

The Open Court

A MONTHLY MAGAZINE

Devoted to the Science of Religion, the Religion of Science, and the
Extension of the Religious Parliament Idea

Founded by EDWARD C. HEGELEK

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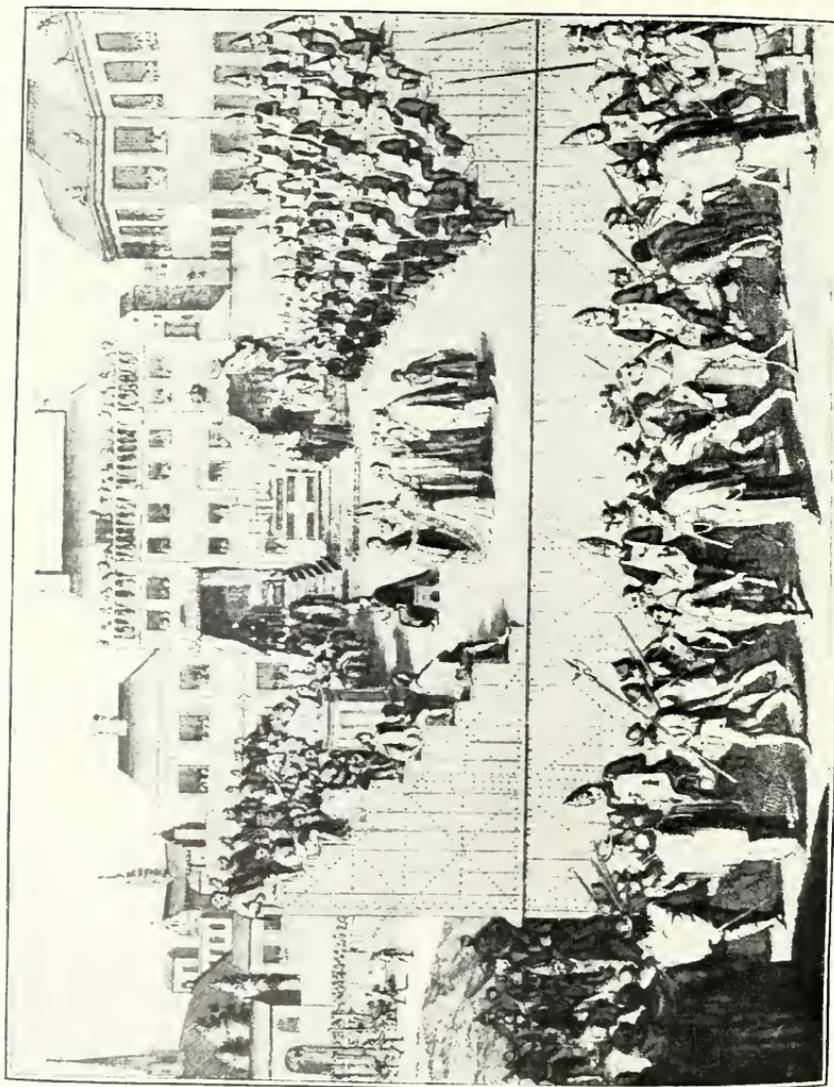
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AN ACT OF FAITH — BURNING THE TALMUD
(From *The Age of Persecutions*)

Frontispiece to The Open Court.

