

ARTICLE VIII.

THE CATHOLIC COUNTER-REFORMATION
IN BOHEMIA.¹

BY PROFESSOR LOUIS FRANCIS MISKOVSKY.

By the battle of White Mountain, November 8, 1620, the political struggle between Protestantism and Catholicism which had rent Bohemia for over two centuries, was suddenly and effectually brought to a close. The Catholic reaction was at last triumphant, and Protestant Bohemia lay at the mercy of the victors. Her discarded king, Ferdinand II., who had lately attained the imperial dignity, was again her master. He had been brought up by the Jesuits in strict and intolerant Catholicism, and was but a mere tool in their hands to carry out their cherished designs. They could now proceed in the work of counter-reform as they pleased, and freely employ their chosen methods. What these were, and what they accomplished, it is our purpose briefly to relate.

Two days after the defeat of the Bohemian army, the imperial forces under Duke Maximilian of Bavaria took possession of Prague. The city had opened its gates to the enemy only upon the promise of the Duke, in the name of the Emperor, that the lives and property of its citizens and of the leaders in the late insurrection would be held inviolable. In spite of this promise, it was resolved in the imperial cabinet at Vienna that the Bohemian insurgents should be punished by death and the confiscation of their estates. An imperial mandate ordering the confiscations was issued as early as the 25th of November. It was followed, February 6, 1621, by another in the Emperor's own handwriting, which commanded the imprisonment of the Directors of the late provisional government, and of all persons of high and low degree who had taken prominent part in the insurrection. The imperial will was adroitly car-

¹[Lack of space compels us to print this important article in brevity.—ED.]

ried out by the royal governor, Prince Lichtenstein, who summoned the Directors and a number of knights and nobles to an audience in his palace, in order to "announce to them an important communication from the Emperor." The unsuspecting victims who presented themselves in obedience to the summons were forthwith put under arrest and confined in the Castle of Prague. Under the same pretext a number of commoners were summoned before the city judges and put into custody. Those who had fled from the country with King Frederick were summoned to appear for trial within six weeks, at the expiration of which time they were put under the ban of the Empire, and their property was confiscated. Even those who had died in the interim suffered similar penalties.

A court was then formed under the presidency of Prince Lichtenstein, which proceeded to try the prisoners not only for treason and "horrible rebellion," but for a multitude of trumped-up charges of which no one had ever dreamed. Two incidents will illustrate the Star-chamber character of this court. At the trial of Count Schlick the exasperating conduct of the judges and the irrelevancy of their questions caused the noble prisoner to lose his patience, and, baring his breast, to exclaim: "Tear this body into a thousand shreds, and search through my vitals, you will find nothing else but what we wrote in our Apology.¹ The love of liberty and of our religion compelled us to appeal to the sword. But since God has been pleased to give the victory to the Emperor's sword and deliver us into your hands, let His will be done!" The other incident relates to the unfortunate Martin Fruwein. He was a member of the *Unitas Fratrum* (Bohemian Brethren), and had been so frightfully tortured by soldiers that "for six months he remained as half-dead." In this condition he was kept in solitary confinement and constantly guarded by soldiers. Tried by the court, he was condemned and sentenced to a barbarous death. Summoned to appear for another hearing before the court in which he was to be put to torture, in order to extort from him some confession, he cast himself in despair into the moat below his prison window.² Nevertheless the sentence of the court was carried out upon the man's corpse as follows: The body, taken to the battle-field of White Mountain, was first beheaded, then quartered, the entrails torn out and buried on the battle-field, where also a portion of the body was impaled, the other three being disposed of similarly in different places, and finally

¹ The Apology was the declaration of grievances which the Protestant states made in justification of their course at the breaking-out of the Thirty Years' War. It was printed in 1618 in the Bohemian and German languages. The Bohemian edition was re-published by Pastor Vaclav Subert in 1862. It has been aptly compared to the American Declaration of Independence, of which it is a worthy forerunner.

² The History of Persecutions (Latin edition 1648, Bohemian 1655) denies that he committed suicide, claiming that some one mercifully put an end to him. We follow the statement of Prince Lichtenstein's report.

the head and right hand were nailed to the gallows in Prague. It is worthy of note that the sentence was carried out on the day marking the third anniversary of the expulsion of the Jesuits from Prague (June 9, 1621).

Meanwhile the judgments of the court were confirmed by an imperial resolution from Vienna. The court condemned forty-five persons to death and escheated their estates to the crown. We quote a few of its sentences :—

“ Joachim Andrew, Count Schlick, whose right hand was first to be cut off, the body quartered alive and the parts impaled along the public highways, the head and right hand nailed to the gate of the bridge of Prague, is, out of the Emperor's mercy and clemency, only to be beheaded, his right hand being first cut off and with the head to be exposed upon said bridge tower. Vaclav Budovec, Baron of Budova, receives a like sentence, but in mercy is only to be beheaded and his head suspended from the Prague bridge tower. Henry Otto, Baron of Los, is sentenced like Budovec, but mercifully is only to be beheaded, his body then quartered and exposed on stakes in various public places. Jasper Kaplir of Sulevice is to be beheaded, quartered, and portions of his body impaled in public places ; but on account of his great age (he was over eighty), is only to be beheaded and his head exposed on the bridge tower. Dr. John Jesensky (Jessenius de Magna Jessen), rector of the University of Prague, is sentenced to be quartered alive, his tongue being first torn out by the roots, and the parts of his body to be impaled at the crossings of the public highways ; but the Emperor mercifully changes the sentence so that only a piece of his tongue is to be cut off, after which he is to be beheaded, his head and said piece of tongue to be suspended from the bridge tower opposite to the Jesuit College, and his body, to be carried without the city walls and there quartered and impaled.”

But we mercifully desist, and turn to the more heroic spectacle of the conduct of the condemned on the day of blood at Prague, Monday morning, June 21, 1621. When their sentence was announced to them, the victims were led back to prison, where they were repeatedly visited by the Jesuits, who used all means in their power to convert the doomed men to the Roman Catholic faith. But in no instance did these heroes of the faith prove false to their confession. Six of the twenty-seven martyrs executed on that day belonged to the *Unitas Fratrum* (the Ancient “Moravian” Church) ; these alone were not allowed the ministrations of their pastors, though Lutheran ministers were admitted to them. The memorable scenes that transpired during this carnival of blood have often been described. We have only room to cite the last moments of Budovec, whose noble personality may serve to illustrate the character and demeanor of all.¹

¹ *History of Persecutions*, chap. lxii. This gives the accounts of various eye-witnesses, collated by Adam Hartmann, a minister of the *Unitas Fratrum*.

