

“enemy at the polls!” “invasion of Protestant rights!” and the majority are let loose once more on the Catholic trail. It is to be regretted that Catholics do not take a lesson from Protestants and act with more concert in political affairs. They have as much right to demand legislation for the protection of their religion as Protestants have. To this equality Protestants object—they want to rule. They claim all privileges from the State, and wonder why Catholics are even tolerated. What arrogance! All we ask, as Catholics, is equal rights with other denominations before the State. We claim no more, nor shall we be satisfied to take less, let the First Dutch say what it will. When I hear a Protestant minister injuring his lungs in the praise of religious freedom, I feel like cutting off his coat-tails so that every *true* lover of Liberty could get a decent kick at him. His voice is like the song of the siren, that charms but to devour.

CHAP. IV.

PROTESTANT PREACHERS AND THE INQUISITION—THE INQUISITION AND THE WALDENSES—ST. DOMINIC AND THE INQUISITION—SPAIN AND THE INQUISITION—POPE SIXTUS IV AND THE INQUISITION—PASCAL—ROME THE JEWISH PARADISE.

DR. CLARK, in common with all other Protestant preachers, scarcely ever concludes a discourse, without interlarding it with the Inquisition. It is Inquisition in the beginning, Inquisition in the middle, and Inquisition at the end, until their hearers, like themselves, get Inquisition on the brain. We are no apologist for any institution that tyrannizes over the conscience of man, neither would we willingly submit to have opinions, destructive of religion and civil polity thrust upon us. Personally, I regret the Church having any thing to do with the Inquisition, and yet, when I consider the age in which it was instituted in Spain, the circumstances which called it forth, what the Church had to suffer from heresy for eight centuries previous, and the condition of

society, I do not wonder that a check was put on the fomenters of strife in the State, and discord in the Church. It seems hard to take the life of a human creature, to torture, or throw him in prison, but we have examples sufficient to prove that mercy has a limit, even with the Almighty. We well know that God destroyed all the inhabitants of the earth, save Noah and his family ; and the Old Testament is full of examples, where the chosen of the Lord had put thousands to the sword. Whole tribes and nations were disinherited, and cities destroyed by fire from heaven, on account of man's insubordination, his infidelity and his crimes. Protestants will have it that the Inquisition was the work of the Church. Now, this is a lie! They also maintain that it was the ecclesiastical tribunal that passed the penalty of the law. This also is a lie! Dr. Clark told his people, in his lecture on the Waldenses, that they were condemned to death, by the priests, for opinion's sake. This is a palpable lie, and it is a great wonder it did not

choke him when he gave it utterance! Protestants also insist that St. Dominic was its founder, and the good saint has been continually the object of abuse and condemnation, when it is a well established fact that he never opposed heresy with any other weapons than prayer, patience, and good counsel. It is not exactly known when or where the Inquisition was first established ; but this much is certain, that in its first operations it was mild and salutary, and continued so until the civil power made use of it for its own protection. It was not until the latter part of the fifteenth century that its rigors were fairly put into practice. It is unjust, therefore, to charge St. Dominic or any other ecclesiastic with either its severity or its abuse. The part that was intrusted to that order, long after the death of St. Dominic, was the preaching part. Judaism had crept into Spain in or about the fifteenth century. The wealth and intermarriage of the Jews, with many of the noble families of the realm, especially those connected

with the government, had made them a formidable power in the political status of the country. Add to this the influence arising from the remains of Mahometanism, which had already cursed the land with its despotic sway, and deluged its fertile provinces with the blood of its own people. The country was thus jeopardized, by Judaism on the one hand and Islamism on the other. The noble Castilians could not stand this encroachment any longer—a jealousy, deep and bitter, sprang up—the Cortes demanded strong measures against the Jews—the provinces flew to arms, and a most terrible slaughter was the result. The political horizon grew thick and murky, thunderbolts were pent up in the surrounding gloom, when Ferdinand thought it high time to put a stop to the impending danger, which threatened the country, and the Inquisition was accordingly called into operation. Isabella opposed the severe measures, but the king prevailed, and the Inquisition was put in full force. La Maistre says, that “it

is a great error to suppose that we can get rid of a powerful enemy by merely checking him; prudence tells us that we should at least drive him into his intrenchments.” The Spanish Inquisition was not an ecclesiastical instrument to punish men for conscience sake, it was purely royal; and any odium attached to it is to be attributed to the ministers of the crown, and not to the ministers of the Church.

I do not know how Dr. Clark, or any man like him, can draw such horrid pictures of the Inquisition, and then charge them to Catholics, unless he is a close student of the infidel Voltaire, who, in his hatred towards Christianity, ridiculed and falsified every thing connected with its progress and protection. The imaginations of a people are easily worked up by a crafty teacher or a dissembling preacher, so that they will believe the most absurd story against Catholics, because their minds are already made up on that score—their ears being used to such lying calumnies from their earliest infancy.