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THE BURNINGS OF THE TALMUD

BY DUDLEY WRIGHT

VOLUMES have been written upon the subject of the general persecutions of the Jews throughout the ages, but no attempt has hitherto been made to sum up the evidence concerning the persecutions of the Talmud and Talmudists, in particular. As a matter of fact, Talmudic persecutions were anterior to its compilation and completion as a book as well as afterwards. There were many attempts to destroy Talmudic teaching before even the codification was begun. The first attempt appears to date from immediately after the conclusion of the reign of Antiochus Epiphanes, who died 164 B. C., when the high priesthood passed from the descendants of Zadok to other families, finally passing into the possession of the Maccabees. Antiochus had essayed to destroy the national faith and to this end had constituted Jerusalem a Greek colony, ordering all the sacred books to be surrendered and making the possession of a sacred book or the performance of the rite of circumcision a capital offence. Then the sect of the Sadducees came into existence and they joined forces with the Samaritans, and jointly they gave their support to Antiochus Epiphanes. After Jesus broke with the Pharisees and their practices, in public, his disciples, it has been suggested, ranged themselves along with the Sadducees and Boethusians in opposition to the Talmudists, because the Talmud (then unwritten) laid more stress on external ceremonies than they deemed necessary.

For a time success seemed to favor the anti-Talmudists until the period of Simon ben Shetah, a Pharisee and president of the Sanhedrin, which, except for himself, consisted solely of Sadducees, whom, however, he succeeded in expelling and replacing with Pharisees. Simon recalled Joshua ben Perahyah, formerly president of the college, who had found refuge from persecution in Alexandria, reinstated him as college president, and himself became vice-presi-

dent. Thus there began a revival of Talmudic studies, which spread beyond the boundaries of Palestine and Egypt into all the countries whither the Jews had dispersed. Simon not only restored the Pharisaical system, but he established schools where both the Torah and the Oral Law were taught, thus well meriting the title of "Restorer of the Law" given him by the acclamation of the Jewish people. After the triumph of Simon ben Shetah over the Sadducees the development of the Talmud progressed rapidly and from all parts of the world people came to Palestine to learn the doctrines and morality of the Talmud.

Hadrian (117—138 C. E.), on his accession to the throne, did not remain content with sacrificing the sages of the Talmud, but also directed his energies to the destruction of the Talmud itself, by decreeing that if any Rabbi should confer the Rabbinical diploma upon another, both should be put to death and that the place where they had studied and taught should also be destroyed. R. Judah ben Baba, warned of the decree, betook himself to a place between two great mountains, where he licensed six of the oldest of R. Akiba's disciples as Rabbis, or teachers of the Talmud. He then offered his body to satiate the vengeance of the Romans, who pierced it with three hundred iron lances. The newly-ordained Rabbis were enabled to escape and under their influence there was another revival in Talmudic study. Some joined R. Simon the Nasi in Shrephem and others founded colleges, of which they became the principals. Through their industry and influence the Talmud regained its former power and one of them, R. Ilai, became the tutor of R. Judah ha Nasi, the compiler of the *Mishnah*. Hadrian also forbade circumcision, the reading of the Law, and the observance of the Sabbath.

Antoninus Pius, who ascended the throne in 138 and reigned until 161 C. E., renewed the decree of Hadrian, and it was only after long persuasion and at great risk of life that R. Simon ben Gamaliel, Nasi of Jamnia, induced R. Simon ben Jochai and R. José to accompany him to Rome to petition the king to repeal the decree. Yet even during that stormy period, in every place where Jews dwelt there was to be found a house of learning for the study of the Talmud.

In 261 C. E., Papa bar Nazor led the army which destroyed Nehardea, when it ceased to be the principal focus of Jewish life, although its academy still continued in existence. Many Rabbis escaped to Pumbeditha, which city became the seat, for a thousand years, of the most celebrated Jewish college after Sura.

In consequence of the persecution and the banishment of several religious teachers under the emperors Constantin and Constantinus, the Palestinian academies decayed entirely. Constantine I. (Flavius Valerius Aurelius Constantinus, 274-337 C. E.) succeeded his father Constantinus Chlorus in 306 C. E. He adopted a hostile policy towards the Jews and, in 329, the death penalty was ordained for one who embraced the Jewish faith, as well as for Jews versed in the Law who aided them.

