

# Religious Liberty and Persecution – Part II



St Bartholomews Massacre In 1572

This is the continuation of [Religious Liberty and Persecution – Part I](#) of chapter XIV of a book written in 1941 entitled, “[Our Priceless Heritage Christian Doctrine In Contrast With Romanism](#)” by Henry M. Woods, D.D, LL.D.

*The conflict between the Government of Mexico and the Roman hierarchy is well known. Was the accusation that the Mexican Government was persecuting the Roman Church true?*

The charge of persecution against the Government of Mexico was not sustained by the facts of the case. The Government properly desired to maintain its sovereignty in civil affairs, and its requirement that Roman priests, like all other Mexican citizens, should obey the laws of the land seems reasonable. The testimony of competent witnesses shows this.

In 1925, a mining engineer who had lived 20 years in Mexico, was asked concerning the conflict between the Government of Mexico and the Roman Church. He replied, “It is nothing new: it is merely *the age-long controversy between Church and State.*” The accusation that the Government was anti-religious, he said, “was not true. It was *not* anti-religious, but *anti-clerical,*” i.e., opposing the defiant attitude of the priests.

A former President of Mexico, Emilio Portes Gil, also stated the case clearly and dispassionately,—“Definitely, the Government is not opposed to religion. The trouble is due to the Catholic clergy who continue to aspire to a worldly or temporal mission which the Constitution denies to all religions. Considering itself superior to the Civil Power, the Church has continued to interfere in the internal policy of Mexico.” He cited as proof the past history of Mexico saying, “It is well known that the clergy and influential laity of the Roman Church brought to Mexico the monarchy of Augustin de Iturbide in 1822, and later the Second Empire in 1864. Maximilian and his Empress left documentary proof of their difficulties in dealing with a clergy *which was determined to dominate a government* that was favorably disposed toward the Catholic religion. Their letters attest the unpatriotic attitude of the Catholic clergy in Mexico.”

“Alas! the Church has not mended its ways. Whatever wealth and power it acquires, it continues to use to *further its selfish aims,* and to increase

its *influence in temporal affairs*." The President added, "In Mexico all religions are welcome to worship, and their ministers are allowed ample freedom in pursuing their spiritual tasks. There is no interference with religion so long as *its leaders do not preach disobedience to the political institutions of Mexico*. No other religion among the many practiced in Mexico, has presented any complaint to the Government, alleging that its ministry has been handicapped, or its worship interfered with."

Again, the Roman hierarchy tried to force the United States Government to interfere in Mexico's internal affairs, on account of a purely Church quarrel, in which the U. S. Government had no right to interfere.

Nine years later the Vatican repeated the same offense. In 1935 a cablegram from Rome was widely published in American newspapers entitled, "The Pope urges Catholic Action in Politics"; and for months Roman Church authorities and Societies carried on a propaganda which was highly prejudicial to the public welfare. The U. S. Ambassador to Mexico, Hon. Josephus Daniel, was publicly denounced by name, and repeated demands were made for his recall, simply because he declined to interfere in matters which were outside of his sphere. Happily the U. S. Government refused to yield to the pressure of the hierarchy, and firmly maintained the American principal of the separation of Church and State.

Also in the Philippine Islands in 1938 the Church of Rome presumed to interfere in Government business. President Quezon, having vetoed a bill in the National Assembly, which would have placed national education under the control of the Roman clergy, the Roman bishops criticized him for exercising his constitutional right, whereupon the President administered a deserved rebuke, saying, "It seems that the Archbishop and bishops are blind to the situation invariably created whenever Church authorities have attempted to interfere in affairs of State. They seem to have closed their eyes to the situation in Mexico and in Spain. They have forgotten the lesson everyone should have learned from our own Revolution against Spain in 1896. The country is now facing one of the most menacing evils which can confront the Government and people of the Philippines, viz.: interference by the Church in the affairs of State."

