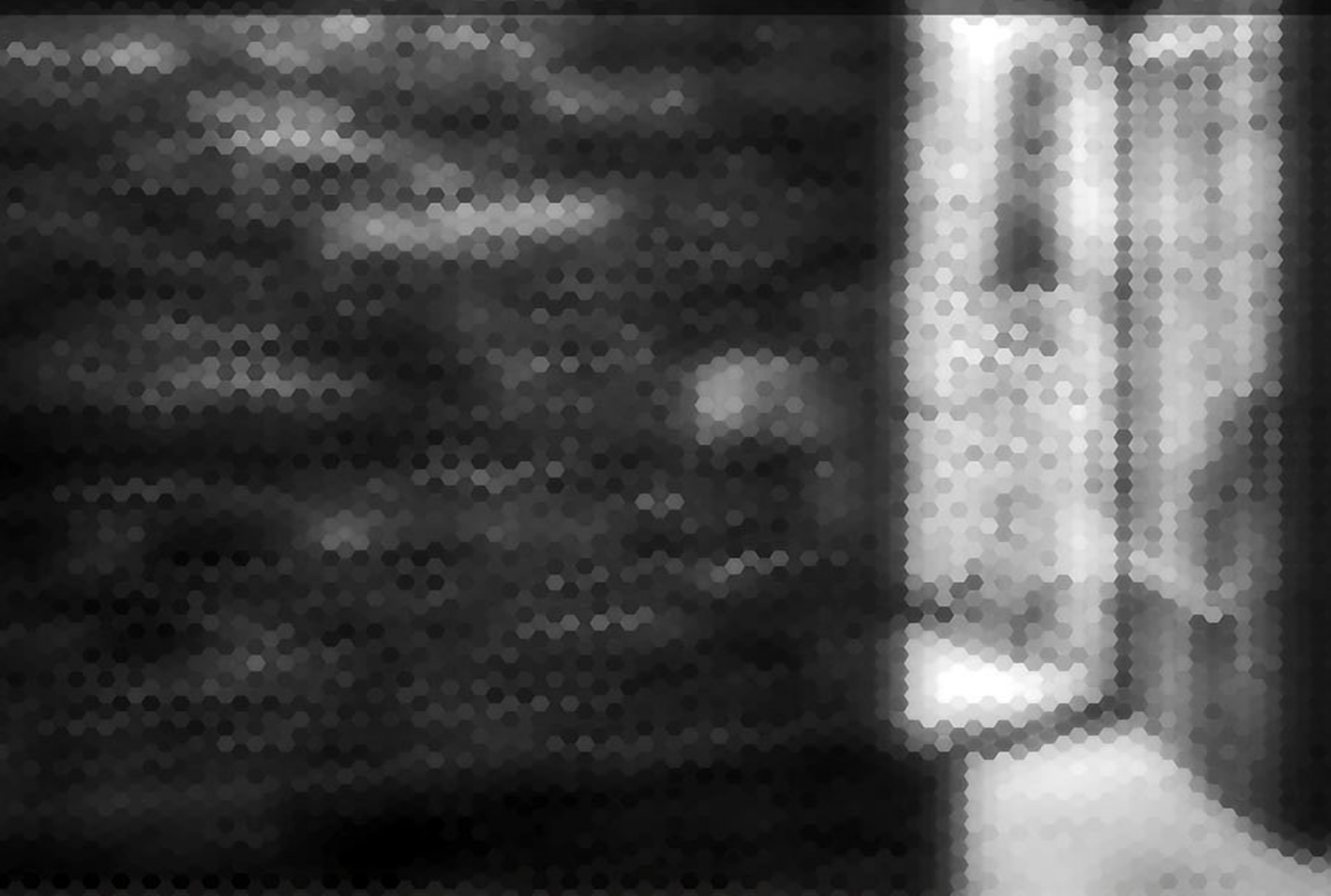


**HENRY CHARLES LEA**

**HISTORY  
OF THE  
INQUISITION**



**Henry Charles Lea**

# **History of the Inquisition**

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# **CHAPTER I.**

## **THE CHURCH.**

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As the twelfth century drew to a close, the Church was approaching a crisis in its career. The vicissitudes of a hundred and fifty years, skilfully improved, had rendered it the mistress of Christendom. History records no such triumph of intellect over brute strength as that which, in an age of turmoil and battle, was wrested from the fierce warriors of the time by priests who had no material force at their command, and whose power was based alone on the souls and consciences of men. Over soul and conscience their empire was complete. No Christian could hope for salvation who was not in all things an obedient son of the Church, and who was not ready to take up arms in its defence; and, in a time when faith was a determining factor of conduct, this belief created a spiritual despotism which placed all things within reach of him who could wield it.