“ This nobleman was highly gifted and very learned, being noted for his many publications in the Bohemian and Latin languages. He had travelled extensively in Germany, Italy, France, England, and Turkey, having spent seven years in the last-named country. He was a zealous and honorable sire of seventy-four years, who had been entrusted with many distinguished offices of state . . . in fine a splendid ornament to his country and a shining light in the Church of God, a father to his vassals rather than their master, a soul beloved of God and man. After the victory of the Emperor he removed his wife, son, daughter-in-law, and grandchildren from Prague, but himself returned as keeper, with Baron Los, of the royal crown, that it might not be thought he had sought safety in flight. Shortly after, his house was rifled, and everything, even his clothes, taken from him. At this he only remarked : ‘ The Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away ; blessed be the name of the Lord.’ And when he was arrested in his own house, he was visited by Paul Aretin, the secretary of the court of appeals, who asked him : ‘ Why did my lord, having once left Prague and gained his liberty, return and place himself in such jeopardy?’ ‘ My conscience,’ replied Budovec, ‘ would not suffer me to forsake my country and our good cause. But I do not know the counsel of God concerning me ; perhaps he wants me to seal that good cause with my blood.’ And, rising, he added : ‘ Here am I, my God ; do unto thy servant as seemeth good in thy sight. I am full of days, take my spirit from me that I may not behold the evil which I see coming on my country.’ Visited again another day by the same Aretin, and hearing from his visitor that it was commonly reported of himself that he had died of excessive grief, he smiled and said : ‘ I die of grief ! Why I have scarcely ever experienced such delights as I do now. See (pointing to his Bible), this paradise of mine has never given me sweeter fruit than now. I still live, and will live as long as God pleases ; and I hope no one will ever see the day in which it can be said that Budovec died of grief.’

“ Being often examined by the inquisitors, valiantly did he defend his good cause ; and when he was condemned he said to his judges : ‘ You have long thirsted for our blood, drink it then ! But know, too, that God, for whose cause we suffer, will avenge our blood.’ . . . On his return to prison after hearing his death sentence, he was visited by two Capuchin monks, who announced, as the object of their visit, their desire to show him mercy in his distress. Being asked what their errand of mercy might be, ‘ We wish to show your lordship,’ answered they, ‘ the way to heaven.’ ‘ The way to heaven?’ replied Budovec, ‘ that, by the grace of God, is well known to me.’ ‘ My lord’s imagination deceives him,’ rejoined they. ‘ I am not deceived, for my hope is not founded on imagination, but on the immovable truth. I have no other way than Him who said : “ I am the way, and the truth, and the life.” ’ To this the Capuchins only replied : ‘ But outside the church, there is no salvation.’

And then they began to speak of the excellency of the Church, identifying it with the pope, and cardinals, and bishops, until the martyr was moved with indignation and said: 'And I know of your pope that he is the vicar of the Devil, the Antichrist and son of perdition, the beast drunken with the blood of the saints, which he laps even as he now does mine and that of my associates. Begone with him where you belong, and give me peace. Though if you wish me to instruct you in the way of salvation, stay; it will not be burdensome to me to bestow my time and labor on you in order to benefit your souls.' Smiting their breasts and crossing themselves, they went away, remarking that they had never seen so blasphemous an heretic.

"On the day of execution two Jesuits came very early to the hall,¹ and again began troubling the holy men. Being repulsed by the others, they drew near Budovec, and, conversing in Latin, said: 'We see that your lordship is learned and well versed in the sciences; we desire to save your lordship's soul, and thus perform an act of mercy.' 'Dear fathers,' replied Budovec, 'do you desire to save my soul? Oh, that you knew as much of your own salvation, and were as certain of it, as I am of mine. Praise be to God, who has by his Spirit assured me of my salvation through the blood of the Lamb.' 'Let not my lord,' rejoined the Jesuit, 'boast so much of his salvation lest he deceive himself through vain presumption. For the Scripture says that no man in this life knows whether he abides in the love or in the wrath of God.'² 'And is this the work of mercy you desire to perform, and the salvation you bring my soul?' exclaimed the Baron; 'are you not rather filling my soul with despair? Wretched men, you do err, not knowing the Scriptures.' Thereupon he expounded to them the true meaning of the Scripture passage, and quoted many others which set forth the assurance of the believer's salvation, among the rest, Paul's words: 'I know whom I have believed,' and 'Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day.'³ Here the Jesuit interrupted him and said: 'That is not to the point; Paul there speaks of himself, and not of others.' 'That is false,' replied Budovec, 'for he immediately adds: "and not to me only, but unto all them that love His appearing."' The reply struck the seducer dumb. But the Baron continued: 'But since you have tried to catch me with the Scripture, That no man in this life knows whether he abides in the love or in the wrath of God, tell me where it stands written; here is a Bible.' Turning to his companion the Jesuit asked: 'Where is it?' 'It seems to me,' came the answer, 'that it is in Timothy.' At this the Baron broke forth indignantly: 'You ass, do you wish to teach me the way of salvation, and do not know where in the word of God this little passage is found? Depart from me, Satan, and tempt me no more.' Only when they had

¹ The prisoners spent the last night in the Old Town Hall.

² The Jesuit misquoted Eccles. ix. 1. ³ 2 Tim. i. 12; iv. 8.

thus been put to an open shame, did the Jesuits depart. . . . Soon after Budovec was summoned, and went to the scaffold with evident joy, stroking his gray head and long beard and saying: 'My gray hairs, behold what honor has been waiting for you that you should be honored with a martyr's crown!' And immediately turning to God, he prayed for the Church, his country, and his enemies, and committed his soul to Christ. His severed head was suspended from the bridge tower, and his body laid in the grave."

