

# The Papacy And The Civil Power –

## Chapter XVI. Henry VIII. Part 1

A portrait of Henry VIII of England, wearing a white cap and a dark, patterned robe with a large collar. He is looking slightly to the right.

### Henry VIII of England

- Wished to divorce Catherine of Aragon and marry Anne Boleyn
- Pope refused to grant it
- Henry dismissed the authority of the Pope in Rome
- declares himself head of the Church of England, or Anglican Church

Continued from [Chapter XV. The English Barons.](#)

Religious Persecution antedates Protestantism.—Lucius III. and Innocent III. persecute the Waldenses and Albigenses.—The Fourth Lateran Council.—The Third Canon provides for extirpating Heretics, and taking away their Country.—Law of the Church.—Acted upon in the Fifteenth Century by Innocent VIII.—The Practice of Innocent III. under it.—Persecution made a Religious Duty.—Reformation in Germany.—Luther and the Pope.—Henry VIII. and the Pope quarrel about Supremacy, not Faith. Protestants do not assist Him.—The Pope releases his Subjects from their Allegiance.—Their Adherents persecute each Other.—More and Fisher.—Henry VIII. always a Roman Catholic in Faith.—He persecutes Reformers and Papists.—Edward VI. the first Protestant King.—He does not persecute Papists.—Gives the Crown to Lady Jane Grey.—Mary, the Rightful Heir, proclaimed Queen.—Her Promise to the Reformers that they should not be disturbed in their Religion.—She refuses to be bound by her Promise.—The Teachings of Rome.—Mary's Measures all Papal. Her Persecution of Protestants.—Her Marriage to Philip of Spain.—The Result of the League between Pope Paul III. and Charles V.—Cardinal Pole.—Dictates Policy of the English Government.—Persecutions continue.—Hooper, Latimer, and Ridley.—Elizabeth.—She persecutes both Papists and Protestants.—Is educated in the School of Rome.—Only seeks to substitute Imperial Protestantism for Imperial Romanism.

IT was impossible, in the very nature of things, that the condition of affairs portrayed in the last chapter could long exist in England without some material change. The barons had placed themselves between the people and the king, and were the representatives of principles of civil polity which they could not now surrender without an abandonment of the best interests of the country and their own honor. The Lollards, under the lead of Wycliffe, were similarly situated, as it regarded the principles of religious belief and the affairs of the Church.

Upon one point they agreed; that is, the necessity for reform. The barons were laboring to reform the State; the Lollards, the Church. The barons were not ready to concede that the king was the State; nor were the Lollards ready to concede that the pope was the Church. Such concessions on the part of both of them would have given to absolutism a perfect triumph over all the ancient liberties, and would have left England completely subdued. She would then have been, in fact, a fief of the Holy See, with no claim whatever to an independent national existence. With her Parliament constituted as it then was, subordinated to the king, and with the king subordinated to the pope, the people would have borne the same relations to the papacy that the people of the Papal States did—that of entire dependence. The pope, as a thorough

politician, could see all this, and therefore left no possible means unemployed to hold both the barons and the Lollards in subjection. For, whatever else he may have seen, it must have been apparent to him that, unless the reform sought for by each was speedily checked, they would both ultimately reach some common point of union which would make them strong enough to materially weaken both the papal and the kingly power.

As the controversy waxed warmer and warmer, the respective parties became more earnest and aggressive; the barons more determined not to yield; the Lollards more resolved upon Church reform; and the pope and the king more resolved upon keeping the Church and the State so united that their combined power would be sufficient to suppress all free inquiry, and to keep the people in a condition of vassalage.

It was an issue between power and right—the former represented by the pope and the king, the latter by the people, in civil affairs under the lead of the barons, and in the affairs of the Church under the lead of the Lollards. As in all such controversies, power has invariably resorted to force to keep itself in place, so it did in this. This force, however, did not proceed exclusively from the King and Government of England, inasmuch as by this time the influences of the combined opposition had become too great for open resistance by the king and Parliament. But as the pope had assumed to himself the divine prerogative of governing the country, both in its civil and ecclesiastical policy, and held the king in complete subjugation, the Church was relied on as furnishing, through its ecclesiastical organization, whatsoever was necessary in that direction to accomplish the desired end.