This could be accomplished only by a centralized organization such as that which had gradually developed itself within the ranks of the hierarchy. The ancient independence of the episcopate was no more. Step by step the supremacy of the Roman see had been asserted and enforced, until it enjoyed the universal jurisdiction which enabled it to bend to its wishes every prelate, under the naked alternative of submission or expulsion. The papal mandate, just or unjust, reasonable or unreasonable, was to

be received and implicitly obeyed, for there was no appeal from the representative of St. Peter. In a narrower sphere, and subject to the pope, the bishop held an authority which, at least in theory, was equally absolute; while the humbler minister of the altar was the instrument by which the decrees of pope and bishop were enforced among the people; for the destiny of all men lay in the hands which could administer or withhold the sacraments essential to salvation.

Thus intrusted with responsibility for the fate of mankind, it was necessary that the Church should possess the powers and the machinery requisite for the due discharge of a trust so unspeakably important. For the internal regulation of the conscience it had erected the institution of auricular confession, which by this time had become almost the exclusive appanage of the priesthood. When this might fail to keep the believer in the path of righteousness, it could resort to the spiritual courts which had grown up around every episcopal seat, with an undefined jurisdiction capable of almost unlimited extension. Besides supervision over matters of faith and discipline, of marriage, of inheritance, and of usury, which belonged to them by general consent, there were comparatively few questions between man and man which could not be made to include some case of conscience involving the interpellation of spiritual interference, especially when agreements were customarily confirmed with the sanction of the oath; and the cure of souls implied a perpetual inquest over the aberrations, positive or possible, of every member of the flock. It would be difficult to set bounds to the intrusion upon the concerns



of every man which was thus rendered possible, or to the influence thence derivable.

Not only did the humblest priest wield a supernatural power which marked him as one elevated above the common level of humanity, but his person and possessions were alike inviolable. No matter what crimes he might commit, secular justice could not take cognizance of them, and secular officials could not arrest him. He was amenable only to the tribunals of his own order, which were debarred from inflicting punishments involving the effusion of blood, and from whose decisions an appeal to the supreme jurisdiction of distant Rome conferred too often virtual immunity. The same privilege protected ecclesiastical property, conferred on the Church by the piety of successive generations, and covering no small portion of the most fertile lands of Europe. Moreover, the seignorial rights attaching to those lands often carried extensive temporal jurisdiction, which gave to their ghostly possessors the power over life and limb enjoyed by feudal lords.

The line of separation between the laity and the clergy was widened and deepened by the enforcement of the canon requiring celibacy on the part of all concerned in the ministry of the altar. Revived about the middle of the eleventh century, and enforced after an obstinate struggle of a hundred years, the compulsory celibacy of the priesthood divided them from the people, preserved intact the vast acquisitions of the Church, and furnished it with an innumerable army whose aspirations and ambition were necessarily restricted within its circle. The man who entered the service of the Church was no longer a citizen. He owed

no allegiance superior to that assumed in his ordination. He was released from the distraction of family cares and the seduction of family ties. The Church was his country and his home, and its interests were his own. The moral, intellectual, and physical forces which, throughout the laity, were divided between the claims of patriotism, the selfish struggle for advancement, the provision for wife and children, were in the Church consecrated to a common end, in the success of which all might hope to share, while all were assured of the necessities of existence, and were relieved of anxiety as to the future.

The Church, moreover, offered the only career open to men of all ranks and stations. In the sharply-defined class distinctions of the feudal system advancement was almost impossible to one not born within the charmed circle of gentle blood. In the Church, however much rank and family connections might assist in securing promotion to high place, yet talent and energy could always make themselves felt despite lowliness of birth. Urban II. and Adrian IV. sprang from the humblest origin; Alexander V. had been a beggar-boy; Gregory VII. was the son of a carpenter; Benedict XII., of a baker; Nicholas V., of a poor physician; Sixtus IV., of a peasant; Urban IV. and John XXII. were sons of cobblers, and Benedict XI. and Sixtus V. of shepherds; in fact, the annals of the hierarchy are full of those who rose from the lowest ranks of society to the most commanding positions. The Church thus constantly recruited its ranks with fresh blood. Free from the curse of hereditary descent, through which crowns and coronets frequently lapsed into weak and incapable hands, it called into its service an indefinite