President Quezon had abundant reason for vetoing the bill, for he remembered Governor-General W. H. Taft's report to the U. S. Senate. In this was revealed the maladministration of education in the Philippine Islands under the control of the Roman Friars, whose immoralities and gross neglect of duty were plainly exposed.

*Can obedience to the pope's command "urging Catholic Action in politics" be harmonized with wholehearted loyalty to the civil government?*

No, it cannot be. "No man can serve two Masters"—a foreign pope and a civil ruler. Sooner or later conflict with the Civil Power must arise. It has always been so in the past, and will always be so in the future.

In view of the Pope's message urging "Catholic Action," and the public statements of an American Archbishop's attempting to *justify ecclesiastical*

*interference in politics*<sup>1</sup>, it is apparent how valueless have been the public assertions of Roman Church leaders in the past that their Church does not interfere in politics. In 1928 when a member of the Roman Communion was candidate for the Chief Office of the U.S. Government, frequent assertions were made that, if elected, his official acts would be entirely free from Vatican influence; and Protestants were called "intolerant" and "bigoted" for receiving these assertions with reserve. At that time it was pointed out that the Vatican's insistence on the supremacy of the Church over State and its frequent interference in politics, directly conflicted with the principles of civil and religious liberty, and therefore, it was not "intolerance and bigotry" but simple recognition of the facts of history which led American citizens to challenge an allegiance which professed entire loyalty to one's own national government, and at the same time loyalty to a foreign government, whose principles were totally different.

<sup>1</sup> Archbishop Curley, who without just cause criticized the President of the United States for pursuing the proper American policy of declining to interfere in the internal affairs of a neighboring, friendly power.

Space does not permit mention of the persecutions by the Papal Inquisition during 300 years, spreading death and terror over Europe.

It is estimated by competent authorities that in the 16th century hundreds of thousands of Protestant martyrs laid down their lives for Christ. Even in this so-called "enlightened" 20th century, *the Roman Church still persecutes, whenever it has the power to do so.*

A few years before the Revolution in Spain which put an end to the monarchy, a Spanish woman who had been converted to the true faith was put in prison for two years for declaring that the *Bible states that the Virgin Mary had other children* beside our Saviour! Matt. 12:47, 48, John 7:5.

During the summer of 1933 two young men in Quebec, Canada, who had been converted by reading the Bible, were arrested and imprisoned on complaint of a Roman priest because they *distributed Christian tracts.*

In 1935 the Rev. Victor Rahard, formerly head of a religious Order of the Church of Rome, was converted to the true faith, and became minister of the English Church of the Redeemer in Montreal, Canada. He was bitterly denounced by the Roman Church, was arrested, tried in the Civil Court and fined \$100.00 because he exhibited at the door of his church a statement of Christian truth taken verbatim from the "39 Articles of the Church of England." Fortunately, as in the case of St. Paul, God made the persecution of this faithful servant turn out "to the furtherance of the Gospel," for many fair-minded Catholics were drawn to his Church and were won to the original Christian faith.

The Church of Rome's boast, *Semper eadem*, "Always the same," is certainly true of her unchristian persecution of those who differ from her in faith; wherever she has the power, she still persecutes, just as in the days of the cruel Inquisition.

A missionary in Brazil writes: "Ten years ago a mob of Romanists raided one

of my chapels and burnt all the furniture, including the Bible, which was approved by Roman Church authorities.”

“As we were leaving Brazil on furlough in 1937, a mob, incited by the local priest, burnt the Presbyterian Church at Ventanis. Again, since our arrival in the United States, news has come of the destruction by explosives of the Presbyterian chapel at Rio Paranahyba.”

The same year two Indian converts at Tayabamba on the upper Amazon, were imprisoned in a cell, the floor of which was covered with water. For 34 days they were kept without trial, on charges which were proved to be false. They wrote to the missionary in charge, “pray that we may be kept faithful to the Lord, and that our wives and children may be comforted in their sorrow.” Letter of Dr. E. E. Lane, February, 1938.