The pope's recognized right of dictation to the king made him responsible for the oppressive measures resorted to by the latter; while his position as the infallible head of the Church made him equally responsible for the oppressive measures of the Church. It is manifestly true that the principles of Magna Carta would have gone into immediate effect in England but for the interference of the pope; for if he had not intervened between the king and the people by employing the authority of the Church to release the king from the obligation of his oath, the barons, backed by the people, would have been able to hold him to his promise. And thus we find all the measures of compulsion employed against the barons and the Lollards traceable directly to the papacy, and made effectual, as far as they could be, by means of the immense number of foreign ecclesiastics scattered throughout the kingdom, who, as the emissaries of the pope, dictated to the king whatsoever measures were necessary to keep the people in check. And hence we find also that a measure of ecclesiastical policy was adopted, and made a part of the canon law of the Church, during the pontificate of Innocent III., which makes the papacy immediately and directly responsible for all the force and persecution employed, not only in England, but elsewhere, to keep the people in subjugation, and repress reform both in State and Church.

In the year 1215, the Fourth Lateran Council was held in Rome, under the direct personal guidance of Innocent III., to whom, as already shown, King John surrendered the crown of England. This is conceded to have been the twelfth Ecumenical Council, and its enactments are, consequently, regarded as part of the canon law, equally binding upon the faithful at all times, as

much so now as when they were originally passed. In one canon adopted by this council certain heresies were condemned; in another, heretics were excommunicated; and in another, it was provided that they should be exterminated.

Here we reach a point of vast importance to the present times, and ground on which it is necessary and right that we should tread with great caution, so as not to mislead ourselves or others. For if it be true that what is here alleged constitutes a part of the law of the Roman Church, having, by the action of a general council and the assent of a pope, the impress of infallibility stamped upon it, then it will not do to say, as the papal writers do, that persecution arose out of Protestantism and was of Protestant growth; for it must be observed that at the time referred to there was no such thing as Protestantism known. Wycliffe, who has been properly called the "Morning-star of the Reformation," was not born till the year 1324, and therefore the Lollards, who were his followers in England, had not arisen.

The Waldenses, or Vaudois, had been excommunicated for heresy by Lucius III., who was pope from the year 1181 to 1185; and they were afterward condemned for teaching, contrary to the practice of the Roman Church, that the unworthiness of the clergy rendered them incapable of their ministry. (Du Pin, vol. xi., p. 147.)

Pope Innocent III. inaugurated measures of his own accord in the year 1198—the first of his pontificate—to extirpate the Albigenses. The next year he ordered their estates to be confiscated. He ordered the abbots and monks not only to preach against them, but to "excite the princes and people to extirpate them, and to form a crusade against them." Raymond, Count of Toulouse, a leader among the Albigenses, caused one of these missionaries to be assassinated, for which he was required to retract his errors, and to deliver up several of his towns to the pope as the price of his absolution—which was granted him. After this was done, as the crusaders had no further contest with Raymond, they turned their arms against the town of Beziers, where the Albigenses were fortified, besieged, took, and burned the town, and put all the inhabitants "to the edge of the sword." (*Ibid.*, pp. 150, 151.)

The particular heresies, therefore, with which the Church had to deal during the pontificate of Innocent III. were those of the Waldenses and the Albigenses; and, consequently, it is to these that the decrees of the Fourth Lateran Council were specially directed. All this antedated the existence of the Lollards and the birth of Protestantism; but when Protestantism began subsequently to arise, the law of the Church was already prepared to visit upon the Protestants the same measure of pontifical vengeance as had been visited upon the inoffensive Waldenses and Albigenses. The torch of persecution, lighted for the latter, was kept continually aflame, in readiness for the former.

The Fourth Council of Lateran being assembled to deal, among other things, with the heresies then existing, it was considered necessary that it should be so attended as to represent the Universal Church. To effect this, two years were permitted to pass between the time when it was called by Innocent

III. and its meeting, in November, 1215. It contained four hundred and twelve bishops in person, eight hundred abbots and priors, and a great many deputies of absent prelates who were excused from attending. There were also ambassadors from the following courts: Constantinople, Sicily, Germany, France, England, Hungary, Jerusalem, Cyprus, Arragon, and from those of other princes. And thus it had all the power and authority which could be conferred on it by the Church. Even those who denied the personal infallibility of the pope accepted all the decrees of such a council as infallible, equally binding as if God, by a visible manifestation, had sent them down from heaven.