amount of restless vigor for which there was no other sphere of action, and which, when once enlisted, found itself perforce identified irrevocably with the body which it had joined. The character of the priest was indelible; the vows taken at ordination could not be thrown aside; the monk, when once admitted to the cloister, could not abandon his order unless it were to enter another of more rigorous observance. The Church Militant was thus an army encamped on the soil of Christendom, with its outposts everywhere, subject to the most efficient discipline, animated with a common purpose, every soldier panoplied with inviolability and armed with the tremendous weapons which slew the soul. There was little that could not be dared or done by the commander of such a force, whose orders were listened to as oracles of God, from Portugal to Palestine and from Sicily to Iceland. "Princes," says John of Salisbury, "derive their power from the Church, and are servants of the priesthood." "The least of the priestly order is worthier than any king," exclaims Honorius of Autun; "prince and people are subjected to the clergy, which shines superior as the sun to the moon." Innocent III. used a more spiritual metaphor when he declared that the priestly power was as superior to the secular as the soul of man was to his body; and he summed up his estimate of his own position by pronouncing himself to be the Vicar of Christ, the Christ of the Lord, the God of Pharaoh, placed midway between God and man, this side of God but beyond man, less than God but greater than man, who judges all, and is judged by none. That he was supreme over all the earth—over pagans and infidels as well as over Christians—was legally proved

and universally taught by the mediæval doctors.<sup>[1]</sup> Though the power thus vaingloriously asserted was fraught with evil in many ways, yet was it none the less a service to humanity that, in those rude ages, there existed a moral force superior to high descent and martial prowess, which could remind king and noble that they must obey the law of God even when uttered by a peasant's son; as when Urban II., himself a Frenchman of low birth, dared to excommunicate his monarch, Philip I., for his adultery, thus upholding the moral order and enforcing the sanctions of eternal justice at a time when everything seemed permissible to the recklessness of power.

Yet, in achieving this supremacy, much had been of necessity sacrificed. The Christian virtues of humility and charity and self-abnegation had virtually disappeared in the contest which left the spiritual power dominant over the temporal. The affection of the populations was no longer attracted by the graces and loveliness of Christianity; submission was purchased by the promise of salvation, to be acquired by faith and obedience, or was extorted by the threat of perdition or by the sharper terrors of earthly persecution. If the Church, by sundering itself completely from the laity, had acquired the services of a militia devoted wholly to itself, it had thereby created an antagonism between itself and the people. Practically, the whole body of Christians no longer constituted the Church; that body was divided into two essentially distinct classes, the shepherds and the sheep; and the lambs were often apt to think, not unreasonably, that they were tended only to be shorn. The

worldly prizes offered to ambition by an ecclesiastical career drew into the ranks of the Church able men, it is true, but men whose object was worldly ambition rather than spiritual development. The immunities and privileges of the Church and the enlargement of its temporal acquisitions were objects held more at heart than the salvation of souls, and its high places were filled, for the most part, with men in whom worldliness was more conspicuous than the humbler virtues.

This was inevitable in the state of society which existed in the early Middle Ages. While angels would have been required to exercise becomingly the tremendous powers claimed and acquired by the Church, the methods by which clerical preferment and promotion were secured were such as to favor the unscrupulous rather than the deserving. To understand fully the causes which drove so many thousands into schism and heresy, leading to wars and persecutions, and the establishment of the Inquisition, it is necessary to cast a glance at the character of the men who represented the Church before the people, and at the use which they made, for good or for evil, of the absolute spiritual despotism which had become established. In wise and devout hands it might elevate incalculably the moral and material standards of European civilization; in the hands of the selfish and depraved it could become the instrument of minute and all-pervading oppression, driving whole nations to despair.

As regards the methods of election to the episcopate there cannot be said at this period to have been any settled and invariable rule. The ancient form of election by the

clergy, with the acquiescence of the people of the diocese, was still preserved in theory, but in practice the electoral body consisted of the cathedral canons; while the confirmation required of the king, or semi-independent feudal noble, and of the pope, in a time of unsettled institutions, frequently rendered the election an empty form, in which the royal or papal power might prevail, according to the tendencies of time and place. The constantly increasing appeals to Rome, as to the tribunal of last resort, by disappointed aspirants, under every imaginable pretext, gave to the Holy See a rapidly-growing influence, which, in many cases, amounted almost to the power of appointment; and Innocent II., at the Lateran Council of 1139, applied the feudal system to the Church by declaring that all ecclesiastical dignities were received and held of the popes like fiefs. Whatever rules, however, might be laid down, they could not operate in rendering the elect better than the electors. The stream will not rise above its source, and a corrupt electing or appointing power is not apt to be restrained from the selection of fitting representatives of itself by methods, however ingeniously devised, which have not the inherent ability of self-enforcement. The oath which cardinals were obliged to take on entering a conclave—"I call God to witness that I choose him whom I judge according to God ought to be chosen"—was notoriously inefficacious in securing the election of pontiffs fitted to serve as the vicegerents of God; and so, from the humblest parish priest to the loftiest prelate, all grades of the hierarchy were likely to be filled by worldly, ambitious, self-seeking, and licentious men. The material to be selected

