

[WRITTEN FOR THE TRUE WITNESS.]
SPANISH INTOLERANCE.

A Mr. C. G. Jones writes a letter to The Daily Witness, under the above heading, and says he would like to hear what the True Witness etc., have to say about the attempt to prevent Protestants in Spain from worshipping God in their own church according to the dictates of their own conscience.

The efforts of the Spanish Catholics are devoted towards the legal fulfilment of Article II of the constitution of the country. This Article decrees that the religion of the State is the Catholic Apostolic Roman; no one is to be molested on account of his religious opinions; but no public ceremonies or manifestations of any other religion than that of the State are to be allowed. The erection of a Protestant Temple by Lord Plunket is an open infringement of the existing law of the country. Mr. Jones and others like him are very fond of talking of our British connection—and Protestantism giving liberty of conscience to all. Is it liberty of conscience to bind our Sovereign under oath to a State religion? was it liberty of conscience that strove to prevent the election of a Catholic Lord Mayor of London?

Mr. Jones, in order to give colouring to his letter, takes up some old historical lies about the Spanish Inquisition; and he quotes from Lorente, as bring an authority—Who was Lorente? "He was born of a noble family of Aragon in 1756, he entered the priesthood in 1779, became vicar-general of the diocese of Calahorra in 1781 and was appointed secretary-general of the Inquisition at Madrid in 1789. From his early manhood he was a freemason, and, of course, a Liberal—When Napoleon commenced his experiment of planting his own dynasty on the throne of Spain, Lorente, became an enthusiastic *Afrancesado*—It has always been a favorite trick with usurpers to ransack the archives of dispossessed princes, and to publish to the world whatever might be turned, or might be twisted, to the discredit of the latter.

In accordance with this idea, the intruding Joseph Bonaparte, in 1809 commissioned Lorente, the ex-secretary (he had been dismissed for several irregularities) to show up the secrets of the Inquisition, that the Spaniards might learn to love the tyranny crushing rule of a foreigner. When the vena *Afrancesado's* work appeared, it was found to be an insult to Rome, to Spain, and to the Spanish Church." (Some Lies and Errors of History by Rev. Ruben Parsons, D.D.) He tells thus writes of Lorente: "A prominent feature in his writings is their great bitterness towards the Church, and the sentimentality which impels him to many inexact and even false assertions. The shallowness and inaccuracy of Lorente, as a historian, are no less evident than his hatred of the Church. In his 'Portraits' he informs us that Paul of Samosata embraced the heresy of Sabellius; an assertion the absurdity of which brings a smile to the face of the veriest tyro in Ecclesiastical history. He also tells us that St. Justin wrote his works before the time of St. Ignatius of Antioch; that Appollonius of Tyana, was a heretic, etc. No less full of errors is his 'History of the Inquisition.'

The Protestant Ranke says that Lorente "gave us a book on this subject; (The Inquisition) and if I may presume to say anything that contravenes the opinion of such a predecessor, let my excuse be that this well informed author wrote in the interest of the *Afrancesado* of the Josephine administration. In that interest he looks upon the Inquisition as a usurpation of the Spiritual over the secular authority. Nevertheless, if I am not altogether in error, it appears, even from his own facts, that the Inquisition was a royal court of judicature, although armed with ecclesiastical weapons." So much for Lorente as a good authority.

But let us hear Ranke again: "In the first place, the inquisitors were royal officers. The kings appointed them; among the various councils at their court the kings had likewise one of the Inquisition; the courts of the Inquisition, like other magistracies, were subject to royal visitation; the same men who sat in the supreme court of Castile were often accessories of the Inquisition. To no purpose did Ximenes scruple to admit into the council of the Inquisition a layman nominated by Ferdinand the Catholic. "Do you not know," said the king, "that if the tribunal possesses jurisdiction it de-

rives it from the king?" In the second place, all the profit of the confiscation by this court accrued to the king. It was even believed and asserted from the beginning that the kings had been moved to establish this tribunal more by a hankering after the wealth it confiscated than by motives of piety. Signi says that the Inquisition was invented to rob the wealthy of their property, and the powerful of their influence. As Charles V. knew no other means of bringing punishment on the bishops who had taken part in the insurrection of the Comunidades he chose to have them judged by the Inquisition. Under Philip it interfered in matter of trade and of the arts, of custom and marine. How much further could it go, when it pronounced it heresy to sell horses or munition to France? In spirit, and above all in tendency, it was a political institution. The Pope had a desire of thwarting it, and he did so as often as he could." So much for the Spanish Inquisition.

As this letter is already long I will now close by commending to Mr. Jones the following words addressed to the newly-elected Lord Mayor of London by the Lord Chief Justice:—"My LORD MAYOR—The sight of you here, elected as you have been, after what has taken place in regard to your election, must show that these are happier times than those which have passed away—those times of intolerance and bigotry which have in former days unhappily discredited this country. But it is too often forgotten that these things are not the special and peculiar privilege of any form of politics or religion. All sides, all parties in former days have been guilty of acts which now all sides equally repudiate. If an Emperor of Germany burned Huss, Calvin burned Servetus with great treachery and amidst excruciating torments; and the Elizabethan persecutions were at least as prolonged and as cruel as the Marian, with the added infamy that in the Elizabethan persecutions opinions were turned by law into crimes, and, with detestable hypocrisy, it was said that men were put to death not for opinions, but for breaking the law which made their opinions crimes. And even in my own time we have seen the relics of the penal laws—a code as hateful as anything ever seen since the foundation of the world."

H. J. COOD.

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