To say, however, of the canons of this council that they were the deliberate action of those who composed it would be contrary to the fact. Du Pin, referring to the canons upon discipline, says: "'Tis certain that these canons were not made by the council, but by Innocent III., who presented them to the council *ready drawn up*, and *ordered* them to be read, and that the prelates *did not enter into any debate upon them, but that their silence was taken, for an approbation!*" (Du Pin, vol. xi., p. 95.) Nevertheless, they became as much the law of the Church as if they had been debated and voted on. Any violation of the doctrine of passive obedience was only another form of heresy.

The third canon of this General Council stands in history without any parallel. And in order that the reader may see this for himself, it is deemed most expedient to pass by what is said of it by Protestant writers, and quote the precise words of Du Pin, not merely on account of his great learning and erudition, but because of the conspicuous position he occupied in the Roman Catholic Church. He says:

"In the third canon they excommunicated and anathematized all the heretics who oppose the Catholic and orthodox faith, as before explained: and 'tis therein ordered that the heretics shall be delivered up, after their condemnation, to the secular powers, or to their officers, to be punished according to their demerits, the clerks being first degraded; that their goods shall be confiscated, if they be laics (laypersons); and if clerks, then they shall be applied to the use of the Church; that those who lie under violent suspicions of heresy shall be likewise anathematized, if they do not give proofs of their innocence, and they shall be avoided tin they have given satisfaction; and if they be in a state of excommunication during a year, they shall be condemned as heretics; that the lords shall be admonished and advised by ecclesiastical censures to take an oath that they win extirpate heretics and excommunicate persons who shall be within their territories; that if they neglect to do it after admonition, they shall be excommunicated by the metropolitan and bishops of the province; and in case they persist a year without making satisfaction, the sovereign pontiff shall be advised thereof, that so he may declare their vassals absolved from their oath of fealty, and bestow their lands upon such Catholics as win seize upon them, who shall be the lawful possessors of them, by extirpating heretics, and preserving the purity of the faith in them, but without prejudice to the right of the superior lord, provided

he offer no obstruction or hindrance to the putting this ordinance in execution. The same indulgences are granted to those Catholics as shall undertake to extirpate heretics by *force of arms* as are granted to those who go to the Holy Land. They excommunicated those who entertained, protected, or supported heretics, and declare that those who shall be excommunicated upon that account, if they do not make satisfaction within a year, shall be declared infamous, and divested of all offices, as well as of votes in the elections; that they shall not be admitted as evidences; that they shall be deprived of the faculty of making a will, or succeeding to an estate; and, lastly, that they may not perform the functions of any office.'Tis likewise further ordered that those who win not avoid the company of such persons as are by the Church denounced excommunicate shall be excommunicated themselves tin they have given satisfaction. But, above all, ecclesiastics are forbidden to administer the sacraments to them, to give them Christian burial, to receive their alms or oblations, upon pain of being suspended from the functions of their orders, wherein they may not be re-established without a special *indulto* from the pope. The same punishment is likewise inflicted on the regulars, and, besides this, that they be not any longer tolerated in the diocese wherein communicated who shall dare to preach without having received a license from the Holy See or a Catholic bishop. Lastly, the archbishops and bishops are obliged to visit in person, or by their archdeacons or by other persons, once or twice a year, the dioceses where it is reported that there are any heretics, and to put a certain number of inhabitants under their oath to discover to the bishop such heretics as may be detected. They are likewise enjoined to cause the accused to appear, and to punish them if they do not clear themselves, or if they relapse after they have been cleared. Lastly, the bishops are threatened *to be deposed* if they neglect to purge their dioceses from heretics." (\*)

\* Du Pin, vol. xi., pp.96,97. The duty of persecuting and exterminating heretics now became a part of the canon law of Rome, not merely by the previous infallible act of Innocent III. himself, but by force of this decree of an Ecumenical Council. Nearly three hundred years after the time of Innocent III., his successors found a memorable occasion for enforcing it against the peaceful Vaudois, for daring to maintain their own religion in preference to that of Rome. In 1487, Innocent VIII. fulminated against them a bull of extermination, by which he enjoined all temporal powers to take arms for their destruction. He commanded a crusade against them, "absolving beforehand all who should take part in this crusade from all ecclesiastical penalties, general or special, setting them free from the obligation of vows which they might have made, legitimating their possession of goods which they might have wrongfully acquired, and concluding with a promise of the remission of all sins to every one who should slay a heretic. Moreover, he annulled all contracts subscribed in favor of the Vaudois, commanded their domestics to abandon them, forbade any one to give them any assistance, and authorized all and sundry to seize upon their goods."—*History of the Waldenses*, by Muston, vol. i., p. 31.