Thus it will be seen that Talmudic persecutions began really when the Talmud was known only orally, when it was taught by the sages and considered, discussed, and analyzed by their pupils and students. But no sooner was the Babylonian Talmud completed and the Saburites had placed their seal upon it, declaring that nothing was to be added to it or subtracted from it, than Justinian, on 13th February, 553 C. E., decreed capital punishment to all communities in the Byzantine who should fail to use a Greek or Latin translation of the Bible in their Sabbath services. He also forbade the traditional Jewish interpretation and illustration of the Old Testament, which, in many points, was naturally opposed to the Christian interpretation. This was tantamount to an absolute prohibition of the study of the Talmud. The Palestinian Talmud, more ancient than the Babylonian, had previously suffered from a like decree. Justinian's aim, of course, was to curb or repress the Haggadic or Rabbinical exposition of the Scriptures, which would prevent the Jews from accepting the Christological interpretation. Whilst the Babylonian Talmud was known and studied as far as Chorasán and India in the East, and as far as the end of the ancient world in the West, its companion remained for a long time unknown outside its birthplace, and whilst the former had commentators who explained and expounded it thoroughly, the latter was for a long time neglected. It is noteworthy that Jewish scholars and authorities were among the earliest to prohibit the reading of those works which had not received the mark of their approbation. In the tenth chapter of the *Mishnah Sanhedrin*, R. Akiba forbids the reading of non-canonical writings by declaring that whoever did so would not have a share in the future life.

The Canon of the Talmud was closed in a season of opulence and repose, but the scene speedily changed. Gloomy and dark days were followed by a storm of persecution from the Persian kings, whose terrible onslaughts almost paralyzed the activities of the academies at Sura and Pumbeditha. Yesdegerd II. instituted a persecu-

tion of the Jews which transcended in cruelty all they had hitherto experienced, forbidding even the observance of the Sabbath, but which, nevertheless, was forerunner of still more severe sufferings. Firuz, "the tyrant," continued the persecutions on a larger scale. In 468 C. E., the Jews in Persia underwent a year of suffering which in the Talmud is called "the year of the destruction of the world." From that year until 474 C. E., the study of the Law was prohibited. Then, amid other evils, Mazdak introduced the doctrine of community, both of property and wives, to which resistance was led by Mar Zutra II., son of R. Chuna. The Talmudical colleges at Sura and Pumbeditha were closed and many teachers fled to Firuzshabas, where, under an Arabian governor, they were less exposed to espionage. New colleges arose there, among which that of Mair was eminent, and there the devout Jews continued their Talmudic studies. When Bubrum Tshrubin, assisted by the Jews, usurped the Persian throne, the colleges of Sura and Pumbeditha were reopened, Chanan of Iskia returned from Firuzshabar to Pumbeditha and restored the college there.

After the Persian dynasty had gained the Caliphate (750 C. E.) it began persecuting the Israelites. Without regard to the flourishing condition literature had attained in those Oriental academies, they expelled the Jews from Babylon, closed their renowned colleges and dispersed their illustrious teachers. Four of these learned men were captured by a corsair despatched by Abderachman from Cordova to cruise in the sea of the Grecian archipelago. He sold R. Shemaris at Alexandria, and he became head of the Jews in Egypt. R. Heshiel was sold by him on the coast of Africa, whence he went to Alkirohan, at that time the most powerful of the Mohammedan western provinces, where he became Chief Rabbi. R. Moses and his son, R. Hanoch, were carried to Cordova. That city was actuated only by benevolence and was unaware of the identity of their two illustrious visitors. When, however, their identity was discovered, the joy of the residents was great: they made R. Moses judge of the congregation and the fame of his learning spread through all Spain and the West. The reputation of the academies at Pumbeditha and Nehardea was such that the Spanish Jews, who had no such institutions in their own country, had sent their sons thither, in spite of the long distance and the dangers attendant upon travelling. This was by no means pleasing to the Moors, whose subjects the Jews were. Now, however, R. Moses and his son established at Cordova the first Jewish academy in Spain and thus engendered a love for

the Talmud which the Spanish Jews had previously scarcely experienced. Among the disciples of R. Moses was R. Joseph ben Isaac Shatnesh, who, by desire of Caliph Hakin, translated the Talmud into Arabic. The Caliph became a great patron of this study, and subsidiary schools were founded at Grenada, Toledo, Barcelona, and elsewhere. R. Joseph, however, was sorely aggrieved that R. Hanoch was chosen to succeed his father instead of himself, and, being excommunicated from the congregation because of the disturbance he made, became a wanderer and died at Damascus. R. Moses was by birth a Persian and he only transplanted on to the soil of Iberia the studies which had made such progress under the Caliphs of Bagdad and Koufa.

