

difficulty, which, as all will agree, could be overcome only by an inquisition. To establish an inquisition, Ferdinand asked the permission of the Pope, Sixtus IV. That pontiff, however, was at first unwilling to grant Ferdinand's request, but was so urged by the court of Spain, that he finally agreed, and in the year 1478 the Spanish Inquisition sprang into existence.

But before the first trial was opened at Seville in 1481, the Pope withdrew his sanction because he had not been consulted as to the plan which had been adopted.

Nevertheless, pleadings on the one hand and anxiety for the Spanish nation on the other, again prevailed upon him to renew the permission, and from that time on there was a continual controversy between Spain and Rome. Often was the tribunal at variance with the popes, and most frequently were the victims condemned by the Inquisition pardoned on appealing to the successor of Peter—nay, more, so serious were the frictions between them, that several times the Holy See threatened the Spanish Inquisitors with excommunication.

But here I may be met with a very great objection: What need was there of the permission of the popes? If the Inquisition was *purely secular*, what had the Pope or the church to do with its actions? Ah! there is just the point. The permission of Rome was necessary for many reasons, but chiefly for two. First, because the men who were appointed as inquisitors by the court of Spain were *priests and prelates and theologians of the church*, and were, for that reason, under the *jurisdiction of the popes*; and secondly, and most especially, because the Inquisition was instituted to try people on *matters of faith*. Truly, indeed, did Ranke call it a *royal tribunal furnished with ecclesiastical weapons*. "In the first place," says the liberal-minded and authoritative Protestant historian ("History of the Popes," Vol. I., p. 242, etc., in original German edition), "the Inquisitors were royal officers; the king having the right to appoint and dismiss them; the tribunals of the Inquisitors were subject to royal visitations" (which meant royal control), "just as any other authority under the king." In the second place, all the profits and advantages resulting from confiscations fell to the king. "And in the third place, it was by means of this tribunal that the Spanish nation was completely rounded off and finished. The king obtained a tribunal from which neither grandee nor archbishop could escape." As the tribunal is founded upon the king's power, so its exercise redounds to the king's advantage. "It is one of the spoils of ecclesiastical power which the Spanish nation snatched to itself, and by which it has become powerful. In its meaning, object, and aim, it is, above all, a political institution. It is the Pope's interest to stand in its way, as often as he can, and he does so; it is the king's interest always to keep the way clear for it, and he does." So far says Ranke. Lezeli ("History of the World," Vol. II., p. 431, etc.), Guizot ("Cours D'Histoire Moderne") and Menzel ("History of Modern Germany," Vol. IV., p. 196), and Protestant writers, declare the Inquisition a State machine.