When we remember that Innocent III. based his right to interfere with the domestic policy of the nations upon the ground of the possession of divine power, we shall be the better enabled to appreciate the character and

understand the scope of this extraordinary part of the canon law of Rome. His power being divine, obedience to it, both on the part of nations and individuals, was the inevitable consequence. Therefore, this decree of the Third Lateran Council proceeds upon the idea that the obedience of the nations had been already secured; but that if it should be refused the papacy possessed the same power to punish them that it did to punish individuals for their disobedience.

Accordingly, the decree provides for the extirpation of all heretics by force of arms, the confiscation of their goods, the forfeiture of all their rights of property and country, the seizure of their territory by whomsoever of the faithful shall think proper to do so, and requires them to be hunted down by spies and detectives, against whose accusations they are required to defend themselves by proving their innocence! It stands alone in the world in enormity; and even now it chills the blood to read of the horrible sufferings inflicted upon the poor unoffending Waldenses and Albigenses, by virtue of it, merely because they would not bow down before the papacy, and agree to consider as virtues the shameless corruptions and vices of its court.

As it will be necessary to refer to this decree again, it will be well to inquire, at this point, what position it occupies in the present canon law of the Roman Church, which Pius IX. is now laboring to make the universal law of all the world. Since the council which enacted it there have been eight ecumenical councils and over eighty popes, embracing a period of over six and a half centuries, and yet no decree has been enacted by any one of these councils, and no bull, or brief, or encyclical has ever been issued, by anyone of all these popes, wherein it has been declared that the Third Lateran Council transcended its authority, or that its third canon was not a part of the existing canon law of the Church. Undoubtedly, therefore, it remains a part of that law today, to be executed whenever the pope shall think it necessary to the welfare of the Church to do so, and he shall possess the necessary power.

In 1839 a controversy was carried on in the columns of *The Charleston Courier*, in South Carolina, between the Rev. Richard Fuller, a Baptist minister, and the Right Rev. John England, Roman Catholic Bishop of Charleston, who was greatly distinguished for his learning and piety. In the course of it Mr. Fuller charged that, by the enactment of this canon by the Fourth Lateran Council, the Roman Catholic Church had made it a part of the law of its organization, that heretics should be persecuted. Bishop England admitted that the canon had been enacted, and set it forth substantially as it is copied above from Du Pin, but endeavored to break the force of the admission by insisting that, having been "a special law for a particular case," it is not now, therefore, "a canon of the Church." He also insisted that as the Fourth Lateran Council "was not merely a council of the Church, but it was also a congress of the civilized world," therefore this canon was not "concerning the doctrine of the Church," but was "a civil enactment of the temporal power against persons they looked upon as criminals." (\*)

\* Letters concerning the Roman Chancery," by the Rev. Richard Fuller, of Beaufort, South Carolina, and the Right Rev. John England, Bishop of Charleston. Published

This is puerile (silly), as will appear to any reasoning mind upon a moment's reflection. This council was one of the great general councils of the Church. Its provisions in reference to heresy and heretics are both special and general. Its canons were not enacted to meet special cases only, but all cases covered by them. The assemblage was ecclesiastical, solely and entirely, so far as it possessed power to pass enactments. The ecclesiastical authorities of the Church were alone summoned by Innocent III. to attend it. All the ambassadors from the civil powers who were present were there by courtesy, not by right. They were not members of the council, so as to be entitled to vote upon questions of either Church discipline or doctrine. They did not vote upon these questions, but, as Du Pin says, the measures were drawn up by the pope and acquiesced in by the bishops. Therefore, to say that a canon enacted by such a council, under the direct auspices of Innocent III., did not become a part of the doctrine of the Church and take its place in the canon law, is the exhibition of a degree of absurdity into which nothing but sheer necessity could have driven such a man as Bishop England. But if there were any doubt about it when he attempted this impotent apology, there is none now, since the decree of infallibility is broad enough and goes back far enough to embrace this enactment as the infallible word of God. It takes in, as we have seen heretofore, all that has been done by the popes in all the past centuries, all that may be done now, and whatsoever may be done in the future.