from, moreover, was of such a character that even the most exacting friends of the Church had to content themselves when the least worthless was successful. St. Peter Damiani, in asking of Gregory VI. the confirmation of a bishop-elect of Fossombrone, admits that he is unfit, and that he ought to undergo penance before undertaking the episcopate, but yet there is nothing better to be done, for in the whole diocese there was not a single ecclesiastic worthy of the office; all were selfishly ambitious, too eager for preferment to think of rendering themselves worthy of it, inflamed with desire for power, but utterly careless as to its duties.<sup>[2]</sup>

Under these circumstances simony, with all its attendant evils, was almost universal, and those evils made themselves everywhere felt on the character both of electors and elected. In the fruitless war waged by Gregory VII. and his successors against this all-pervading vice, the number of bishops assailed is the surest index of the means which had been found successful, and of the men who thus were enabled to represent the apostles. As Innocent III. declared, it was a disease of the Church immedicable by either soothing remedies or fire; and Peter Cantor, who died in the odor of sanctity, relates with approval the story of a Cardinal Martin, who, on officiating in the Christmas solemnities at the Roman court, rejected a gift of twenty pounds sent him by the papal chancellor, for the reason that it was notoriously the product of rapine and simony. It was related as a supreme instance of the virtue of Peter, Cardinal of St. Chrysogono, formerly Bishop of Meaux, that he had, in a single election, refused the dazzling bribe of five hundred marks of silver. Temporal princes were more

ready to turn the power of confirmation to profitable account, and few imitated the example of Philip Augustus, who, when the abbacy of St. Denis became vacant, and the provost, the treasurer, and the cellarer of the abbey each sought him secretly, and gave him five hundred livres for the succession, quietly went to the abbey, picked out a simple monk standing in a corner, conferred the dignity on him, and handed him the fifteen hundred livres. The Council of Rouen, in 1050, complains bitterly of the pernicious custom by which ambitious men accumulated, by every possible means, presents wherewith to gain the favor of the prince and his courtiers in order to obtain bishoprics, but it could suggest no remedy. The council was directly concerned only with the Norman dukes, but the contemporary King of France, Henry I., was notorious as a vendor of bishoprics. He had commenced his reign with an edict prohibiting the purchase and sale of preferment under penalty of forfeiture of both purchase-money and benefice, and had boasted that, as God had given him the crown gratis, so he would take nothing for his right of confirmation, reproaching his prelates bitterly for the prevalence of the vice which was eating out the heart of the Church. Yet in time he yielded to the custom, and a single instance will illustrate the working of the system. A certain Helinand, a clerk of low extraction and deficient training, had found favor at the court of Edward the Confessor, where he had ample opportunities of amassing wealth. Happening to be sent on a mission to Henry, he made a bargain by which he purchased the reversion of the first vacant bishopric, which chanced in course of time to be Laon, where he was duly



installed. Henry's successor, Philip I., was known as the most venal of men, and from him, by a similar transaction, Helinand purchased, with the money acquired from the revenues of Laon, the primatial see of Reims. Such jobbers in patronage were accustomed to enter into compacts with each other for mutual assistance, and to consult astrologers as to expected vacancies. The manipulation of ecclesiastical preferment was reduced to a system, calling forth the indignant remonstrance of all the better class of churchmen. Instances of these abuses might be multiplied indefinitely, and their influence on the character of the Church cannot easily be overestimated.<sup>[3]</sup>

Even where the consideration paid for preferment was not actually money, the effect was equally deplorable. Peter Cantor assures us that, if those who were promoted for relationship were required to resign, it would cause general destruction throughout the Church; and worse motives were constantly at work. Though Philip I., for his adultery with Bertrade of Anjou, was nominally deprived of the confirmation, or, rather, nomination, of bishops, there were none to prevent his exercise of the power. About the year 1100 the Archbishop of Tours, having gratified the king by disregarding the excommunication under which he lay, claimed his reward by demanding that the vacant see of Orleans should be given to a youth whom he loved not wisely but too well, and who was so notorious for the facility with which he granted his favors (the preceding Archbishop of Tours had likewise been one of his lovers) that he was popularly known as Flora, in allusion to a noted courtesan of the day, and ribald love-songs addressed to him were

openly sung in the streets. Such of the Orleans clergy as threatened trouble were put out of the way by false accusations and exiled, and the remainder not only submitted, but even made a jest of the fact that the election took place on the Feast of the Innocents—