The Reverend Augusto Bersani, pastor of the Italian Protestant Church in Montreal, knows by experience the unjust attempts of the Roman clergy to deprive of their religious liberty those who desire to follow the dictates of conscience. When it becomes known that an Italian has become a Protestant, he is denounced to the civil authorities as a Communist, and his deportation to Italy is demanded. Rev. Bersani wrote: “During the past year (1937) I have had to appeal to the Department of Immigration on behalf of 27 Italians who have committed no other offense than changing their religious beliefs! In one case, a young man was arrested and held for deportation within 24 hours after declaring *his faith in the Protestant Church!*”

It is well known that this flimsy pretext of charging persons with Communism was used by the Insurgents in Spain to excite odium against the Spanish Republican Government. Loyalists were called Communists, although the rebels knew perfectly well that they were good Republicans. They knew that there were thousands of loyal Catholics, like the Basques, who heartily supported the Republican Government, though it suited the purpose of the Vatican to declare otherwise.

More attempts at persecution were revealed by the passage of the “*Padlock Law*” of Quebec, which was clearly a menace to religious liberty. Newspapers of Toronto of February 6, 1938, published front page dispatches headed, “Sale of Bibles banned by Quebec City Police,” and “Circulation of Bibles halted by Padlock Law.” The Padlock Law was rightly called “an astounding piece of legislation.” The law made no provision in the case of an accused person, for trial by jury, or for a hearing before a judge. In the Attorney-General alone was vested the power of deciding what under this law were illegal activities or utterances! “This law enabled the Government of Quebec to padlock any newspaper, building or private home, which might be suspected of disseminating any views on faith, morals or economics, of which the Government disapproved! Here is an enactment so constructed that it might be turned to any purpose, good or bad, depending solely on the will of the man, or group of men, behind it.”

The Globe and Mail, and Toronto Star, The Evangelical Christian, March, 1938, pages 64 and 117.

Roman Church authorities strenuously try to deny the widespread and virulent persecution which for centuries were inflicted on those who rejected their teachings, and which they still inflict as far as they have the power. But their denials are useless in view of the plain facts of history. It would be well to remember the words of an impartial historian, who wrote regarding the cruel persecutions which the Roman Church inflicted:

"The so-called horrors of the French Revolution were a mere bagatelle, a summer shower, by the side of the atrocities committed in the name of religion and with the sanction of the Catholic Church." Estimating the number of unfortunates who perished in the French Revolution at 5,000 at most, Professor Froude says, "Multiply the 5,000 by ten, and you do not reach the number of those who were murdered in France alone in August and September, 1572. 50,000 Flemings and Germans are said to have been hanged, burnt or buried alive under Charles V."

"Add to this the long agony of the Netherlands under Philip II, the 30 years war in Germany, the ever recurring massacres of the Huguenots, and remember that the Roman Catholic religion alone was at the bottom of all these horrors; that the crusades against the Huguenots especially were solemnly sanctioned by successive popes, and that no word of censure ever issued from the Vatican, except in the brief intervals when statesmen and soldiers grew weary of bloodshed and looked for some means to admit the heretics to grace." Froude's *Condition and Prospects of Protestantism*, pp. 143, 144.

*Why should such facts as these be recounted?*

Because *they are true*, and the publication of truth is always salutary, while the ignoring or suppressing of the truth is always harmful. There is no better way of appraising an institution or religious system than by ascertaining its effect on human conduct. "By their fruits ye shall know them." The warnings of history should be heeded. They show the baleful effect of false principles on the life of a nation, which result in dishonor to God and immense suffering to multitudes of innocent people. Moreover, like causes produce like effects. What has taken place in the past, may recur in the future. Those mistaken principles which formerly wrought great injury to individuals and governments, will cause the same injury in the future, if unchecked. The greatest safeguard of the public welfare, against the repetition of wrongdoing, is to make it known, and point out its causes.