Was not Innocent III. an infallible pope? No papist will deny that. Then, without the decree of the Fourth Lateran Council, he prescribed extermination as the remedy against the heresy of the Waldenses and Albigenses, and, consequently, against all heresy. Thus this method of persecution became a part of the canon law, and therefore a part of the doctrine of the Church, by his infallible act alone. And when afterward he compelled this general council to affirm and ratify what he had done and declared by a solemn decree, unanimously passed by the representatives of the whole Church, persecution became so embodied in the law of the Church that no earthly authority can remove it. Whether he alone, as he claimed, and as Pius IX. now claims, possessed all the divine power; or whether, as the Gallican Christians insisted, it was in his hands when acting jointly with the council, does not change the question. According to either, the decree as enacted was the exercise of a divine power, and therefore became part of the faith. Consequently, if there had even been an attempt made to repeal, vacate, or set it aside, it must have failed for the want of power; for the law of God is unchangeable. There having been no such attempt, however, this persecuting decree is as binding upon the faithful today as it was the day it was enacted.

The "temporal powers" had nothing to do with its enactment. They were held by the pope to be the mere instruments to secure its execution. He used them for that purpose; and that is what is meant by the theory which permits the Church to teach the State its duty—in the domain of faith and morals! They neither enacted any such laws themselves, nor authorized their ambassadors at this council to legislate in reference to their domestic and internal policy.

The council dealt with the affairs of the Church, and the laws it passed were considered above those of the states. Whatever nation disobeyed them was heretical, and forfeited its right to exist! Whatever individual disobeyed them was cut off by excommunication! The fact, therefore, cannot be escaped by any sophistry that the persecution of heretics is commanded by the canon law.

And thus we are enabled to understand the condition of things existing in England after the pontificate of Innocent III., who set the example of persecuting heretics, or of causing them to be persecuted, which his successors were very willing to follow. And the imbecile kings of England were quite as willing to obey them; for, not only by the letter of this law of the Church, but by the action of the infallible Innocent III., they were taught to foresee that an act of disobedience to the pope would be construed into heresy, and cost them their crowns and kingdom. And looking back, through the lapse of years, to the condition in which England must have been placed by the prevailing policy at that time, we cannot fail to see how necessary it was for the barons to demand and to adhere to the provisions of Magna Carta as the means of securing civil liberty, and for the Lollards to demand reform in the Church as the means of securing religious liberty.

But we can see, too, that it was impossible for Protestantism to rise immediately out of this condition of affairs. It had to await the slow progress of events elsewhere, especially in Germany. Both there and in England the load of papal oppression was too heavy to be thrown off at once. Therefore we are enabled to account for the fact, that in its first forms, during its terrible struggles for existence, it retained somewhat the impress left upon it by the papacy; and never, in fact, reached the point of full development until it obtained a new field of operation in the United States. Reforms are never the result of sudden impulses. Like the plant which enlarges by accretion, they are wrought out by the force of opinion gradually developed.

It is well understood that in Germany, as well as in England, for many years before the Reformation, the ecclesiastical and political alliance between the reigning monarchs and the papacy had been complete, and comparatively undisturbed. Owing to the imbecility of some of the monarchs and the inordinate ambition of others, the German people were reduced, through instrumentalities like those employed in England, to dependence upon the popes, who claimed that they possessed divine authority to regulate their domestic affairs also. By virtue of their conceded power to appoint all the prelates of the Church, and to exact from them oaths of fidelity to themselves, they had succeeded in building up an ecclesiastical empire, which they maintained among the German people in entire independence of the Government and its laws—a state of things precisely similar to that which Pius IX. is now trying to bring about. The hierarchy which composed this independent body was freed from all responsibility to the German authorities, no matter what enormity its members perpetrated upon society, or what the nature and extent of their usurpations. They looked alone to Rome for the approval or disapproval of their conduct. Whatsoever the pope commanded them to do, they did—peaceably, if the people submitted, but forcibly if they did



not. Such enormous power as this naturally bred arrogance and covetousness; and as the popes have at all times required large sums of money to maintain the splendor and magnificence of their courts, they employed it for the accumulation of large wealth, not only at Rome, but among themselves. With this wealth in their possession, these prelates became more and more exacting—knowing that they were esteemed by the popes in proportion to the extent of the contributions they levied upon the people.

