

selected with extreme care the freest and boldest men in order to burn and imprison them. In Spain alone some of the best men, those who doubted and questioned, and without doubting and questioning there can be no progress, were eliminated during three centuries at the rate of a thousand a year" (*Descent of Man*, vol. 1, pp. 171-2).

It is true that many of the precepts of the New Testament enjoin submission and love; but a moral precept is powerless to counteract the effects of an erroneous principle, conscientiously entertained. Thousands of benevolent men, regarding unbelief or heresy as a crime of which the effect is the damnation of the soul, and desiring naturally enough to avert so terrible a calamity, have imprisoned and otherwise punished their fellow-men to arrest the progress of their opinions. Any good man, seeing thousands liable to be ruined by a false doctrine, and believing the man disseminating it the enemy of his Creator, will, if he has the power, confine and, if necessary to deter others, punish with severity that man to prevent the injurious influence of his blasphemous teachings. What is the imprisonment, or even the death, of a few individuals, he argues, compared with the eternal torture of thousands which will result if the heresy is not checked? It is easy to see why some of the most conscientious and benevolent men and women have been among the most bitter persecutors. It is easy to believe Llorente when he says that the founders of the Spanish Inquisition were men whose characters were unstained by vice, and who acted from an earnest desire to save the souls of men.

Christianity teaches that men are "saved" through Christ. Moral goodness will not do. The thief, the robber and the murderer may go straight to heaven by repentance at the last moment. The noblest minds must suffer eternally if they believe not in Jesus. This doctrine certainly gives a license to crime. It makes Jesus a scapegoat for raciality and wickedness. It depreciates the value and the importance of moral goodness. Indeed, the "plan of salvation" has all the worst features of a bankrupt law. In the past, especially, Christendom has been filled with men who have not tried to live pure and good lives, because they believed that moral goodness would not save them. There are still those who intend to get all the advantages, or the supposed advantages, of a sinful life, and at last to "cheat the devil out of his dues" by availing themselves of the great bankrupt scheme of redemption. It is true that Christianity tells men to live morally. So the laws require men to pay their honest debts. Give men an opportunity to do wrong and to escape its consequences, and in spite of all injunctions to virtue, many will put off doing right as long as they think it prudent or possible to do so and yet escape hell. The degraded beings in the slums and purlieus of vice in our large cities are among those who expect to be saved from the effects of their immoralities by the great scheme of salvation. They believe that repentance in the last moments of earthly existence will save them; and under the influence of this belief they