in 1229, under Pope Gregory IX., prohibited "laymen" from possessing or reading the Bible in the mother tongue; and the same pope in 1231 prohibited "laymen" from disputing on the faith under penalty of excommunication.

The custom of voluntary flagellation, as a means of self-purification or of the propitiation of the Deity, was practiced by the ancient Pagan Egyptians and Greeks and Romans; and, before being abandoned by the latter in the fifth century, was adopted by some Catholic "Bishops" in their courts. But, from the thirteenth to the fifteenth century, especially in the years 1260, 1349 and 1414, it raged in many countries of continental Europe as a religious mania. "All ranks, both sexes, all ages, were possessed with the madness—nobles, wealthy merchants, modest and delicate women, even children of five years old. They stripped themselves naked to the waist, covered their faces that they might not be known, and went two and two, both day and night, in solemn, slow procession, from city to city, with a cross and a banner before them, scourging themselves till the blood tracked their steps, and shrieking out their doleful psalms. Thirty-three days and a half, the number of years of the Lord's sad sojourn in this world of man, was the usual period for the penance of each. Sovereign princes, as Raymond of Toulouse, kings, as Henry II. of England, had yielded their backs to the scourge. Flagellation was the religious luxury of 'Saint' Louis IX. of France, who had his priest scourge him every Friday with an iron chain, and in Lent on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, and who wore in his girdle an ivory case of such scourges, such boxes being his favorite presents to his courtiers. A year of penance was taxed at three thousand lashes. Dominic, the founder of the Mendicant Order, accompanied each Psalm with one hundred lashes; so that the whole Psalter, with fifteen thousand stripes, equaled five years' penance. Dominicus Loricatus (wearing a shirt of mail next his skin) could discharge, in six days, the penance of an entire century, by a whipping of three hundred thousand stripes." Francis of Assisi, from self-flagellation, had made his skin one sore from head to foot, when he died. Scourging was considered a substitute for all the "sacraments of the church," and even for the merits of Christ. It became so excessive and scandalous that even popes and Catholic governments suppressed the public exhibitions; but the merit of voluntary self-chastisement is still a doctrine of Roman Catholicism.

In 1215 King John of England was forced by his barons, at Runnymede, to sign the Magna Charta, the legal basis of English liberties, securing life, liberty and property from arbitrary spoliation—representation with taxation,

the Habeas Corpus, and Trial by Jury. In 1265 "the knights, citizens and burgesses" were summoned to form the House of Commons, and thus, with the House of Lords, complete the organization of the British Parliament.—In 1268 Louis IX. issued an edict, called the Pragmatic Sanction, which, though affirming the plenary power of the pope in all other countries, made an exception in the case of France, "limiting, in that country, the interference of the court of Rome in the elections of the clergy, and directly denying its right of ecclesiastical taxation." This has been considered the great charter of the independence of the "Gallican Church." It was emphasized and enlarged by the Pragmatic Sanction of Charles VII. in 1438, but virtually annulled by the Concordat of Francis I. with Pope Leo X. in 1516, which, though professing to grant to each party mutual privileges, gave the real advantage to Rome; these advantages it has been the constant aim of Rome ever since to improve.

Boniface VIII., who occupied the papal chair from 1294 to 1303, was the most ambitious, arrogant, avaricious, crafty, unscrupulous, revengeful and cruel of all the popes of Rome; and he was believed by his contemporaries to be exceedingly immoral. The unexampled loftiness of his pretensions shook the papal throne to its base, and led to his own most ignominious fall and end. Soon after his death his ineffaceable epitaph was announced to an unprotesting world: "He came in like a fox, he ruled like a lion, and he died like a dog." He craftily procured the abdication of his predecessor, Celestine V., whom he imprisoned, and, it is thought, poisoned. His inauguration was the most magnificent that Rome had ever seen. The kings of Naples and Hungary held the bridle of his noble, richly caparisoned white horse on either side. He had a crown on his head, and was followed by the nobility of Rome, and could hardly make his way through the masses of the kneeling people. In the midst of the inauguration of a furious storm burst over the city, and extinguished every lamp and torch in the building. A riot broke out among the populace, in which forty lives were lost. The next day, while the pope dined in public, the two kings waited behind his chair. In 1296 he published his bull *Clericis Laicos*, declaring himself the one exclusive trustee of all the property held throughout "Christendom" by the clergy, the monasteries and the universities, and that no authority should, on any plea, levy any tax on that property without his distinct permission. This bull was received with