It is not at all to be wondered at that the Germans, like the English, became restless and dissatisfied under the crushing pressure of such a burden as this. All the tendencies of their minds were toward freedom, in the defense of which they had always been in the foremost rank. But on account of their devotion to the Roman Catholic Church, and the belief, constantly inculcated in their minds by the clergy, that they were indebted to it for all the Christianizing and civilizing influences they possessed, they patiently endured their submission till they could bear it no longer. They at last came to realize that the question was simply one of life or death to their nation—that it was impossible for Germany ever to acquire an independent and commanding position among the other nations so long as this hierarchical power was permitted to maintain its ascendancy. And herein we undoubtedly find the real origin of the Reformation in Germany—according to Hallam, “its predisposing cause.” (“Constitutional History of England,” by Hallam, vol. i., p. 137.)

Luther quarreled with the pope about matters of religious faith, and when the people of Germany saw this vast power, with all its ecclesiastical weapons drawn, threatening him with the terrible vengeance of the papacy, they took sides with him, not at first on account of his religious opinions merely, but because the time had come for them to assert their true German manhood, and to throw off the yoke of temporal bondage which the papacy had placed upon their necks. And thus a single brave and untterrified man was enabled to multiply his army of reformers into an unconquerable host, whose ultimate victory over the pope consisted, not alone in the introduction of the Reformed religion, but in marking out new paths for the modern nations—paths which pointed, with marvelous precision, toward that grandest achievement in history, the American Revolution.

The Reformation in Germany did not immediately extend itself into England; for Henry VIII., who was a bigoted papist, occupied the throne at a time when he had the power to resist its influence, and, in order to keep himself in favor with the pope, wrote a reply to Luther, for which he was flattered with the title “defender of the faith.” It was his greatest pride to keep in existence in England the same exacting and ambitious hierarchy against which the German people were getting ready to rebel. Between these ecclesiastical princes and himself there was perfect accord in this: that each should sustain the power of the other, at every hazard, in order to keep the people in subjection, and prevent them from having any voice in the management of public affairs. They were held together by the cohesion of a common faith, which taught, as had always been taught by the papacy, the divine right of kings and the divine right of popes above that of kings, which latter enabled the popes, as “vicegerents of God,” to sit in judgment over all the earth,

with the right to command whatsoever should augment their power, and to forbid whatsoever should curtail it. Like the people of Germany, those of England were held down by an oppressive weight of tyranny at the beginning of their Reformation.

Henry VIII. was a vicious and unprincipled monarch, consistent in only two things—the constant indulgence of his evil inclinations, and an equally constant adherence to the chief doctrinal dogmas of the Roman Catholic Church. He was never a pious Christian except nominally; no more so when he broke the alliance between the Church in England and that at Rome, than when he sought to win the favor of the pope by hurling his royal and poisoned shaft at Luther's head. And he was never a Protestant except only so far as he resisted the papal encroachments upon the authority and prerogatives of the English crown.

Upon this subject, much of what is called history abounds in error and misstatement. It has led many honest minds into the belief that this profligate king was at the head of the Protestants of England. The papal writers are indefatigable in maintaining this belief, in order to hold the Reformation responsible for his vices; whereas the "truth of history" is, that he never professed to be, and never was, a Protestant, in any proper sense of that term, but lived and died in the faith of the Roman Catholic Church! His quarrel with the pope had nothing to do with the faith of the Church. It began about the divorce, but soon involved the question of ecclesiastical investitures, by means of which he found the pope could maintain in England a power rival to his own, if not more formidable. Upon these questions each supported his position with stubborn tenacity, until the breach between them became so wide that it could neither be healed nor bridged over. The parties were about equal in pertinacity and ambition, neither of them having the slightest respect for the people, or regard for their political rights. As none of the religious dogmas of the Church were assailed by Henry, the controversy was simply a struggle for supremacy between two sovereigns, one of whom was the lawful king, and the other claiming dominion over the kingdom in right of divine appointment; and each of whom, to have secured his triumph, would have made galley-slaves of all the English people. (\*)

\* John Milton says: "Henry VIII. was the first that rent this kingdom from the pope's subjection totally; but his quarrel being more about supremacy than other faultiness in religion that he regarded, it is no marvel if he stuck where he did. The next default was in the bishops, who, though they had denounced the pope, they still hugged the popedom, and shared the authority among themselves, by their six bloody articles, persecuting the Protestants no slacker than the pope would have done."—*Prose Works of John Milton*, Philadelphia ed., vol. i., pp. 3, 4.