“Elegimus puerum, puerorum festa colentes,  
Non nostrum morem sed regis jussa  
sequentes.”<sup>[4]</sup>

Under such influences it was in vain that the better class of men who occasionally appeared in the ranks of the hierarchy, such as Fulbert of Chartres, Hildebert of Le Mans, Ivo of Chartres, Lanfranc, Anselm, St. Bruno, St. Bernard, St. Norbert, and others, struggled to enforce respect for religion and morality. The current against them was too strong, and they could do little but protest and offer an example which few were found to follow. In those days of violence the meek and humble had little chance, and the prizes were for those who could intrigue and chaffer, or whose martial tendencies offered promise that they would make the rights of their churches and vassals respected. In fact, the military character of the mediæval prelates is a subject which it would be interesting to consider in more detail than space will here admit. The wealthy abbeys and powerful bishoprics came to be largely regarded as appropriate means to provide for younger sons of noble houses, or to increase the influence of leading families. By such methods as we have seen they passed into the hands of those whose training had been military rather than religious. The mitre and cross had no more scruple than the

knightly pennon to be seen in the forefront of battle. When excommunication failed to bring to reason restless vassals or encroaching neighbors, there was prompt recourse to the fleshly arm, and the plundered peasant could not distinguish between the ravages of the robber baron and of the representative of Christ. One of the early adventures of Rodolph of Hapsburg, by which he won the reputation which elevated him to the imperial throne, was the war declared by Walter, Bishop of Strassburg, against his burghers, because they had refused to aid him in gratuitously interfering in a quarrel between the Bishop of Metz and a troublesome noble. As they disregarded his excommunication, Bishop Walter attacked them vigorously, when they placed themselves under the command of Rodolph, and utterly defeated their pastor, after a war which desolated every portion of Alsace. The chronicles of the period are full of details of this nature. Worldly and turbulent, there was little to differentiate the prelate from the baron, and the latter had no more scruple in making reprisals on Church property than on secular possessions. In the dissensions which reduced the wealthy Abbey of St. Tron to beggary, the pious Godfrey of Bouillon, shortly before the crusade which won for him the throne of Jerusalem, ravaged the abbey lands with fire and sword. The people, on whom fell the crushing weight of these conflicts, could only look upon the baron and priest as enemies both; and whatever might be lacking in the military ability of the spiritual warriors, was compensated for by their seeking to kill the souls as well as the bodies of their foes. This was especially the case in Germany, where the prelates were princes as

well as priests, and where a great religious house like the Abbey of St. Gall was the temporal ruler of the Cantons of St. Gall and Appenzel, until the latter threw off the yoke after a long and devastating war. The historian of the abbey chronicles with pride the martial virtues of successive abbots, and in speaking of Ulric III., who died in 1117, he remarks that, worn out with many battles, he at last passed away in peace. All this was in some sort a necessity of the incongruous union of feudal noble and Christian prelate, and though more marked in Germany than elsewhere, it was to be seen everywhere. In 1224 the Bishops of Coutances, Avranches, and Lisieux withdrew from the army of Louis VIII. at Tours, under an agreement that the king should make legal investigation to determine whether the bishops of Normandy were bound to serve personally in the royal armies; if this was found to be the case, they were to return and pay the amercement for deserting him. The decision apparently went against them, for in 1272 we find them serving personally under Philippe le Hardi. This indisposition to fight the battles of others was not often shown when the cause was their own. Geroch of Reichersperg inveighs bitterly against the warlike prelates who provoke unjust wars, attacking the peaceful and delighting in the slaughter which they cause and witness, giving no quarter, taking no prisoners, sparing neither clergy nor laity, and spending the revenues of the Church on soldiers, to the deprivation of the poor. Such a prelate was Lupold, Bishop of Worms, whose recklessness provoked his brother to say, "My lord bishop, you scandalize us laymen greatly by your example. Before you were a bishop you feared God a little, but now you care