*Have the popes of Rome ever expressed sorrow for the dreadful persecutions for which they were responsible, or have they ever renounced the false dogmas which led to them?*

Sad to say, so far as is known, no pope has ever publicly expressed sorrow for the bitter persecutions they have caused; nor have they renounced the grave errors which have led to such gross violation of human rights. Some apologists for the Papacy have vainly tried to deny the plain facts of history; while others have attempted to deny the responsibility of the Roman Church for persecutions by alleging that the Church only condemned heretics, and the civil government put them to death!

A Church history under the imprimatur of Archbishop Glennon, 1904, even attempts to "whitewash" the Roman Inquisition, asserting that the Inquisition "*has never shed a drop of blood!*" But this is a childish subterfuge, an unworthy attempt to dodge the verdict of history and escape the odium which justly attaches to papal persecutions; for it is a universally recognized principle of law that the party who instigates, or procures the commission of a crime is as truly responsible for that crime as the actual perpetrator. The Church of Rome was the power behind the act, which urged and procured the bitter persecution and death of heretics, and impartial public opinion will always hold her responsible for these acts.

As long as the popes of Rome continue falsely to claim supreme spiritual and temporal power over the world, the Roman Church will rightly be held responsible for the hideous persecutions which have disgraced the Christian name.

### **The Papal Church Still Upholds Persecution to Death for Religious Belief**

Not only has the Roman Church not repudiated the unchristian dogma of the persecution to death of heretics, but it has continued to justify and teach it, certainly up to the year 1910.

#### **Pius IX**

Pius IX upheld persecution and all its attendant cruelties, when he pronounced it an error to hold that "in the present day it is no longer expedient for the Roman Catholic religion to be considered the only religion of the State to the exclusion of all other modes of worship"; and "also an error to hold that the Church should not *avail itself of force, directly or indirectly, through the temporal power.*" The pope thus teaches that no Church other than that of Rome has a right to exist, and that it is right and proper to use force to crush those who do not accept the papal system. Remember that Pius IX did not live in the Dark Ages, but in the 19th Century. The Church of Rome therefore had no excuse for maintaining a barbarous dogma, which was repugnant not only to the Christian faith, but also to the best teachings of pagan sages.

#### **Leo XIII**

Pope Leo XIII (died in the 20th century, 1903) maintained the same odious dogma of persecution, that "heretics" ought to be put to death. In 1901 a book entitled *Institutiones Juris Ecclestastici*, by Marianus di Luca, professor in the papal college at Rome, was issued from the Vatican Press. This book declared that the Church "has a coercive power, even to the extent of the death sentence." "It must put these wicked men (heretics) to death."

Mr. A. B. Sharpe, in *Questions and Answers*, page 46, defines as "heretics" all Christians "who reject the teaching of the Roman Catholic Church" among whom he generously includes such excellent company as Milton, Bunyan, Whitefield, the Wesleys, William Penn, George Fox, Chalmers and Moody, mentioning them by name, and by implication including them among the "wicked men, who ought to be put to death!"

Again in a duly authorized book entitled Aquinas Ethicus, by Joseph Rickaby, S.J., vol. I, pp. 332, 333, the execution of death sentence for heretics is urged. In reply to the question, "Are heretics to be tolerated?" it is said, they should "not only be excommunicated, but also banished from the world by death. If coiners or other malefactors are at once handed over by secular princes to a just death, much more may heretics, immediately they are convicted of heresy, be not only excommunicated, but done to death."

Cardinal Lépicier, twice legate of the pope, in a volume published by him in 1910 entitled, "The Stability and Progress of Dogma," wrote, "If heretics profess publicly their heresy, and incite others to embrace the same errors, none may doubt that they deserve not only to be separated from the Church by excommunication, but even to be cut off by death from the number of the living!"