The wholesale execution of the Protestant nobility of Bohemia was but the preliminary act in the destructive work of the Catholic counter-reformation. The plan of the campaign, including the capital punishment of the leaders of the insurrection, had been agreed upon in the imperial cabinet before the defeat of White Mountain. Shortly after this catastrophe, orders were issued from Vienna inaugurating the movement by the seizure of the Protestant churches in Prague, and the expulsion of all "preachers, professors, and teachers of the Calvinistic and Picard [Bohemian Brethren's] faiths." In consequence of this mandate some forty Bohemian ministers immediately left Prague for the dominions of the Elector of Saxony, who vainly interceded in their behalf with his ally, the Emperor. 'But foreign interference was useless. The Emperor was committed to the Catholic cause, and was but a tool in the hands of the papal party. The Roman See manifested a lively interest in the suppression of Protestantism in Bohemia, and gave it more than merely moral support. When Pope Paul V. received news of the Emperor's victory over the Bohemian states, he led in person a grand religious procession through the streets of Rome, during which, however, he was stricken with apoplexy and died shortly afterward. Nevertheless his yearly subsidy of twenty thousand scudi was regularly forwarded to Emperor Ferdinand by his successor, Gregory XV., who demanded that the Roman Catholic religion be immediately reestablished in Bohemia, and that the heretics be violently proceeded against in case they should refuse to forsake their ungodly practices. A papal legate in the person of Caraffa, Bishop of Aversa, was sent to the imperial court, whose special duty it was to incite the Emperor to a zealous performance of his difficult task. Through him the Pope suggested the following steps which he deemed necessary for the success of the Catholic cause: 1. The founding of a Roman Catholic university in Prague; 2. The supplying of all churches in Bohemia with Catholic priests, and the schools with Catholic teachers; 3. The universal use of the Roman Catholic catechism; 4. The establishment of Roman Catholic printing and publishing houses, with the control on the part of Roman Catholic priests of all heretical establishments; 5. The employment of the Jesuit and other orders for missionary work among the common people. The seven and a half years which Caraffa spent at the imperial court were the most active and fruitful in results of the whole period of the Catholic counter-reformation. To this man

indeed are traceable most of the measures employed for the Romanization of Bohemia.

In the beginning of the year 1622 the use of the cup by the laity in the celebration of the Lord's Supper was forbidden by the Archbishop of Prague at the instance of the papal legate. Nothing was more calculated to rouse the old Hussite spirit of the people to opposition than to touch this sacred symbol of its former glory and independence. Accordingly riots occurred in the Utraquist churches; but these were only construed into new occasions for further repressive measures. The charter of King Rudolph, by which in 1609 religious liberty was granted to all the inhabitants of Bohemia and Moravia for all future time, was annulled. And now the Catholic reformers became bolder. Measures were created affecting not only the religious, but also the civic, status of the kingdom. All the magistrates of Prague and other royal cities who refused to become Catholics were removed from office, and their places were filled by adherents of the Roman Catholic faith. Then followed the formal confiscation of all the evangelical churches in Prague, including even those of the German congregations, which had hitherto been spared out of regard for the Elector of Saxony, who had been the Emperor's ally in the Bohemian war. The ousted pastors left Prague in a body, October 29, 1622, most of them settling in Dresden.

The next step in the work of the Catholic counter-reformation was far reaching in its effects. It was the turning over of the University of Prague into the hands of the Jesuits. This ancient seat of learning, founded by Emperor Charles IV. in 1348, had been for more than a century before the German Reformation the center of evangelical thought; but it was now to feel the blighting touch of the enemies of free thought and enlightened Christianity.¹ Vain were the protests of the Archbishop

¹The testimony of Francis Martin Pelcl, a Roman Catholic historian of the last century, is instructive. "High as the Bohemians had risen in literature, science, and the arts, under the reigns of Maximilian and Rudolph, they now sank equally low in these respects. I do not know of a single scholar who, after the expulsion of the Protestants, distinguished himself by any learning. The University of Prague was in the hands of the Jesuits, or rather in abeyance, because the Pope had given orders to suspend all proceedings in it, and no person could receive an academical degree. . . . The greatest part of the schools of the kingdom were conducted by the Jesuits, and not much more than bad Latin was taught in them. . . . In order to keep the people more effectually in a state of ignorance, they went from town to town exacting from the inhabitants, under penalty of everlasting damnation, that they should show the books in their possession. These books were examined by the Jesuits, who burnt the greater part of them, and since that time a Bohemian work is a rare book among us. They also endeavored by the same means to obliterate throughout all Bohemia every trace of her ancient learning. They therefore related to their pupils, that previously to their arrival in Bohemia ignorance prevailed in the country, and carefully concealed from the people, not only the learned labors of our ancestors, but even their very names."

of Prague, Lohelius, and of his successor, Cardinal Harrach. On the 22d of November, 1622, the rector of the Jesuit College of Saint Clement assumed control of the University, whose endowment was at the same time substantially increased.¹ With the control of the University went that of the nine minor colleges in Prague, and of all the schools in Bohemia. At the same time the Jesuits assumed the right of the censorship of books and all other publications. They at once proceeded to desecrate the memory of the martyr John Hus by striking his name out of the national calendar, and prohibiting the commemoration of the day of his burning, July 6th, which had been provided for by the national constitution.

After the expulsion of the Protestant clergy, steps were at once taken for the wholesale conversion of the masses. Deprived of their spiritual leaders and despairing of the Emperor's clemency or even toleration, the Protestants began to fall away from their faith. Apostacy became more common when the adherents of the old religion began to suffer various forms of persecution. Toward the end of the year 1622 Prince Lichtenstein forbade, in the name of the Emperor, the burying in suitable ground and with appropriate religious ceremonies of those who had died in the Protestant faith. Soon after, the prohibition of the use of the cup was renewed, and its removal from all the churches throughout the kingdom was ordered. Early in 1623, at the instigation of Caraffa, the governor issued a mandate prohibiting the religious meetings of the Protestants and their assembling together for any purposes whatsoever. The imperial army was employed to secure the enforcement of these regulations, and violations of them met with severe punishment. Thus on Christmas day, 1623, when the Protestants from the vicinity of Kuttenberg assembled in a church near the village of Vysoka, they were attacked by a body of imperial dragoons at the very moment of approaching the Lord's table. The soldiers cruelly abused the communicants, stripping many naked and beating them with clubs. The officiating minister, George Barta, was nearly beaten to death. The sacramental bread and wine were thrown on the ground, and the cup was trampled under feet by the dragoons. The same year the inhabitants of the town of Brandeis on the Elbe who would not renounce the cup were deprived of the right of plying any trade, or carrying on any business, or of gaining any livelihood whatever, in the community. The bodies of Protestants were even to be refused a decent burial. Similar measures against the adherents of the old faith were employed elsewhere, though as yet not universally. Finally, and again at the instance of Caraffa, on March 29, 1624, an imperial patent was issued declaring that in all the kingdom of Bohemia no other religion than the Roman Catholic was henceforth to