In conversation with one of Dr. Clark's parishioners a few days ago, he would have it that the priests put heretics on the spit and turned them before great fires — broiled them on gridirons, etc. Was there ever credulity like this? No well educated man, unless he should be a shameless profligate, and breathing the air of infamy, would utter such scandalous abominations. But there are some dupes so blinded by prejudice that they will swallow any thing and every thing no matter how absurd, should its aim be to throw obloquy on our holy religion and its ministers.

A couple of summers ago I met a deacon of one of the Presbyterian churches of Rochester—we boarded at the same hotel, and had many conversations on one subject and another. In the main he seemed pretty well informed, but on the subject of religion his knowledge appeared very limited. In relating to him a story, to illustrate the tenacity of Irish Catholics to the faith of Jesus Christ, during the invasion of Crom-

well, he looked at me with astonishment, and exclaimed, "Well, that's the first time that I ever heard that Catholics believed in the Lord Jesus Christ!" I looked at him with double surprise, and asked him if he truly meant it, and he replied in the affirmative. I went forthwith and procured him a three-penny catechism, and requested him to read it. At first he objected, for he did not suppose it contained any thing good. I prevailed upon him, however, to look it over at his leisure. I saw him next morning after breakfast—he had read it some time during the night, and approached me with the book in his hand saying, "I don't know, after all, that we differ much on the main points of Christian doctrine." He promised me he would investigate the subject more thoroughly, and seemed much mortified at his ignorance of Catholic dogma.

This is precisely the case with thousands of well-meaning Protestants — they are kept in ignorance of the faith of Catholics, and their minds are poisoned by their ministers,

their literature and their traditions. An American may be excused for his ignorance of the religious belief of Chinese Tartary, or the South Sea Islands, but to be unacquainted with the general outlines of Catholic faith, seems to me very singular, to say the least. They have heard more and know less of the Church of Christ, than any other civilized people on the globe. Their ministers will be held to a strict account before the judgment seat of God for all this ignorance. Their ministry is an office of prejudice, hate and rancor, with which they fill the breasts of those over whom they exercise an influence. In that dreadful day when they are arraigned before the face of the great Judge, and as they stand before Him, in all the ugliness of the grave, chattering blasphemy against the Almighty, while thousands upon thousands of their dupes shall come up in judgment against them, howling, in wild confusion, "Ye teachers of perdition, we have been damned through your deception," the Lord will hurl them from His presence,

never more to see the light of His countenance.

We challenge Dr. Clark, or any other person, to point to any Catholic bishop or priest that ever took the life of an individual. They preach rather mercy and forgiveness, clemency and justice, throughout the earth—they but too often yielded up their own lives as a living sacrifice, for the sake of God's poor and the honor of religion. The Catholic Church, kind mother that she is, views mankind in a different light from those who libel her—she looks upon men as the images of that God whom she worships and adores, for well she knows that they all have been ransomed by the blood of Jesus Christ, whether they belong to the household of faith or not.

It was principally for this reason that Pope Sixtus IV allowed ecclesiastics to act as inquisitors, lest any individual should have been unjustly sentenced by the civil magistrates. Dr. Clark, in referring to Pascal, took good care not to mention any opinion

that the great man held favorable to the Church. In one of his provincial letters, he says, "the Church holds the effusion of blood in such abhorrence that she deems all who abet, promote and effect a capital condemnation of a fellow being, although it be accompanied by every religious consideration, to be disqualified from officiating at her altars."

If the Church was given to persecution and the destruction of human life, as has been charged upon her, how comes it that she never yet perpetrated a deed of blood, for opinions' sake, in that province which she legitimately calls her own? There was not a country in all Europe where the Jew was so well protected in his rights, as in the Papal States. In contradistinction to the annoyances to which they were subjected in all other lands in those days, they used to designate Rome as the *Jewish Paradise*. If any fault could be found with the papal government, it should be attributed rather to its mildness and humanity in the exercise

of its authority than otherwise. A more just and paternal code of political ethics never was adopted by a civilized people, than was that of Rome, until English fomenters of rebellion and their infidel allies took up their abode there, hatching sedition and revolt. It was there, among an unsuspecting people, that these villains distilled the poison of rationalism and disobedience to constituted authority, under the pretext of liberty, independence, etc. I never knew a rascal yet that did not appeal to such high sounding pretensions as a cover to hide his depravity — just like the snake that crawls among the flowers, and when the unwary stoops to pluck an inviting blossom, he is met by the deadly fangs concealed beneath.