The final triumph which Henry VIII. did win over the pope only changed the form of English tyranny, by concentrating all the absolute power of imperialism in the hands of one despot, instead of leaving it to be shared by two. It remained papal tyranny in substance, if not in name, by the preservation of that nefarious union between Church and State which had its origin at Rome in the time of Constantine, and which, wherever it has

existed, has held the people in vassalage.

Henry VIII. and Pope Julius II. were both children of the Church of Rome, educated in the same religious faith, and disciplined under the same papal system. With each of them Innocent III. was infallible, and the persecuting decree of the Fourth Lateran Council was a part of the law of the Church.

When Henry felt the pressure of the papal power upon himself, he called upon the Protestants of Germany for assistance to enable him to resist it; but they refused the alliance, because they had no sympathy with his cause, and despised his iniquities. Julius, finding him thus unsupported, followed the example of Innocent III., in the exercise of divine power, hurled at his head the thunders of excommunication, and released all the English people from their allegiance to the crown, impiously pretending also that he stood upon earth in the place of God, and that obedience to him, in both spirituals and temporals, was necessary to secure admission into heaven.

The demon of persecution was unchained among the followers of these Roman Catholic contestants, each letting loose his own blood-hounds; and if the distinguished More and Fisher were cruelly murdered for their resistance to the English oath of supremacy, which did nothing more than place the king above the pope, their triers and executioners were their own brethren, reared, educated, and nurtured in the same religious faith. No drop of their blood stained the hands of a single Protestant Christian. The children of Rome shed the blood of each other with a ferocity akin to that of wild beasts. And even after all this, and before the blood of the victims had become dry, Paul III., who, while cardinal, had taken the side of Henry VIII., made an effort to reconcile Henry with the papacy, there yet being no important difference of religious faith to separate them. And a like effort at reconciliation was made by the Roman Catholic king of France; at the suggestion, doubtless, of the pope. The question, however, being one of mere supremacy in the government of England, Henry was not disposed to give up any of his royal prerogatives, and no compromise could be arranged.

The Protestant Christians stood aloof from the contest, awaiting the result with anxiety, of course, and hoping that it would contribute to the strength of their own cause. Their religious faith received no encouragement from the king, and had the curse of the pope resting upon it; so that when the final expulsion of the papal power from England was accomplished, the English Church, under Henry VIII., still retained the leading tenets of faith it had learned from Rome. It continued to maintain the doctrine of the real presence of Christ in the sacrament of the Eucharist. It did not regard communion in both kinds as at all essential. It forbade the marriage of priests. It preserved the Romish custom of encouraging vows of chastity. It continued private masses for the dead. It enforced the duty of auricular confession. It was, in fact, as much Roman Catholic under Henry VIII. as it had been under Pope Julius II. or Pope Paul III., except that it denied the temporal authority of the pope, and his right, divine or otherwise, to interfere with and regulate the domestic affairs of either the English Church or nation. (\*)

\* "History of the Church of England," by Short; Appendix B to ch. v., p. 79;

"History of England," by Macaulay, vol. i., p. 46; "Constitutional History of England," by Hallam, vol. i., ch. ii.; "History of England," by Rapin, vol. viii., pp. 20, 21; "History of England," by Hume, vol. iii., p. 311; "History of Religious Thought in England," by Hunt, vol. i., p. 10. This last author, speaking of the "Six Articles" of 1539, says, "They are purely Roman Catholic."

The following eminent Roman Catholic authorities are directly upon this point: Lingard says, "The publication of 'the Articles' showed that *the king was not disposed to dissent from the pontiff on doctrinal matters.*" LINGARD's *Hist. Of Engl.*, vol. v., p. 58.