¹ The sum of all the donations made between the years 1621 and 1630 to the Roman Catholic priesthood from the confiscated Protestant estates amounted to over twelve million rix dollars.

be tolerated.¹ Caraffa's opinion was, that only through torment could the Bohemians be brought into the right way.²

The beginning of the enforcement of the new law was made in the city of Tabor, the stronghold of advanced Hussitism for more than two centuries. At the breaking out of the Thirty Years' War it contained not a single Catholic. When it was finally taken by the imperial troops some few burghers were harassed into the Catholic faith by fines, confiscations, imprisonment, the prohibition of marriages among the Protestants, and other forms of punishment. But the majority of the inhabitants firmly adhered to the old faith. The burghomaster, John Chvatal, addressed the imperial authorities a spirited letter in which he claimed and defended religious liberty for himself and all his countrymen. For this offense he suffered the confiscation of his property. The people held out three years against their oppressors, when after numerous emigrations of the burghers to neighboring Protestant countries, the activity of the Jesuits and their unbearable persecutions met with success, and Tabor became nominally Roman Catholic. Its example was gradually followed by other cities in Southern Bohemia. Many of these were pillaged and burned, others utterly ruined and left almost without an inhabitant, so that they had to be repopled from without. The town of Susice (Schüttenhofen) was so harassed by the imperial dragoons quartered in the houses of the Protestants that all but thirteen of its citizens left the city, most of them emigrating to Hungary. The remaining thirteen finally became Catholics, and were relieved of the dragoons. A similar fate befell the cities of Pisek, Prachatic, and Vodnany.

In Prague the resistance to the Catholic reformation was the most determined. Consequently the penalties for nonconformity to Catholic standards were heavier here than elsewhere. On the 6th of May, 1624, orders were issued by the imperial authorities forbidding Protestants to practice any profession or to work at any trade in the city; shortly after, May 29th, Prince Lichtenstein in an imperial patent declared all religious meetings of Protestants illegal, and enjoined the magistrates to break up such gatherings with troops. The patent further ordered the arrest and imprisonment of Protestant preachers, and the dismissal on pain of imprisonment of Protestant teachers from the homes of the burghers, and also prohibited the singing of Protestant hymns and psalms both in public and private. Three preachers were arrested and confined in the Cas-

¹ This decree had reference only to the burgher and peasant classes, the nobility being as yet exempt. See *infra*, p. 548.

² His own words are: "Cognitum fuit, solam vexationem Bohemis posse intellectum praeberere eosque in bonam viam dirigere." One is reminded of the remark of John Palomar at the Council of Basel in 1433: "One must deal with the Bohemians cleverly as with a horse or a mule when breaking them and before the halter is thrown over them, for only then can one tie them to the manger; so will it be done to the Bohemians who do not now wish to enter the fold, when they shall have accepted the unity of the [Roman] Church."

tle of Krivoklat (Pürglitz), but after a year were released and banished (June 5, 1625). In June of the previous year, 1624, the Prince issued a general mandate containing instructions to all the captains of the districts into which the country was divided, and which we enumerate here at length.

"Article I. deprives of all means of livelihood all those who refuse to conform to the religion of the Emperor.

"II. All preaching of the word of God in private dwellings is forbidden; also baptisms and marriages under penalty of one hundred florins or six months' imprisonment. Any one sheltering a Protestant preacher shall be beheaded, and his goods confiscated.

"III. No Catholic priest shall bury a Protestant, but he will collect the fee due him for such services.

"IV. Any one working or driving a wagon or selling goods on Catholic saints' days shall be imprisoned, and released only on payment of ten florins' fine.

"V. Likewise, any one found in a public inn at the time of the celebration of mass shall be imprisoned and fined ten florins; the innkeeper shall pay double the amount.

"VI. Any one criticizing the preaching of a Catholic priest, or permitting Protestant services to be conducted in his house, shall be banished and his property confiscated.

"VII. For eating meat on Friday or on Saturday during Lent, without permission from the Archbishop, a fine of ten florins shall be imposed.

"VIII. Any person absenting himself from mass on Sunday or on Saints' days shall be fined four florins if rich, and two pounds of wax¹ if poor.

"IX. A census of all the young people of the cities shall be taken, and all Protestant youths shall be apprenticed to Catholics under penalty of fifty pounds if the parents be rich, twenty-five if poor.

"X. Any person clandestinely teaching Protestant youth shall be banished and all his goods confiscated.

"XI. All wills shall be illegal and void unless made by Catholics.

"XII. No children or orphans shall henceforth be permitted to learn any trade unless they first become Catholics.

"XIII. Any person speaking profanely of God, of the Blessed Virgin the Mother of God, of the saints, of the ordinances or ceremonies of the Church, or using improper language of the illustrious House of Austria, shall be beheaded without mercy, and his goods shall be confiscated.

"XIV. Any person having a picture or drawing caricaturing the Roman Catholic Church anywhere about his house, shall have the same immediately removed under penalty of thirty florins. . . .

"XV. The sick poor occupying the hospitals who will not become Roman Catholics before All Saints' Day of the present year 1624, shall

¹The wax was intended for the candles to be burned for the dead.

not be suffered to remain in them, nor shall others be taken in. Thus shall His Imperial Majesty's most positive will be fulfilled.

CHARLES VON LICHTENSTEIN."¹

In spite of the severity of these coercive measures the Protestants remained steadfast, and there were but few conversions to the Roman Catholic faith. As a last resort the Jesuits urged the quartering of soldiers in the homes of the immovable Protestants, and this method was consequently adopted. The case of the poor victims now became desperate. What lengths blind hatred and mistaken zeal could go, and how intolerable was the situation in which the Protestants thus found themselves, will be apparent from a short account of what followed. And when the lawless, brutal, and licentious character of the imperial mercenaries is remembered, it will also become plain why the quartering of soldiers proved the most efficacious means of imposing the Catholic faith upon the unwilling Protestants.² The case of Martin Lawrence Pregel, an aged citizen of Prague, is an eloquent witness to the value of soldiers as reformers. This poor man of seventy-five years, scarcely able to take care of himself, had three soldiers placed in his house, and was required to provide for their entire support as long as he remained a Protestant. At his urgent request two were later removed, but one was ordered to remain until the man should become a Roman Catholic.