indignant resistance in England and France. To aggrandize his power and enrich his treasury Boniface, by way of a Catholic revival and combination of the old Pagan Roman Secular or Centennial Games and the Mosaic Jubilee, decreed that the last year of the thirteenth century, the year 1300, should be a year of Jubilee, in which all who should make a pilgrimage, not to Jerusalem, but to Rome, and visit for fifteen days "the churches of St. Peter and St. Paul, the tombs of the chief Apostles," and repent and confess, should receive full absolution of all their sins. It was much easier to go to Rome than to Jerusalem. All Europe, we are told, was thrown into a frenzy of religious zeal. The roads everywhere were crowded with pilgrims of all ages, of both sexes. Thirty thousand entered and left Rome in a single day; two hundred thousand strangers were in the city at one time; and it is thought that millions visited it during the year. The offerings were incalculable. An eyewitness reports that two priests stood with rakes in their hands, sweeping the uncounted gold and silver from the altars. The entire treasure was at the free and irresponsible disposal of the pope, who professed to give in return pardon of all sin and everlasting life. During the Jubilee Boniface assumed alternately the splendid habiliments of pope and emperor, with the crown on his head, the sceptre in his hand, and the imperial sandals on his feet; and he had two swords, symbolical of temporal and spiritual power, borne before him, thus openly assuming the unlimited sovereignty of the world. By his bull *Unam Sanctam*, issued in 1302, he declared that *strict submission to the Pope of Rome was absolutely essential to salvation for every individual of the human race*. From this high and golden zenith of pretension he soon had a miserable and fatal fall. He had a long and hot quarrel with King Philip the Fair, of France, who was his equal in avarice, ambition and unscrupulousness, and he was just on the point of excommunicating Philip when the envoy of the latter, William of Nogaret, a stern and bold lawyer, whose grandfather had perished, on the side of the "heretics," in the Albigensian war, attacked with three hundred horsemen and seized the pope in his castle at Anagni, and insulted and imprisoned him. Thirty-four days afterwards the proud-hearted old man of eighty-two died a raving maniac, either beating out his own brains against the wall or smothering himself with his own pillows. The history of the world affords no more striking instance of the truth of the scriptural declaration that "Pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall" (Prov. 16:18).

Among the unscriptural and fanatical sects that appeared in Germany during the thirteenth century were those who called themselves "Brethren and Sisters of the Free Spirit." In their libertine doctrines and deeds they claimed to be above all law human and Divine. "Consistent pantheists, they denied the distinction between good and evil. All was good, they said, for God was good, and God was all and in all; as truly and as much in the sinner sinning as in the saint walking in uprightness; as much honored in and by the one as the other, for He had equally willed the sin and the uprightness." They looked with contempt upon the ordinances of the gospel and upon all external acts of religious worship; and maintained that all persons would finally be absorbed in the Deity, and thus become a part of the Godhead. This doctrine was made by many an apology for all kinds of wickedness.vii[4]viii The Catholic Inquisitors put large numbers of these people to death, not, of course, because of their wickedness, but because of their opposition to Rome.

The scriptural, simple, peaceful, industrious and upright Waldenses in Northern Italy were providentially protected by the favor of the Dukes of Savoy, during the thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, until 1487.

NOTE.—Several eminent historians maintain that, in the very rough and wild times of the Dark Ages, the general influence of the Roman Catholic organization, notwithstanding the gross errors and vices and crimes of numerous individuals in that communion, was a great check on the evil passions of men, and a great political, social and moral benefit.—See George P. Fisher's *Reformation*, p. 9; E. A. Freeman's *General Sketch of History*, p. 169; and W. E. H. Lecky's *Rationalism*, vol. ii., p. 37.

Even a *nominal* reverence for the true God, and a very imperfect acquaintance with the Scriptures of eternal truth, may be attended by important temporal advantages.

ENDNOTES:

ix[1] The continued quotations and perversions which the Papists made of the Old Testament—the popes blasphemously assuming to themselves the prerogatives granted, under the Old dispensation, to men directly and infallibly inspired of God, which prerogatives are, under the New Dispensation, vested solely in Christ, the Divine and Everlasting Prophet, Priest and King of spiritual Israel—were no doubt among the cogent reasons why the Albigenses and other Cathari, who denied the legitimacy of such impious applications of the law and the prophets, were charged with rejecting the Old Testament Scriptures.

x[2]xi The people of these valleys are described by contemporaries as quiet, pious and secluded; their clothing, sheepskins and coarse hempen cloth; their food, milk and venison and the yield of scanty harvests; their houses either built of flint-stone, or dens and caves of the earth; themselves, extremely poor but content; all able to read and write, and delighting to study the Scriptures; and bringing up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

xii[3]xiii See R. C. Trench's *Medieval Church History*; Appletons' American Cyclopaedia, article *Waldenses*; and Ludwig Keller's *Die Reformation*.

xiv[4]xv The true people of God are not anti-Pauline, but Pauline Antinomians; that is, they carry their opposition to the law just as far as, and no further than, Paul did. While they earnestly maintain with him that they are justified freely, without the deeds of the law, by the grace and faith of Christ—that Christ is all their wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption—they, with equal earnestness, maintain with Paul—as Paul did not only in his doctrine, but also in his life—that *the grace and faith of Christ do not make void, but rather establish, God's holy, spiritual and good law of love in the heart of every believer forever*, as that law was eternally in the heart of their elder brother, Christ, and is graciously written by God also in their hearts, in accordance with the blessed promise of the new and everlasting covenant. The Spirit of Christ, that dwells in His people, is the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of *Holiness*, and *frees* them from the love and bondage of sin, upholds them to walk lovingly in the way of His commandments,

teaches them to live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world, and to be careful to maintain good works, unto, which they were created new creatures in Christ Jesus, and in which God hath before ordained that they should walk.