Hearing of the death of Anne Boleyn, Pope Paul III. said: "I have long besought God to open his majesty's eyes. It is impossible that Heaven should have abandoned a prince who is endowed with so many virtues, and who has rendered so many services to the Christian republic. Heaven will surely enlighten him. Now is the time for Henry to finish the noble work which he has commenced in defense of Christianity. If he return to the bosom of the Church, who is there among the princes of Christendom that will be able to resist him? With Rome as his ally, the peace of the world will be secured. I will unite with Henry, and we will join our efforts to pacify the world..... Let him not doubt the affections of my heart." AUDIN's *Life of Henry VIII.*, p. 322.

The late Archbishop Spalding, of Baltimore, says: "Notwithstanding his defection from the Church, Henry was still attached to the ancient faith, and he decided to retain its principal articles, as well as the ancient worship. In 1536, he compiled, with the assistance of his theologians, a book of "Articles," which Cromwell presented for signature to the convocation, and which the members, of course, subscribed without a word. These articles declare that a belief in the three ancient creeds—the Apostles', the Nicene, and the Athanasian—is necessary to salvation; that the sacraments of baptism, penance, and the holy Eucharist are the ordinary means of salvation; and that the use of masses, the honoring and invoking of saints, and the usual ceremonies of the public service "are highly profitable, and ought to be retained." The lay vicar-general accordingly issued his injunction to the bishops and clergy, requiring that these articles should be explained to the people, should be accepted by all, and reduced to practice. This was followed by a fuller exposition of doctrine, entitled "The Godly and Pious Institution of the Christian Man," issued by the convocation on the command of the king. This document strongly denies the possibility of salvation out of the Catholic Church; and it inculcates slavish passive obedience to the king in the same breath with which it denounces the papal supremacy. "*Hist. of the Prot. Ref.*, by M. I. Spalding, D.D., 5th ed., vol. ii., pp. 103, 104, citing Wilkins's "Council.," iii., 804; *apud* Lingard, vol. vi., pp. 272, 273.

And Henry, to prove how faithful he was to his Roman training, turned his persecution against the English reformers, who were disposed to favor the principles of the Protestant religion, the influence of which was beginning to be transferred from Germany to England, and to unite with similar influences already existing there.

The torch and the rack, so familiar to Rome, were no less terrible in the hands of the English than they were in those of the Roman pope. The difference was this only, that Henry VIII., having learned their use from Rome, employed them, after he established his English pontificate, in the torture of both Roman Catholics and Protestants! Who does not remember the

account of three of each, coupled two and two, who were carried out to execution upon the same hurdles? (\*)

\* Archbishop Spalding refers to this incident in strong terms.—History of the Prot. Ref., by Spalding, vol. ii., p. 105. Macaulay says, Henry VIII. “sent to death, on the same hurdle, the heretic who denied the real presence and the traitor who denied the royal supremacy.”—MACAULAY’S Miscellanies, article *Nare’s Memoirs of Lord Burleigh*, Philadelphia ed., p. 147.

In a like spirit he employed his royal power to prevent the teachings of Luther from taking hold of the English mind, and punished those who openly advocated them, or were suspected of doing so. The circulation of pamphlets and tracts written by Luther was prohibited. He forbade his subjects to import, sell, or keep in their possession Tyndale's translation of the New Testament, “and ordered the chancellor and the courts to prosecute any one that should disobey his commands; and to punish, with the utmost rigor of the law, the abettors of the new opinions ” (“Life of Henry VIII.,” by Audin, p. 313. This is a Roman Catholic author.)—that is, the Protestant opinions that were taking deep root in England and Germany.

And if before his death he abated these persecutions, it was only because he courted an alliance with the Protestants, so as to make his power more effectual in his contest with the pope. He cared nothing for religion, but struggled hard for royal authority and supremacy. But death, which strikes alike both the high and low, laid its unsparing hand upon him before he could accomplish such an alliance, before Protestantism had become firmly planted in England, and while he was yet, in all the religious faith he ever had, a Roman Catholic! True, he has extorted some praise from portions of the English people, and the poet Gray called him

“....the majestic lord  
Who broke the bonds of Rome!”

but these praises were bestowed because “they saw in him, not indeed the proselyte of their faith, but *the subverter of their enemies’ power*, the avenging minister of Heaven, by whose giant arm the chain of superstition had been broken and the prison gates burst asunder.” (“Constitutional Hist. of England,” by Hallam, vol. i., ch. i., p. 49.)

Continued in [The Papacy And The Civil Power – Chapter XVI. Henry VIII. Part 2](#)