### **PROSCRIPTION OF PROTESTANTS SUGGESTED**

Rev. J. A. Ryan, of the Catholic University, Washington, D. C., in his book, "The State and the Church," 1922, upholds persecution for religious belief and even the proscription of non-Catholics. He says: "A Catholic State could tolerate only such religious activities as were confined to the members of the dissenting group. It could not permit them (Protestants, etc.) to carry on a general propaganda, nor accord their organizations certain privileges that had formerly been extended to all religious corporations, for example, exemption from taxation."

Knowing that the Supremacy of Church over State, which popes advocate, is not possible under the Constitution of the United States, Mr. Ryan adds: "But constitutions can be changed, and non-Catholic sects may decline to such a point that the proscription of them may become feasible and expedient!" The Century Dictionary and Cyclopedia defines proscribe as, "to outlaw," "to publish one's name as condemned to death, and Hable, to confiscation of property." In other words, Rev. Ryan suggests that *if a Roman Catholic party ever got firm control of the U. S. Government, they could change the constitution, and "proscribe," or outlaw all Christians who prefer to follow the Bible and conscience rather than the pope!* Who would imagine that such intolerant dogmas could be held in this 20th Century? Does this not indicate a relapse to the superstition and despotism of the Dark Ages? Surely "eternal vigilance is the price of liberty!"

The present position of the Church of Rome regarding the punishment of heretics is that, in principle, it follows the teachings of St. Thomas Aquinas, who declared that "the Church, no longer hoping for the heretic's conversion, delivers him to the secular tribunal to be exterminated thereby from the world by death." It is greatly to the discredit of the Roman Church that it has not repudiated its barbarous cruelty in the treatment of heretics, but continues to try to justify itself, and now merely holds the infliction of the death penalty *"in abeyance* (not being used at present)." The Catholic Encyclopedia states: "the present day legislation (of the Roman Church) against heresy has lost nothing of its ancient severity; but the penalties on heretics are now only of a spiritual order; all the punishments which require the intervention of the secular arm have fallen into abeyance."

Reading between the lines this means: "Humane and enlightened civil governments have deprived us of the power to murder heretics that we once had; we are now obliged by civil law to refrain, so we hold the barbarous practice '*in abeyance*.'" Think how deplorably far Papal teachings and practice are from the love and mercy of Him whose example the Church professes to follow! Rom. 12:19-21, I Tim. 2: 24-26.

*WHAT WAS THE ATTITUDE OF POPE PIUS XI TOWARD THE ETHIOPIAN WAR AND THE WAR IN SPAIN? DID HE BRAVELY STAND FOR PEACE, REGARDLESS OF CONSEQUENCES?*

It is most deplorable that Pius XI, while uttering vague platitudes favoring peace, in reality yielded to political pressure and approved the war. Did not the pope bless the Italian armies as they embarked on their unrighteous crusade of conquest, a crusade of brute force and violence against a weak nation, which had given no provocation for the attack made upon it? And did he not try to gloss over his unjustifiable attitude before a disapproving world by miscalling the crusade a "mission for civilization?" The pontiff had a rare opportunity to prove his sincerity by standing firmly for the law of God, upholding right against might, and law against brute force; but alas for the weakness and inconsistency of human nature which in the hour of crisis chooses expediency not principle, and, disregarding the Divine voice, "*follows the multitude to do evil!*"

Concerning the tragic onslaught on Ethiopia, Mr. William Teeling, a Roman Catholic, remarks in a recent book, "The fact must be faced that practically without exception the whole world condemned Mussolini, *except the pope!*"<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The Pope in Politics; The Life and Work of Pope Pius XI by William Teeling September, 1937.

As for Spain, pitiful were the frantic appeals made to the pope by loyal Catholics beseeching him to use his influence to stop the war, but all in vain! M. Aquirre, President of the Basque Government, who signed himself "a practicing Catholic," wrote urging the Papal See to break its silence in view of the massacre of Catholic women and children, but no reply came!