nothing for him," to which Bishop Lupold flippantly retorted that when they both should be in hell he would exchange seats if his brother desired. During the wars between the emperors Philip and Otho IV. he personally led his troops in support of Philip, and when his soldiers hesitated about sacking churches, he would tell them that it was enough if they left the bones of the dead. The story is well known of Richard of England, and Philippe of Dreux, the warlike Bishop of Beauvais, who had shown himself equally skilful and ruthless in the predatory warfare of the age, and who, when at last captured by Earl John, complained to Celestin III. of his imprisonment as a violation of ecclesiastical privileges. When Celestin, reproving him for his martial propensities, interceded for his release, King Richard sent to the pope the coat of mail in which the prelate had been captured, with the inquiry made to Jacob by his sons, "Know, whether it be thy son's coat?" to which the good pontiff responded by abandoning the appeal. A different result, not long afterwards, attended a similar experience of Theodore, Marquis of Montferrat, when he defeated and captured Aymon, Bishop of Vercelli. It happened that Cardinal Tagliaferro, papal legate to Aragon, was tarrying at Geneva, and, hearing of the sacrilege, wrote in threatening wise to the marquis, who responded with the same inquiry as King Richard, sending him the martial gear of the prelate, including his sword still stained with blood. Yet the proud noble felt his inability to cope with his spiritual foes, and not only liberated the bishop, but surrendered to him the fortress which had been the occasion of the war. Even more instructive is the case of the Bishop-elect of Verona, who, in

1265, when marching at the head of an army, was taken prisoner by the troops of Manfred of Sicily. Although Urban IV. was busily urging forward the crusade which was to deprive Manfred of life and kingdom, he had the assurance to demand the liberation of his bishop, telling Manfred that if he had a spark left of the fear of God he would dismiss his prisoner. When Manfred replied, evading the demand with exuberant humility, Clement IV., who had meanwhile succeeded to the papacy, called upon Jayme I. of Aragon to intervene. Neither pope seemed to imagine that there could be any hesitation in acceding to the preposterous claim, and King Jayme interposed so effectually that Manfred offered to release the bishop on his swearing not to bear arms against him in future. Even this condition was not accepted without difficulty. When the spiritual character thus only served to confer immunity for acts of violence, it is easy to understand the irresistible temptation to their commission. [5]

The impression which these worldly and turbulent men made upon their quieter contemporaries was, that pious souls believed that no bishop could reach the kingdom of heaven. There was a story widely circulated of Geoffroi de Péronne, Prior of Clairvaux, who was elected Bishop of Tournay, and who was urged by St. Bernard and Eugenius III. to accept, but who cast himself on the ground, saying, "If you turn me out, I may become a vagrant monk, but a bishop never!" On his death-bed he promised a friend to return and report as to his condition in the other world, and did so as the latter was praying at the altar. He announced that he was among the blessed, but it had been revealed to

him by the Trinity that if he had accepted the bishopric he would have been numbered with the damned. Peter of Blois, who relates this story, and Peter Cantor, who repeats it, both manifested their belief in it by persistently refusing bishoprics; and not long after an ecclesiastic in Paris declared that he could believe all things except that any German bishop could be saved, because they bore the two swords, of the spirit and of the flesh. All this Cæsius of Heisterbach explains by the rarity of worthy prelates, and the superabounding multitude of wicked ones; and he further points out that the tribulations to which they were exposed arose from the fact that the hand of God was not visible in their promotion. Language can scarce be stronger than that employed by Louis VII. in describing the worldliness and pomp of the bishops, when he vainly appealed to Alexander III. to utilize his triumph over Frederic Barbarossa by reforming the Church.<sup>[6]</sup>

In fact, the records of the time bear ample testimony to the rapine and violence, the flagrant crimes and defiant immorality of these princes of the Church. The only tribunal to which they were amenable was that of Rome. It required the courage of desperation to cause complaints to be made there against them, and when such complaints were made, the difficulty of proving charges, the length to which proceedings were drawn out, and the notorious venality of the Roman curia, afforded virtual immunity. When a resolute and incorruptible pontiff like Innocent III. occupied the papal chair, there was some chance for sufferers to make themselves heard, and the number of such trials alluded to in his epistles show how wide-spread and deep-rooted was