From Prague the custom of quartering soldiers rapidly spread to other cities until it became universal. The city of Rokycany, famed as the birthplace of the brilliant but vacillating Hussite leader, John Rokycana, was entirely Protestant at the breaking out of the Thirty Years' War, and remained faithful a long time. Up to the year 1624 only six of its citizens had embraced the Roman Catholic faith. But in December of the same year Zdenek Leo, Count Kolovrat, the "reform commissioner," appeared with a whole regiment of imperial troops, and with their aid he finally compelled all the inhabitants to profess the Roman Catholic religion. Only one burgher succeeded in eluding the vigilance of the soldiers, and escaped to Saxony. The Count further extorted from the people a written oath stating that they had become Catholics of their own free will! The formula ran thus: "I swear to the Almighty God,

¹History of Persecutions, Chap. xci.

²"Under the reign of Ferdinand II. the whole Bohemian nation was entirely changed and recast. It is scarcely possible to find another instance of a whole nation so much changed in a space of about fifteen years. In the year 1620 all Bohemia was, with the exception of some nobles and monks, Protestant; at the death of Ferdinand II., in 1637, it was, at least in appearance, entirely Roman Catholic. The merit of this conversion of a whole country in so short a time was claimed by the Jesuits. When they were once boasting of this achievement at Rome in the presence of the Pope, the celebrated Capuchin monk, Valerianus Magnus, who was present on that occasion, and who had also taken a part in the conversion of Bohemia, said: "Holy Father, give me soldiers as they were given to the Jesuits, and I will convert the whole world."—Peiçls' History of Bohemia.

the Virgin Mary, and all the Saints that I return to the bosom of the holy Roman Catholic Church of my own good will and not by any compulsion, and that I regard her as the only true, ancient, and saving church. The cup I most solemnly renounce, never again desiring to have any portion therein, and purposing to warn and caution against it by all means in my power all my children and whosoever may be entrusted to my guardianship. I further promise to stand firm in this faith, and to loathe all those who profess a different one. So help me God, his Mother, and all the Saints."

The people of the town of Klatovy (Klattau) heroically bore the galling yoke of the cavalry of Don Balthasar de Marradas for a whole year and a half before they finally submitted. As in all such cases, many of the citizens left the town during its occupation, some of whom again returned upon the withdrawal of the troops. The city of Domazlice (Taus) long resisted all efforts at conversion to Catholicism until the notorious Don Martin de Huerta was called in to aid with his dragoons. He at once placed from ten to twenty soldiers apiece in the houses of the city councilmen, the effect of which measure was the speedy "conversion" of seventy-one citizens, and the flight of twenty-nine others. Within a year the whole community was Roman Catholic. Mlada Boleslav (Jung Bunzlau), one of the centers of the *Unitas Fratrum*, was summoned by an imperial rescript "to follow in all matters religious the person of the Emperor, who would not tolerate any other religion in his hereditary dominions, even if these were in consequence to be left desolate and without an inhabitant." Against this the citizens protested, begging the Emperor to be allowed freedom in the exercise of their religion in accordance with the provisions of the Letter of Majesty given by King Rudolph, and entering a complaint against the Roman Catholic dean who called them in his sermons "heretics and the children of the Devil." In reply the government ordered soldiers to be quartered in the houses of the foremost citizens, under the pretext of collecting certain unpaid taxes. By this means and with the aid of a company of Capuchin monks about a hundred persons were converted in the course of a year. The wives of the proselytes, however, firmly refused to renounce their faith, and could not be induced even by threats and beating to become Catholics. That the town long remained true to the old faith is evidenced by the fact that as late as 1636 eighty conversions to Roman Catholicism were reported by the Jesuits.

In some towns the people nominally accepted Romanism only to get rid of the brutal soldiery. Thus in Beroun the authorities reported as early as 1625 that the city had become entirely Catholic. But before long the dean of the place complained to the Archbishop that his townspeople were in the habit of attending secret Protestant services in the neighboring villages, and two years later he again complained that the people still clung to their heretical faith and neglected the ordinances of the

Catholic Church. On the other hand, the citizens of Nymburk to the number of one hundred and fifty left their homes because of the cruel oppression of the soldiers quartered in their houses, and settled on the estates of Count Waldstein (Wallenstein), who, though a Catholic and in the service of the Emperor, steadfastly refused to employ coercive measures against the Protestants.

The city of Bydzov (Bidschow) witnessed a striking exhibition of the brutality with which the Catholic counter-reformation was carried on. In 1625 Don Huerta arrived in the place as reform commissioner accompanied by his notorious troops. Immediately summoning the burghers before him, he ordered them to accept the Roman Catholic faith. Their spokesman, one John Kolacnik, replied that they found it impossible to forsake the faith in which they had all their lives walked, unless they were first convinced out of the word of God of a better way. This sane reply so incensed Huerta that with his own hand he beat the unfortunate man almost to death, and then banished him from the town. The other burghers, thoroughly frightened, made efforts to escape, first sending their wives and children away from the town. When this reached the ear of Huerta, he ordered his soldiers to hunt down the women and children, and cast those captured in prison. The sufferings of the people became so terrible that by the year 1633 only ten burghers remained in the city, the others all having run away!

Hradec Kralove (Königgrätz), another important seat of the *Unitas Fratrum*, resisted all attempts to convert its people to Catholicism until, in December 1625, a battalion of soldiers was called in at the request of the archdeacon, John Vaclav Celestine von Kronenfeld. The troops were quartered in the homes of the Protestants, where they were to remain until the latter embraced the Roman Catholic faith. As soon as a man became a Catholic, he was relieved of the soldiers, who were then placed in the houses of his more steadfast neighbors to add to their burden and induce them to yield. The property of those who for their religion emigrated from the city was confiscated into the hand of the Emperor. Not until all the burghers, tormented beyond endurance by the soldiers, had become at least nominal Catholics, were the troops withdrawn from the city.

