

FREETHOUGHT JOURNAL

IN THINGS DEMONSTRATED CERTAIN

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IN WHATSOEVER MAY BE DOUBTED

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IN ALL THINGS

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For the FREETHOUGHT JOURNAL.

THE INQUISITION.

BY CHARLES ELLIS.

The recent trouble in Montreal between the Orangemen and Catholics, which ended in the triumph of the latter, is ominous. Even though it be clearly established in the trial of the Orange leaders that they have no legal right to walk as a party or body through the streets, still the fact that they, as Protestants, have been refused the privilege of walking, is dark with sinister meaning.

Behind it, from out of the shadow of the past, I see the ghost of the Inquisition rising into the light of our own century and country, its eyes ablaze with the fiery hope of new conquests here and in its hands the old paraphernalia of power, the rack, dungeon, faggot, poison, sword, and the "Revealed will of God."

As "straws show which way the wind blows," and as the muttering thunder portends the storm, so does this triumph of the Catholics, even in this small nation, reveal the conflict that will one day sweep over this continent in blood. I am not an "alarmist" and do not so write to excite unnecessary feeling, but simply make an observation that must be plain to any careful observer of the signs of the times.

Confident as I am that the struggle is coming between the powers of the Supernaturalistic Christians and the Naturalists, or those who will not accept the so-called supernatural, and that in the struggle the Catholic church will speedily move to the front, absorb the other sects, direct the attack and determine the treatment of the opponents, it is well enough for us to remember what has been in society may be again. A disposition that would

murder a peaceable citizen for simply desiring to walk with his brothers on an anniversary that could in no possible way interfere with the rights of Catholics to-day either civilly or religiously, would, undoubtedly, if it had the power that the church wielded a few centuries ago, murder all citizens who might dare to be anything but Catholics! And, hence, I say the recent disturbances and the disposition there manifested is indicative of a disposition to resuscitate the Inquisition and break its long fast with the fat heresies and heretics of this country.

This brings the question home. What was the cause of the sufferings inflicted by the Inquisition in the past? It was the false, ignorant, superstitious notion that "God" could reveal his will to mankind and that he did so reveal it through his chosen priests, and that they had power to enforce the observance of that will upon the whole human race.

If, now, God did reveal his will, if that is not a priestly lie, if he did lay it down as his will that all should believe or be damned, then the bloodthirsty villains who executed the will of the Inquisitors were right. They were doing their duty when they murdered *all* where there was any question, leaving it to God to select the Christians from among the dead infidels! right from their standpoint. But in that case the God is wrong! And that is precisely where the contest comes to-day. We must overthrow not so much the Catholic church as the false God that it worships, the myth that it clothes in its blind imagination with all the horrible characteristics that have marked all the beastly, brutal, inhuman, selfish, mean, cruel, tyrannical representatives of the human race from its earliest history down to the present time!

Let us give them a better God and they will become better men and women, but just as long as they worship a lie for the benefit of their priestly slave owners, just so long will they believe it to be their sacred duty to compel the world to observe their own beliefs and customs as far as they have the power. It does not change the conclusion any to say that *some* of the priests recognize the situation and counsel their followers to be citizens as well as Catholics. It is an old truth that children and fools tell the truth, but it means that they *tell what they hear in secret at home*. The character of a people determines the character of its God. And