the evil. Yet, even under him, the protraction of the proceedings, and the evident shrinking from final condemnation, show how little encouragement there was for prosecutions likely to react so dangerously on the prosecutor. Thus, in 1198, Gérard de Rougemont, Archbishop of Besançon, was accused by his chapter of perjury, simony, and incest. When summoned to Rome the accusers did not dare to prosecute the charges, though they did not withdraw them, and Innocent, charitably quoting the woman taken in adultery, sent him back to purge himself and be absolved. Then followed a long course of undisturbed scandals, through which religion in his diocese became a mockery. He continued to live in incest with his relative, the Abbess of Remiremont, and other concubines, one of whom was a nun, and another the daughter of a priest; no church could be consecrated or preferment conferred without payment; by his exactions and oppressions his clergy were reduced to live like peasants, and were exposed to the contempt of their parishioners; and monks and nuns who could bribe him were allowed to abandon their convents and marry. At last another attempt was made, in 1211, to remove him, which, after more than a year, resulted in a sentence that he should undergo canonical purgation; *i.e.*, find two bishops and three abbots to join him in an oath of disculpation, when negotiations as to the character of the oath ensued, lasting until 1214. Finally the citizens rose and drove him out; he retired to the Abbey of Bellevaux, where he died in 1225. Maheu de Lorraine, Bishop of Toul, was a prelate of the same stamp. Consecrated in 1200, within two years his chapter applied to



Innocent for his deposition, alleging that he had already reduced the revenues of the see from a thousand livres to thirty. It was not until 1210 that his removal could be effected, after a most intricate series of commissions and appeals, interspersed with acts of violence. He was wholly abandoned to debauchery and the chase, and his favorite concubine was his daughter by a nun of Épinal, but he retained a valuable preferment, as Grand-prévôt of Saint-Dié. In 1217 he caused his successor Renaud de Senlis to be murdered, soon after which his uncle, Thiebault, Duke of Lorraine, happening to meet him, slew him on the spot. Ordinary justice, apparently, could do nothing with him. Very similar was the case of the Bishop of Vence, whom Celestin III. had ordered suspended and sent to Rome to answer for his enormities, and who had defiantly continued in the exercise of his functions. On Innocent's accession, in 1198, his excommunication was ordered, which was equally ineffectual; and at length, in 1204, Innocent sent peremptory orders to the Archbishop of Embrun to investigate the charges, and, if they were found correct, to depose him. Meanwhile the diocese had been brought to the verge of ruin, the churches were demolished, and divine service was performed in only a few parishes. So in Narbonne, the headquarters of heresy, the Archbishop, Berenger II., natural son of Raymond Berenger, Count of Barcelona, preferred to live in Aragon, where he held a rich abbey and the bishopric of Lerida, and never even visited his province. Consecrated in 1190, he had never seen it in 1204, though he drew large revenues from it, both in the regular way and by the sale of bishoprics and benefices,

which were indiscriminately bestowed on children or on men of the most abandoned lives. The condition of the province, the highest ecclesiastical dignity of France, was consequently shocking in the extreme, through the misconduct of the clergy, the boldness of the heretics, and the violence of the laity. As early as the year 1200, Innocent III. summoned Berenger to account. In 1204 he made another attempt, continued during the following years, as no amendment was visible, and as the farce of appeals from legate to pope was persistently kept up. At length, in 1210, we find Innocent still writing to his legate to investigate the archbishops of Narbonne and Auch and execute without appeal whatever the canons require, but it was not until 1212 that Berenger was removed. It is probable that even then he might have escaped had not the legate, Arnaud of Citeaux, been desirous of the succession, which he obtained. We can readily believe the assertion of a writer of the thirteenth century, that the process of deposing a prelate was so cumbrous that even the most wicked had no dread of punishment.<sup>[7]</sup>

Even where the enormity of offences did not call for papal intervention, the episcopal office was prostituted in a thousand ways of oppression and exaction which were sufficiently within the law to afford the sufferers no opportunity of redress. How thoroughly its profitable nature was recognized, is shown by the case of a bishop who, when fallen in years, summoned together his nephews and relatives that they might agree among themselves as to his succession. They united upon one of their number, and conjointly borrowed the large sums requisite to purchase the

election. Unluckily the bishop-elect died before obtaining possession, and on his death-bed was heartily objurgated by his ruined kinsmen, who saw no means of repaying the borrowed capital which they had invested in the abortive episcopal partnership. As St. Bernard says, boys were inducted into the episcopate at an age when they rejoiced rather at escaping from the ferule of their teachers than at acquiring rule; but, soon growing insolent, they learn to sell the altar and empty the pouches of their subjects. In thus exploiting their office the bishops only followed the example set them by the papacy, which, directly or through its agents, by its exactions, made itself the terror of the Christian churches. Arnold, who was Archbishop of Trèves from 1169 to 1183, won great credit for his astuteness in saving his people from spoliation by papal nuncios, for whenever he heard of their expected arrival he used to go to meet them, and by heavy bribes induce them to bend their steps elsewhere, to the infinite relief of his own flock. In 1160 the Templars complained to Alexander III. that their labors for the Holy Land were seriously impaired by the extortions of papal legates and nuncios, who were not content with the free quarters and supply of necessaries to which they were entitled, and Alexander graciously granted the Order special exemption from the abuse, except when the legate was a cardinal. It was worse when the pope came himself. Clement V., after his consecration at Lyons, made a progress to Bordeaux, in which he and his retinue so effectually plundered the churches on the road that, after his departure from Bourges, Archbishop Gilles, in order to support life, was obliged to present himself daily among his