M. Francois Mauriac also addressed the pope, pleading that the terrible destruction of life and property might cease, but to no purpose. M. Mauriac wrote—"General Franco is one of 'the faithful'; one power alone can lower his arm" (that is, your power, as a supposed minister of Christ), but the pope turned a deaf ear to the cry of distress of Catholics, who were maligned as *Communists!*

M. Maurice Dargaud, commenting in the Lyon *Républicain* on the ominous silence of the Papal See, which meant ruin to Spain, declared: "Whether they wish it or not, their silence expresses this— 'Back, ye who implore and weep! The Vatican diplomacy requires these things!' It blessed the massacres of Ethiopia: it is indifferent when 'the most Catholic country of Europe' is ravaged with fire and sword! It is no longer deniable that the high dignitaries of the Church are visibly allied with the powers who control the forces of money and violence!" *S. 8. Times*, October, 1937, page 747.



Bear in mind that these statements were made, not by men who were unfriendly to the papacy, but largely by Catholics, who indignantly protested against the wars in Ethiopia and Spain as blots on the Christian name, perpetrating hideous wrongs which caused the cruel death of thousands of innocent people!

No thoughtful observer can help asking—"Would it not be well if the Papal See, instead of using plausible generalities to exhort the nations of the world to peace, would try to realize how weak and unchristian its attitude toward the wars in Ethiopia, Spain, and China appear, not only to impartial observers of the outside world, but also to many earnest souls in its own flock? When the Great Day of Reckoning comes and all nations stand before the Bar of Almighty God, will the specious plea, "*the Vatican diplomacy required these things*" then avail?

Concerning China and the brutal war inflicted on her by Japan, the *Daily Telegraph* of London in 1938 referred to a circular which the pope addressed to Chinese Roman Catholic bishops, in which he wished to correct the impression that his sympathies were with the Japanese in their invasion of China.

The pope said in substance that he had expressed no opinion about the war, but his circular ended with a pro-Japanese hint, that "it would be well to remember that the Japanese armies were fighting against Bolshevism." A commentator in the *British Weekly* remarked, "We had always supposed that it was General Chiang Kai-shek who was fighting Bolshevism in China till the Japanese invasion! The papal policy seems dominated by an anti-Bolshevism which is little short of obsession. It is an international disaster that, as Mr. William Teeling says, "The Political policy of Rome seems to become more and more identified with organizations on totalitarian lines." While the pope complained of persecution of the Church in Germany, "in the rest of the world he seems everywhere to give his blessing to the forces of reaction. He has condoned, or seems to be condoning, the two most ghastly international crimes of recent years. He has shown himself in all these matters to be little more than a small Italian politician. This is more dangerous to the Roman Church than all the machinations of the enemy!"

Even Turkey was shocked by the painful contrast between the Vatican's profession and practice. Concerning the war in China the journal *Tan* of Ankara expressed surprise at the Vatican's announcement condoning Japan's unjustifiable assault on a peaceable nation, saying, "When Jesus wrote the Gospels, He took the side of the slaves who were being killed by torture, and announced that Christianity was against the cruel aggressors. In our day when we write about those who are savagely treated, we point to the victims of Ethiopia and the Chinese, who are being murdered by the million. Has the task of defending all the Judases who are crushing the oppressed. to earth fallen to the 'holy' spiritual Head of the Vatican?" *Revelation*, June, 1938, page 246.

In 1938, the Mexican journal *Nacional* rebuked Mexican bishops for "using a message of sympathy sent to the Spanish clergy to play a political role in Mexico," and indignantly commented as follows: "The Mexican bishops express sympathy only with those who died in the Spanish rebel ranks! They forget

that the Basque people, Catholic by tradition, do not regard their religious creed as an obstacle to aiding the cause of the Spanish Republic. They also forget the Church buildings destroyed by the 'holy' machine guns of General Franco's foreign legions! Today Mexican bishops cannot assert that they are being attacked, or call attention to one single act of intolerance by Mexican Government authorities. The aim of the Mexican Episcopate is political domination, and it does not mind what alliances it uses to obtain its end—agitation abroad, or foreign alliances not sanctioned by law or justice.”