The city of Slany (Schlan) had been mortgaged in 1622 to Count Martinic, one of the regents thrown out of the window of the Castle of Prague at the beginning of the war. After the deposition of the Protestant city council and the expulsion of the Protestant clergy, the burghers were summoned to join the Catholic Church voluntarily. This they refused to do. Then followed a period of harsh but useless persecutions. Thus for not taking part in a public religious procession the councilmen John Bleya and John Jahoda were imprisoned for nine weeks. The latter was further fined fifty thalers for refusing to permit the erection of the needed altar near his house. The fifty thalers were applied toward the purchase of a new monstrance. For making some disrespectful re-

marks about this sacred vessel, Jahoda was again imprisoned, and liberated only after a month on payment of an additional fine of fifty thalers. He forthwith left the country, taking his family with him. Bleya also again suffered imprisonment for permitting his infant daughter to be baptized by a Protestant minister. He was cast with his wife into a foul dungeon. On being liberated they both went into voluntary exile, and settled in Pirna, Saxony. In the course of the year 1624 many other burghers sought refuge in foreign lands from the tyranny of the Catholic town-captain, Nicholas Hanzbursky. Finding past measures fruitless, this magistrate decided in 1626 to call in the aid of the imperial troops in order to bring the people under the sway of Rome. At one time he caused fifty burghers to be confined together in a single cell for three days! This barbarous treatment of helpless people resulted in a wholesale exodus from the town, over three hundred persons leaving the city in one month. A large part of the refugees, however, afterward returned and accepted the Roman Catholic faith.

The city of Kutna Hora (Kuttenberg) was at the breaking-out of the Thirty Years' War the second city in Bohemia. For centuries its famous silver mines had been the chief source of revenue to the crown. Here as early as 1623 the newly appointed mint-master, William Ilburk, Count Vresovic, began forcing the Roman Catholic religion upon the inhabitants by the employment of military oppression and violence. Soon however many miners began leaving the city, thus endangering the interests of the royal exchequer in the mines. For this reason the Emperor issued a rescript, June 24, 1625, granting liberty of worship to the miners for ten years. At the same time the imperial troops were withdrawn from the town. But the Jesuits prevailed upon the government to discard the royal mandate, and soldiers were again quartered in the city as early as December of the same year. At the command of the reform commissioners, troops were lodged in the houses of the foremost citizens, twenty soldiers to a house, where they were to remain at the expense of the owners until these became Catholics. But as the burghers could not be induced to give up their faith, the commissioners called to their aid the notorious oppressor of Protestants, Don Huerta, at whose approach the burghers and miners in large numbers fled from the city and sought refuge in the surrounding villages. To compel the fugitives to return, Huerta secured the publication of a decree imposing a fine of one hundred thalers upon any one giving shelter to an escaped citizen. But not until a second imperial rescript, promising the miners immunity from religious oppression, was given, did any of these return; and of them only twenty-four, unable to bear their sufferings any longer, became Roman Catholics. In the year immediately following, the citizens of Kutna Hora withstood all attempts at forcible conversion to Catholicism, appealing, though in vain, to the immunities and privileges secured them by the imperial rescripts. Obtaining no redress, many of them re-

moved with their families from the town, in which three hundred houses were consequently left vacant. Up to the year 1629 only three hundred and nine persons had become Catholics; the rest remained true to their faith in spite of all persecution and oppression. As late as 1644 we hear of the forcible conversion of two hundred persons to Romanism.

Want of space forbids our citing further examples of the treatment of the free cities. The cases noticed are a fair illustration of the fate of all. The persecution of the Protestants by the victorious Catholic party resulted in wholesale emigration from the cities. From the reports of the imperial magistrates alone, it appears that during the years 1624 to 1627 there left for foreign countries 1,731 burghers with their families. To prevent further losses of the important burgher class, the imperial government issued two mandates (February 24 and March 2, 1626), ordering the confiscation of the property of future "emigrants," as they were called, even though it had been sold or transferred by them to others. And since those who could not emigrate banded together for mutual protection and encouragement, binding themselves by oath to remain true to their faith and to one another, there was issued, in July, 1627, an imperial decree forbidding such alliances and covenanting on pain of death. A month later appeared a second decree punishing by death and the confiscation of goods any person who should attempt to dissuade another by word or act from embracing the Roman Catholic faith, or seek to persuade another to leave the country. Offenders against this law who were without the pale of the realm were to be punished by the confiscation of their possessions. Yet, notwithstanding the severity of the government, many emigrants from Prague and other royal cities kept returning to their old homes without permission from the imperial authorities, who consequently ordered the local magistrates to arrest and imprison such persons, requiring however their immediate release upon their becoming Catholics. Those who still refused to renounce their faith were again to be banished, having first signed an oath that they would never again return to the country on pain of death and the loss of goods, except they first became Catholics.

Thus far we have been describing the forcible conversion of the royal cities to Catholicism during the Thirty Years' War. We will now briefly review the history of the Catholic counter-reformation among the peasant class of Bohemia. At first the victorious Catholic party, mindful of the fate of similar measures in the Netherlands, France, and England, abstained from open violence, and attempted to bring about a gradual reformation of the peasantry by the employment of moderate means. The chief task of winning the rural population to Catholicism fell to the Jesuits. The beginning was made in Southern Bohemia by the fathers of the Jesuit College in Krumlov (Krumau), but without any perceptible results. On the estates of Count Slavata the peasants left in a body, and could not be forced to return, though the Count caused them to be