canons for a share in the distribution of provisions; and the papal residence at the wealthy Priory of Grammont so impoverished the house that the prior resigned in despair of being able to reestablish its affairs, and his successor was obliged to levy a heavy tax on all the houses of the order. England, after the ignominious surrender of King John, was peculiarly subjected to papal extortion. Rich benefices were bestowed on foreigners, who made no pretext of residence, until the annual revenue thus withdrawn from the island was computed to amount to seventy thousand marks, or three times the income of the crown, and all resistance was suppressed by excommunications which disturbed the whole kingdom. At the general council of Lyons, held in 1245, an address was presented in the name of the Anglican Church, complaining of these oppressions in terms more energetic than respectful, but it accomplished nothing. Ten years later the papal legate, Rustand, made a demand in the name of Alexander IV. for an immense subsidy—the share of the Abbey of St. Albans was no less than six hundred marks—when Fulk, Bishop of London, declared that he would be decapitated, and Walter of Worcester that he would be hanged, sooner than submit; but this resistance was broken down by the device of trumping up fictitious claims of debts due Italian bankers for moneys alleged to have been advanced to defray expenses before the Roman curia, and these claims were enforced by excommunication. When Robert Grosseteste of Lincoln found that his efforts to reform his clergy were rendered nugatory by appeals to Rome, where the offenders could always purchase immunity, he visited Innocent IV. in hopes of obtaining some

change for the better, and on utterly failing, he bluntly exclaimed to the pope, “Oh, money, money, how much thou canst effect, especially in the Roman court!” This special abuse was one of old standing, and complaints of its demoralizing effect upon the priesthood date back from the time of the establishment of the appellate jurisdiction of Rome under Charles le Chauve. Prelates like Hildebert of Le Mans, who honestly sought to better the depraved lives of their clergy, constantly found their efforts frustrated, and had scant reticence in remonstrating. Remonstrances, however, were of little avail, though occasionally an upright pope like Innocent III., whose biographer finds special cause of praise in his refusal of “propinas”—gifts or bribes for issuing letters—would sometimes recall a letter of remission avowedly issued in ignorance of the facts, or would even grant to a prelate the right to punish without appeal, while other popes were found who sought to neutralize the effects of their letters without diminishing the business and fees of the chancery. Even when papal letters were not of this demoralizing character, they were never issued without payment. When Luke, the holy Archbishop of Gran, was thrown in prison by the usurper Ladislas, in 1172, he refused to avail himself of letters of liberation procured from Alexander III., saying that he would not owe his freedom to simony.<sup>[8]</sup>

This was by no means the only mode in which the supreme jurisdiction of Rome worked inestimable evil throughout Christendom. While the feudal courts were strictly territorial and local, and the judicial functions of the bishops were limited to their own dioceses so that every

man knew to whom he was responsible in a tolerably well-settled system of justice, the universal jurisdiction of Rome gave ample opportunity for abuses of the worst kind. The pope, as supreme judge, could delegate to any one any portion of his authority, which was supreme everywhere; and the papal chancery was not too nice in its discrimination as to the character of the persons to whom it issued letters empowering them to exercise judicial functions and enforce them with the last dread sentence of excommunication—letters, indeed, which, if the papal chancery is not wronged, were freely sold to all able to pay for them. Europe thus was traversed by multitudes of men armed with these weapons, which they used without remorse for extortion and oppression. Bishops, too, were not backward in thus farming out their more limited jurisdictions, and, in the confusion thus arising, it was not difficult for reckless adventurers to pretend to the possession of these delegated powers and use them likewise for the basest purposes, no one daring to risk the possible consequences of resistance. These letters thus afforded a *carte blanche* through which injustice could be perpetrated and malignity gratified to the fullest extent. An additional complication which not unnaturally followed was the fabrication and falsification of these letters. It was not easy to refer to distant Rome to ascertain the genuineness of a papal brief confidently produced by its bearer, and the impunity with which powers so tremendous could be assumed was irresistibly attractive. When Innocent III. ascended the throne he found a factory of forged letters in full operation in Rome, and although this was suppressed,