A Canadian journal! comments—“This last paragraph presents the case in a nutshell. Mexico has found out what every other country has had to find out by painful experience, viz.: that spiritual and political freedom are impossible, where the Church of Rome holds sway!”

Thus it is clear that the attitude of the Mexican Government toward the Church of Rome was reasonable and fair. It rightly wished to manage its own affairs without interference from a hierarchy which sought power that did not belong to it, and which held a theory of the Church, that has no foundation in Holy Scriptures, and is impossible, if true civil and religious liberty are to be preserved.

*IN AUSTRIA DID NOT THE VATICAN PRACTICALLY SURRENDER TO THE DEMANDS OF THE GERMAN GOVERNMENT, AND HEARTLESSLY SACRIFICE THE RIGHTS OF ITS PEOPLE?*

It did. Cablegrams from Vienna of April, 1938, reported that Cardinal Innitzer, primate of Austria, and five Roman bishops had issued an official order which was read in the Austrian Churches, urging all Catholics to support the “union” of Austria with Germany —“union” being an euphemism for the enforced surrender of Austria to the German Reich, and its complete extinction as an independent State!

In this official order “four duties were enumerated which should bind every Catholic.—Obedience to the new worldly authority; unbounded loyal cooperation in the development of the Fatherland; manifestation of Catholicism in the new situation; and a daily prayer for the great German nation and its Fuehrer! In other words, surrender without protest your national life, and “Kiss the rod” by praying for the prosperity of the Church's ruthless enemy! No little perturbation and vacillation seemed to have followed the Cardinal's announcement. A sharp rebuke was flashed from the Vatican radio station, denouncing as disloyal Catholics those who favored surrender to the German Government! This was at once followed by a second message from the Vatican disclaiming responsibility for the previous one! Amid the babel of conflicting voices, a perplexed laity could not discern the Vatican's real meaning. Meanwhile the pope had hastily summoned the Austrian Cardinal who, to smooth over a humiliating situation and “save face,” published a vague statement like the Delphic Oracle of old, that the order to submit to the Nazi demands “obviously did not mean approval of that which was not, and is not, compatible with the laws of God and the liberty of the Catholic Church!”

Later dispatches revealed that the German Government, throwing aside its cloak of “union,” and intent on pressing its advantage to the utmost, was proceeding sweepingly to Naziize the whole fabric of Austrian public

life—military, judicial, political and financial,— even the Austrian schilling being at once replaced by the German mark; and the famous Library of Vienna was “purged” of all books deemed “objectionable.” Before long the promised “union” became a conquest, and the former Head of the Austrian Government, Count von Schuschnigg, who, as in duty bound, had striven to protect his country’s interest against armed aggression, was arrested and imprisoned as a conquered enemy!

Thus a proud Empire, which for 400 years under the Hapsburg dynasty had played a leading part in the affairs of Europe, and whose capital had been famous throughout the world as a center of learning, science, music and art,—forever disappeared from the pages of history!

It is reported on good authority that concentration camps were filled with patriotic Austrians, who bitterly protested against such summary and treacherous treatment, and not a few, overwhelmed with grief, committed suicide! Alas, one looked in vain for any courageous, determined effort on the part of the Papal See to stand in the face of danger for justice and right! What a pitiful surrender apparently without even a dignified, earnest protest, for the Fuehrer had distinctly promised that the union of Austria should not be forced! Did the pope and the Austrian Cardinal lack the martyr spirit of John Huss and Martin Niemoller?—*New York Times* and *Philadelphia Journals* of April 20-25, 1938.