hunted by soldiers like wild game. Nor were the Jesuits of the colleges of Prague and Jindrichuv Hradec (Neuhaus) more successful. These missionaries exhausted all the ingenuities of their art to gain the people. They versified and set to music the Roman Catholic catechism, which they freely distributed among the peasants. They published for free distribution Catholic literature in the vernacular, particularly translations from the works of Cardinal Bellarmine. To insure the reading of this literature, they seized and publicly burned all Protestant books. Thus in Krumlov, at their bidding, the town authorities publicly burned in 1623 over five hundred "heretical" books, which act the fathers piously chronicled "afforded the people a beautiful, profitable, and saving sight!"¹ But when the futility of these methods became apparent, the reformers resolved upon coercive measures, as in the case of the free cities. The first step in this direction was the prohibition, in June 1625, to all Protestant villagers to do any trading in the city of Podiebrady on the Elbe. This was followed, in January 1626, by an imperial resolution prohibiting Protestant peasants from marrying, and punishing offenders against the law by the confiscation of half their belongings. But as even this harsh measure failed to produce the intended effect, the use of military force was resorted to. The same tactics were employed in the country as in the cities. Soldiers were quartered in the homes of the peasants, who were obliged to support and otherwise care for their unwelcome guests as long as they remained Protestants. As a further inducement it was ordered that when a peasant became Catholic the soldiers should at once be removed from his home and added to the care of some already overburdened neighbor. The quartering of soldiers, especially Don Huerta's dragoons, who surpassed all others in cruelty and licentiousness, was the means of bringing a considerable number of peasants into forced and unwilling connection with the Church of Rome. But many of the villagers deserted their homes, and hid in the woods and mountains, where they were hunted by the soldiers like wild animals. Terrible was the treatment of those who were unfortunate enough to be captured, and countless are the examples of Christian heroism and martyrdom of these humble tillers of the soil. The number also of those that succeeded in escaping into the neighboring countries was quite large. Count Slavata reports that up to the year 1626 over thirty thousand settled farmers, not counting their wives and children, escaped over the border, mostly into Saxony, Meissen, and Lusatia. Some villages

¹The rage of the Jesuits against Protestant literature is notorious. Anthony Konias, who for thirty-seven years labored as missionary in Bohemia and Moravia, boasted of having with his own hands burned over sixty thousand volumes. In the words of his biographer: "Eorumque ultra 60 facile millia Vulcano in prædam dedit." In the work of expurgation the Jesuits were no less assiduous. The writer has seen volumes otherwise deemed harmless in which the hand of the censor had carefully obliterated with indelible ink even the names of the Reformers, that their very memory might be effaced from the minds of the people.

were entirely depopulated. Severe decrees were consequently enacted forbidding all persons of high and low degree, under heavy penalties, to receive, protect, harbor, shelter, or anywise aid those who, for whatsoever reason, had left their homes on the farms, but in all instances to report and deliver them to the authorities.

Nor were numerous uprisings of the peasantry wanting. It is needless to say that these were put down by force of arms and with every accompaniment of cruelty. As a consequence of such outbreaks, the employment of soldiers for the purpose of religious coercion and oppression of the peasants became universal. On border estates, however, the nobles were in some cases very loath to employ troops or any other violent means of bringing their subjects into union with the Catholic Church, because of the fear that their tenants would run off into the neighboring countries. This was particularly true of Counts Vchynsky and Trcka, and the Duke of Friedland (Waldstein). The unwillingness of the latter to employ the violent means for the conversion of his subjects to Catholicism in vogue throughout the kingdom was one of the causes that led to his fall and final assassination in Cheb (Eger) in 1634. Nevertheless even Waldstein deemed it prudent to yield, and in 1629 the forcible Romanization of Protestants with the aid of soldiers was undertaken on all his estates.

We now come to the consideration of the third part of our subject, the conversion of the Bohemian nobility of the seventeenth century to the Roman Catholic faith. Up to the year 1627 the forcible imposition of Catholicism upon the inhabitants of the land did not include persons of noble rank. In that year, at the instigation of the papal legate, Caraffa, and the archbishop, Cardinal Harrach, who urged the necessity of the step, the Emperor determined upon forcibly Romanizing the Bohemian nobility. On the 29th of May, 1627, he issued a new Letter of Majesty nullifying that given by King Rudolph, and declaring the Roman Catholic religion the only recognized and authorized religion in Bohemia and Moravia. Any person who should attempt to restore the old order of things in matters religious was made an outlaw, to be punished by the loss of life, honor, and estate. The Letter significantly added that the Emperor intended to hold all the nobility in unity with the Catholic Church, and that he did not purpose to tolerate any other faith or religion in the kingdom. The Protestant knights and nobles were given a term of six months in which to unite with the Catholic Church; those who failed to do so were given six months longer in which to sell their estates, but only to Catholics, after which they were to go into exile. This harsh measure resulted in the emigration of over four hundred persons of noble birth from the kingdom of Bohemia and the margravate of Moravia.¹ Of these only sixteen ever returned to their native country,

¹ To the number of these emigrants should be added the fifty-two nobles who fled from the country immediately after the battle of White Mountain, giving a total loss by death and emigration of some five hundred Protestant noblemen to the Bohemian nation in the seventeenth century.

having first become Catholics according to the requirements of the new law. The orphans of noble families were sent to Jesuit colleges, where they received Roman Catholic training.

After the expulsion of the Protestant nobility of Bohemia began what may be termed the second Catholic counter-reformation. This was the work of Archbishop Harrach, and even more so of his consistorial vicar, Caramuel, a Spaniard by birth and a member of the Cistercian order. As the author and leader of the new movement this monk proved to be a second Caraffa. Through his activity the Emperor, Ferdinand III., commanded, December 25, 1649, the renewal of the counter-reformation in strict accord with the edicts of his predecessor. All secret meetings of the Protestants were at once to be stopped, and, by a special patent given February 1, 1650, all persons who did not adhere to the Catholic Church were to be proceeded against by the quartering of soldiers, imprisonment, confiscation of property, banishment, and even the infliction of capital punishment. No foreign Protestant merchants were allowed to visit the fairs and markets of the country, but in all cases were to leave their business in the hands of Catholic stewards. Later a bounty was placed upon Protestant preachers, persons receiving fifty florins for informing against them, and one hundred florins for delivering them into the hands of the authorities. Those giving shelter to Protestant preachers were to be fined from five hundred rix dollars to one thousand ducats, according to the rank and means of the offender.

As a result of the new activity against the Protestants, many of them again began escaping across the border, while others endured terrible persecutions and martyrdom. Under Emperor Leopold, who removed Caramuel, a milder rule obtained, only however to be followed by increased severities under his successors, Joseph I. and Charles VI. The so-called Josephinian statute of 1707 provided that any person who should give shelter to a Protestant preacher or agent, or who should permit Protestant services to be held in his house, be beheaded with the sword. In 1721 it was enacted that merchants, peddlers, foreign messengers, or any persons whatsoever who should smuggle heretical books into the kingdom of Bohemia be imprisoned and beheaded. Informers against such persons were to receive a third of the goods taken from the offenders or a suitable reward from the royal exchequer.