It was loyalty to the Talmud which gave the Pharisees the victory over the Sadducees and other sects opposed to the Oral Law, but as the Talmudists gained strength their decrees against the Sadducees, Samaritans, Kuthim, and the like, became more and more severe, leading to the only possible result, observable throughout the whole of religious history—rebellion and revolution. There is a special instance of this at Sura, when Anan expected to succeed his uncle Anan b. David as Gaon, but was not elected because of his open hostility to the Talmud and his liberal ideas. This was in 760 C. E. In revenge, he founded the Karaite sect, who claimed to be strict adherents of the Written Law and they rejected all Oral Tradition, claiming also to be the legitimate successors of a by-gone sect. Anan took the field publicly as an anti-Talmudist fixing his headquarters at Jerusalem and assuming also the title of Exilarch. He made unceasing war upon the Talmud and even said that if he could have swallowed the book he would have done so and cast himself into a lime-kill, so that it might be burned with him and leave no vestige of its existence. Indirectly, he was the creator of a number of Karaite sects and these internal dissensions were more inimical to Judaism than external persecutions, since the former aimed at the undermining of that faith by those within the fold, while the latter were gradually impelled by an ulterior motive, which was the spoiling of the Israelites by the confiscation of their material wealth, or relieving them of a portion thereof by the imposition of bribes to escape persecution. The Karaites cared not whether the Jews became Christian or Mussulmans, so long as they forsook the hateful Talmud and its contents became lost. This, surely, is one of the greatest testimonies to the value of the Talmud as an incentive to high spiritual living that could possibly be adduced. It failed, how-

ever, in its purpose, because of the dissensions and divisions that took place among the Karaites themselves and, instead of weakening the influence of the Talmud or diminishing the number of its followers, their propaganda had an effect entirely the reverse, increasing the influence and developing the spiritual life of its adherents.

For many years the Talmudists seem to have been permitted to remain at peace and the next persecution of the Jews appears to have occurred in Germany early in the eleventh century. It arose through the conversion, in 1005, of Wecelinus, Chaplain to the Duke Conrad (a relative of the Emperor) to Judaism, when he wrote a lampoon on his former faith.

The first public official burning of Hebrew books (the Talmud *not* included) which took place in December, 1233, arose, strange to say, from a domestic quarrel or internal warfare; a contest between Maimonists (followers of Maimonides) and anti-Maimonists (those opposed to philosophical study). Solomon of Montpellier, the leader of the latter, sought to condemn the writings of Maimonides as heretical, and he obtained the aid of the Dominican friars, who had firmly established themselves, along with the Inquisition, in his city. At his instigation, and by the command of the Papal Cardinal legate, a house search was made in Montpellier for Maimonist writings, and these, when found, were brought together and publicly burnt. According to Hillel ben Samuel, within a month of this incident some twelve thousand volumes of Hebrew literature were publicly destroyed in Paris, though there is no record that the Talmud itself was included in the conflagration.