One must be blind indeed who cannot read, at least in part, the lessons of these grave events; the sin and folly of a fallible human being attempting to be the Head of a Church of which Christ alone is the true Head: and at the same time claiming in direct violation of Christ’s words, “MY KINGDOM IS NOT OF THIS WORLD,” to be an earthly ruler, who, by dabbling in the muddy stream of politics, degrades and brings reproach upon the Christian faith! What floundering in the bogs of inconsistency and moral compromise could be avoided by humbly obeying the plain teaching of Holy Scripture, —*Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and unto God the things that are God’s!*

## **THE PERNICIOUS EFFECT OF THE TEACHINGS OF ULTRAMONTANISM IN THE ROMAN CHURCH**

Ultramontanism: The clerical political conception within the Catholic Church that places strong emphasis on the prerogatives and powers of the Pope.

Lord Acton, though a Romanist, spoke plainly of the great injury resulting from the dogma of Ultramontanism, that is, the Italian theory which centers in the absolute infallibility and power of the pope and lays claim to civil as well as religious jurisdiction; this in contrast to the theory of the Gallican or French Church. Acton wrote: “In requiring submission to papal decrees on matters not articles of faith, they (the ultramontane clergy) were investing with new authority the existing bulls and giving unqualified sanction to the Inquisition and the Index, to the murder of heretics and the deposing of Kings. They approved what they were called upon to reform, and blessed with their lips what their hearts knew to be accursed.” *Introductory*

*Memoir to Lord Acton's Letters*, pp. xliii, xliv.

Again, holding the papacy justly responsible for the Inquisition which was murderous, he wrote: "Therefore, the most awful imputation in the catalogue of crimes rests upon those whom we call Ultramontanes. The controversy is not primarily about problems of theology: it is about the spiritual state of a man's soul who is the defender, the promoter, the accomplice of murder." "I will show you what Ultramontanism makes of a good man by an example very near home. St. Charles Borromeo, the pope's nephew and minister, wrote a letter requiring Protestants to be murdered, and complaining that no heretical heads were forwarded to Rome, in spite of the reward that was offered for them! His editor (Cardinal Manning) published the letter with a note of approval. The Cardinal thus not only holds up to the general veneration of mankind the authority that canonized the murderer, but makes him (Borromeo) in a special manner his own patron." In other words, Borromeo's demand for the heads of Protestant victims to be sent to Rome, Cardinal Manning's approval of this murder, and the pope's making a saint of him, may all be accounted for by the virus of Ultramontanism! *Letters of Lord Acton*, page 186.

Perhaps, one may ask, surely intelligent Romanists do not now hold these medieval fictions regarding papal power, which are impossible from the viewpoint of Holy Scripture, and also from that of free, enlightened governments? Alas! many still hold them. For though they see how inconsistent they are with the Word of God, and how prejudicial to the welfare of free governments, yet they have been taught from youth to believe that popes are infallible, and therefore dare not, under penalty of anathemas and excommunication, reject these false dogmas. Being in bondage to these beliefs from childhood, they are blind to the fact that loyalty to a pope means disloyalty to their Creator, whose high place he usurps, and that loyalty to a pope may also mean disloyalty to the free government to which every citizen owes the rights he enjoys, and to which his wholehearted allegiance is due.

If intelligent laymen in the Roman Catholic body will carefully examine the Scriptures and trustworthy history, they will be convinced that the claims of the papacy are entirely unfounded, and that it is their duty to acknowledge the Lord Jesus Christ as the true and only Head of God's Church, whom they will henceforth obey and serve. Christ is now calling honest laymen in the papal body,—'COME YE OUT OF HER, MY PEOPLE, THAT YE BE NOT PARTAKER OF HER SINS!' Rev. 18:4, I Cor. 6: 14-18.

May all governments and peoples come to see that the Holy Scriptures are the root of civil and religious liberty; that the papacy has no foundation in Holy Scripture, but is merely the false principle of totalitarianism grafted on religion; and acknowledging Christ alone as Head of the Christian Church and Lord of the conscience may all men thus be brought "into the glorious liberty of the children of God!" Rom. 8:21.