Examples of inhuman cruelty on the part of the Catholic reformers and of exemplary constancy on the part of the persecuted Protestants in this period are well-nigh countless. We can cite only a few. In the year 1717 a large number of people of the village of Javornik in Eastern Bohemia were accused before the authorities of holding meetings at the house of a peasant named Martin Kalas for the purpose of reading the Holy Scriptures and for mutual edification in their faith. They were cast into prison, where they were so frightfully whipped that many of them lost their health forever; those who refused to become Catholics were sepa-

rated from their wives and children and impressed into military service in the imperial army. A certain Thomas Kazda of Cerekvice was placed in solitary confinement, and received so many blows that not a sound spot remained on his body. After a year's imprisonment he was released on payment of one hundred florins' fine. Subsequently at the instigation of a Catholic priest he was again imprisoned for having Lutheran books in his possession. After remaining confined for two years and steadfastly refusing to give up his faith and embrace Catholicism, he died in chains, poisoned by the order of the dean of Litomysl (Leitomischl). His widow was compelled to pay fourteen florins to defray part of the expense of her husband's incarceration! In 1733 three girls (all under twenty years) were imprisoned in the village of Hermanice for attempting to escape from the country because of their religious belief. They were put in irons and received a frightful whipping, lying prone on the ground, while one man held their shackled feet and another the head. The same brutal punishment was administered to Matthias Benes and his wife, the latter, in consequence of the frightful beating, soon after miscarrying. John Benicky with his son and daughter received so many blows that the flesh of their bodies was literally lashed into shreds. In fact whipping was so common a mode of conversion to Catholicism that the citation of cases would be practically endless.

But the palm for inhuman cruelty belongs to the Jesuit Father Firmus. He extorted from the peasants confession where they hid their Protestant books by treading on the feet of the poor victims with heavy clogs full of sharp spikes; he pulled their hair and boxed their ears to obtain their coveted Bibles, which were then publicly burned.¹ At his command and in his presence, the soldiers, whose services were indispensable to the work of the Catholic reformation, tortured the farmers in whose houses they were quartered by burning their hands with fire while they compelled their victims in their agony to sing Protestant hymns. Oftentimes the unfortunates were stripped and tied to a bench and so terribly beaten with switches made pliant in hot water, that the blood gushed out of their wounds, and strips of flesh were torn off their bodies. Even the priests and army officers and noblemen of high rank took hand in inflicting such barbarous punishment upon the helpless Protestants. In 1729 the game-keeper of Count Francis Schlick, in whose house a Jesuit Father had found Protestant books, was immediately dismissed from service, cast into prison, and (as the official report has it), for uttering blasphemies against St. John of Nepomuk, was beheaded and his body

¹ There has come down a hymn composed by the Jesuit Father M. Strepicky and sung by the school children on such occasions, whose opening stanza runs thus:

"Here we burn John Hus,
That our souls may not be singed,
And also Martin Luther,
For cursing the faith of Saint Peter."

burned. A woman named Anna Zvonenska, who died in prison in consequence of the frightful tortures inflicted on her, was buried in chains under the gallows. The Jesuit missionaries, accompanied by soldiers, made regular tours in the various districts, causing the arrest and imprisonment of those even suspected of Protestantism, and subjecting them to torture by whipping, fire, hunger, and other ways, until they either renounced their faith, or were drafted in the army, or died a martyr's death. Even children were imprisoned and subjected to corporal punishment, in order to ascertain from them whether they had been brought up in the Protestant faith.

The spirit of the countless martyrs for the gospel of Jesus Christ in this period is beautifully shown in a letter, dated March 30, 1735, which was left in his house by Matthias Machovec, upon his escape from the country, together with his wife, children, and aged mother. In this he thanks the magistrate and his neighbors for all the good they wished him, and adds that he has nothing to complain of against the authorities touching things temporal, but that, on the contrary, he would gladly in all things obey the Emperor and the authorities to whom he was subject; that he would gladly pay his taxes and discharge his other public duties, if only he were allowed freedom to worship God and serve him according to the teaching of his Holy Word. But, inasmuch as he could not hope for this in his country, and because his conscience had suffered violence from the priests and public authorities, he preferred to leave all behind him and seek freedom elsewhere.

Such is the brief survey of the heroic but mortal conflict between Bohemian Protestantism and its implacable enemy Romanism. Not without its lesson and warning to other nations is the record of the terrible tragedy. A spiteful Nemesis seems to visit vengeance upon the Bohemian people for their boldness in giving the signal for revolt against Rome, and leading in the work of emancipation of the human conscience from the thralldom of papal authority. Other nations and peoples have reaped the harvest which Bohemia had sown and sprinkled with her lifeblood. The Thirty Years' War begun by her insured Protestant Europe her existence, but buried Bohemia in an untimely grave. Her glory was turned into shame by her enemies, and even her very memory seemed likely to sink into oblivion. The knowledge of her wonderful and glorious past was systematically either suppressed or perverted. Hard has been

her fate in this respect: the very book which was to acquaint the English-speaking world with her heroic deeds and suffering and from which we have quoted at some length, the "History of Persecutions," came too late to be incorporated into Fox's "Book of Martyrs" for which it was originally written. Had not this happened, the names and events which we have mentioned would have become household words and traditions in Protestant England and America. The very name of the Bohemian people has been degraded by their enemies. When, at the time of the Hussite wars, hordes of Gypsies first overran Western Europe, the enemies of the Bohemian reformation contemptuously gave them the name of "Bohemians" for the purpose of heaping shame and dishonor upon the heretic nation.¹

But two thoughts relieve the dark picture of its horror and gloom. The sufferings and sacrifices of the Bohemian people have not been in vain. The world to-day is debtor for its liberty of conscience, under God, first of all to Bohemia. And not a small part of its best piety, of its missionary zeal and activity, it owes to the Bohemian Brethren. And Providence has graciously not suffered the nation to perish. It lives. After the silence of centuries the grave has opened and there has come forth a living being. Six generations passed before the Edict of Toleration, issued by Emperor Joseph II., made it possible for obscure and all but extinct Protestantism again to come to light. Forty-five thousand souls in Bohemia and thirty thousand in Moravia openly professed Protestantism in the memorable year 1781. The Lord had preserved for himself a remnant. But it is as yet only a remnant. The national resurrection of Bohemia is an accomplished fact; her political resurrection is in process of accomplishment; her spiritual resurrection still awaits accomplishment.

¹ See Palacky's *History of Bohemia*, xiii. 6; Trench's *Study of Words*, Lect. iv.