A "conversion" was the cause of the next persecution of Talmudists, which began in 1239 and lasted for several years. Reference will presently be made to the man who was the originator of all the trouble. On 20th June, 1239, Pope Gregory IX. issued a decree confiscating all copies of the Talmud, but this appears to have been generally disregarded. Early in the following year the Pope despatched the decree to the heads of the Church in France, England, Castile, Aragon, and Portugal, along with orders for the confiscation of all copies of the Talmud found in Jewish houses on the morning of the first Saturday in Lent, when the Jews would be assembled in their synagogues, the copies thus found to be handed over to the Dominicans and Franciscans. He further admonished the Provençal members of these two friarhoods to submit the contents of the Talmudical writings to special examination and if they

were found to contain abuse of Jesus and the Virgin, distortion of the words of Holy Scriptures, or disgraceful representations of God, then every volume was to be burned. This decree seems to have been entirely disregarded in Spain and England and, apparently, it was only in France where, under the priest-ridden and weak-minded Louis IX., the confiscation of the Talmud was carried out with severity and the Jews were compelled, under penalty of death, to surrender their copies of the precious volume. In the midst of all the persecution arising from the crusade instituted by Gregory IX., there was only one spot where the Jew might feel free and happy and forget his sufferings, and that was the house of study, where young and old foregathered, in order to read and ponder over the Talmud. Graetz has given a delightful pen-picture of a scene common in those days, in the following words:

Absorbed in deep meditation, those who pored over the Talmud became entirely oblivious of the outer world with its bitter hate, its malicious laws, and its cruel tortures. Here they were the sons of a king, the majesty of thought cast a halo around their brows, and the delight of a spiritual activity illumined their characters. Their whole happiness consisted in solving some difficult problem in the Talmud, or in throwing light upon some obscure point, or in discovering something new which had escaped the notice of their predecessors. They looked neither for office nor honor in reward for their profound studies, and received no tangible recompence for their nocturnal vigils. They desired only to gratify their intense longing for knowledge, to satisfy their sense of religious duty and in every way to assure themselves of their heavenly reward. The all-important occupation for all persons was study, and the flower of all scholarship was the Talmud.

How came this harmonious and peaceful condition to be disturbed? Mainly through the revenge and self-seeking of one despicable individual. In 1225, one Donin, a Talmudist from La Rochelle in the north of France, was excommunicated in the presence of the whole congregation by R. Jehiel, of Paris, because he cast doubts upon the validity of the Talmud and Oral Teaching. For ten years, though excommunicated, Donin clung to Judaism, but at the end of that time he made a profession of Christianity and became a member of the Franciscan friarhood, assuming the name of Nicholas de Rupella. After stirring up the Crusaders to bloody persecutions in Brittany, Poitou, and Anjou, when three thousand Jews were slaughtered (five hundred accepting the alternative of Christian

baptism) Donin, in 1238, went to Rome and obtained an audience of Pope Gregory IX., when he denounced the Talmud, stating his charges in a document of thirty-five articles. A transcript of this document accompanied the Pope's order for the confiscation of the Talmud. The principal charges made by Donin were that the Talmud distorted the words of the Bible; that in the Haggadic portions there were to be found disgraceful representations of God; that it was filled with abuse against Jesus and the Virgin; that it taught that it was a meritorious action to kill the best man among the Christians; that it was lawful to deceive a Christian without any scruple; and that it was permitted to Jews to break a promise made on oath.

In order to settle the dispute it was decided to submit the Talmud to a public trial. Four distinguished Rabbis of northern France were commanded by the King to hold a public disputation with Donin, either to refute the imputations levelled against the Talmud or to make confession of the alleged abuse against the Christian religion and the blasphemies against God it was said to contain. At the end of three days' discussion, which took place in the presence of the queen-mother Blanche, the Bishops of Paris and Senlis, and of many Dominicans, the Commission which had been appointed to make the inquiry condemned the Talmud to be burned on the ground (unwarranted by the evidence) that two of the Rabbis had been compelled to admit the truth of several of the charges. The sentence, however, was never carried out. Archbishop Walter Cornutus of Sena, who had great influence with the king, interceded on behalf of the Jews, with the result that many of the confiscated copies were restored to their rightful owners. It was alleged by his enemies that the Archbishop was bribed by the Jews to bring about this desired result, and the sudden death of the prelate occurring almost immediately afterwards gave the friars the opportunity of persuading the king that such event was the judgment of heaven upon him for thus befriending the Jews. The king now was easily induced to renew his decree for the confiscation of all copies of the Talmud that could be found and one morning in June, 1242, twenty-four cartloads of books were brought together in one spot in Paris and committed to the flames, this being the first public official burning of the Talmud. For many years the anniversary of this day was kept by the French Jews as a day of fasting. An important part in the discussions was taken by Eudes de Chateauxeux, Bishop of Tusculum, Chancellor of the University of Paris, and afterwards

