

in the Spanish people; from no invincible obduracy in the Spanish soil, defying a better agriculture; and certainly from no lack of mineral riches, which under better moral influences would provide capital and other appliances. It is impossible to disconnect these *retributive* facts from the history of Spain—its Inquisition—its heartless and exterminating persecutions—its type of Popery, the lowest of its kind—and its long truce with an ascendant priesthood at war with the Bible, silencing its testimony and successfully keeping it out of sight.

We fear the great mass of the people are profoundly asleep, excepting as regards purely material and mechanical things. They go indeed in large numbers to church and cathedral, especially the women. Turn off the crowded promenade in such a city as Old Granada, when, in the *gloamin*, the people who had scarcely ventured into the open street under that burning sun during the day, come forth to enjoy the cool shadow of the evening; enter into the church hard by; you find the twilight there as out of doors, and by the glimmer of those altar lights, and by the hum of whispering voices, you find the house to be filled with vesper worshippers. There is no lack of church-going in Spain. But what does this imply? The Romish service, even its preaching, is formed with a view to benumb rather than excite inquiry. Practically, preaching is incidental and utterly subsidiary in the Church of Rome, which professes to save men not by means of *truth*, but by priestly operations, by absolutions, and by the creation of new merit by the mass, and by the administration of wafers of bread, transubstantiated, by the intervention of the priest, into "the body, blood, soul, and divinity" of Christ. The exaction on the part of the priest of belief in all this, and the very attempt to exercise it on the part of the people, are enough to stifle intelligent faith and to reduce it to unthinking credulity. This is so in all Popish countries. It is conspicuously so in Spain.

The average priest in Spain is on a lower level, in morals, in education, in intelligence, than in any other country in Europe. Nor ought this to be matter of surprise. Nowhere else was there such a complete suppression of the Reformation, or such a total extinction of Protestant literature, or such a successful murder of thought and inquiry as in Spain. The nation has for centuries been all but hermetically sealed against the entrance of evangelical views. The penalty to an inquiring priest, of doubt on the doctrines of Trent, was hopeless incarceration in a dungeon. These chains were broken scarcely six years ago. Education was all, till then, practically in the hands of the priesthood. It was less diffused than anywhere else in Europe; and thus the million in Spain had sunk not merely into *superstition*, but into the neighbouring pit and slime of *infidelity*, for these two sinks of evil, by a fatal law, are ever found side by side.

You cannot find laymen in Spain as you do in Ireland, who will argue for the Romish faith. They are indifferent on the subject of Protestant truth, partly because they are indifferent to their own religion. They prefer, like a man in his siesta, to abide and doze where he is, and to repel the intrusion of inquiry and investigation. The result is that, with a general and incurious negative acquiescence in the national Romish faith, the people of Spain, though bound by superstition, without free-thinking, or indeed any kind of thinking, are practically without a religion. The consequence is, that there is a large and widely-dispersed criminal population. It is true, while their wine is abundant, we witness drunkenness on rare occasions; yet the taint of other vices has gone deep into the mind of the nation. In different parts of Andalusia we heard the police, in announcing