Papal Legate in the Holy Land. Two manuscript reports of the discussions are in existence, one in Hebrew and the other in Latin. The former is in the Strasbourg Library and the latter is in the Bibliotheque Nationale. Eudes de Chateauroux edited the second manuscript, assisted by two Christians "very erudite in Hebrew" and Donin, doubtless, also rendered much assistance in the preparation of this report.

Gregory IX. was succeeded in 1243, after practically two years' interregnum, by a pontiff, who, had he been left to give expression to his own will, would have proved more tolerant than his predecessor. The French Jews appealed to Pope Innocent IV. for permission to retain their Talmudical writings, principally on the ground that without them they could not fulfil their religious obligations. The Pope granted the petition and, in the year of his accession, decreed that the Jews were not to be deprived of such writings, the Talmud included, as they contained nothing antagonistic to Christianity. Again, however, a storm was raised by the fanatics, who protested against this edict so persistently that the Pope eventually withdrew it and gave, instead, early in May, 1244, his sanction to the condemnation of the Talmud. In that year there was another solemn burning of the Talmud and other Hebrew books in Paris, to the number of ten or twelve thousand and, also, probably, in other parts of France, by command of this Pope. In Rome, also, at this date, the Talmud was confiscated. A certain number of copies of the Talmud, however, escaped these various confiscations and remained hidden in Jewish houses, as was proved by an inquiry held in 1247, when the Jews handed over a number of copies to Eudes de Chateauroux. Some were hidden in wells, others buried among the roots of trees, while copies were even snatched from the very flames. Possibly, also, all the copies were not sent to Paris, or, if sent, were not all destroyed. On 12th August, 1247, the Pope wrote again to Eudes de Chateauroux asking him to undertake a fresh examination of the Talmud and other Jewish books, in order definitely to ascertain that they contained nothing inimical to the Christian religion. Eudes de Chateauroux appointed forty examiners, of whom Albertus Magnus was one, and he issued his report on 15th May, 1248. He condemned the Talmud. The book, he said, had again been examined and found to be full of errors and horrible blasphemies and could by no means be tolerated. It was decided that none of the copies which had been seized could be returned to their original owners. In that year there were two more burnings of the Talmud

and other Jewish books in Paris, altogether twenty wagon-loads, but still some copies escaped the flames, hidden away in Jewish households.

In 1255, under a decree from St. Louis to his seneschals in the Narbonnais, at the instigation of Pope Innocent IV., the Talmud was burned in France, and the teaching of it prohibited, although it was at this time that Moses of Courcy composed his great work on the Mosaic Law, and another famous Talmudist, Samuel ben Solomon of Falaise, prepared a new collection of Tosefta. He possessed no copy of the Talmud from which to work, because he had been deprived of it by the Dominicans, and so he was compelled to rely upon his memory. It is also said that Ezekiel of Paris had three hundred students of the Talmud in his academy, to whom he delivered discourses, probably from memory, but he was eventually compelled through poverty, to return to Palestine. Thus the Church met with a temporary success by suppressing the Talmudical spirit, which for ages had existed and had found its principal home in France. As H. C. Lea points out, the Church held the Jew to be a being deprived by the guilt of his ancestors of all natural rights, save that of existence.

In August, 1263, King Jacob of Aragon, doubtless with the aim of emulating his neighbor, ordered all Jews within his realm to delete within three months all the so-called objectionable passages found in their books, either by themselves or by Paul of Bourges. Failure to obey the command was to entail the destruction of the books and a heavy fine.

In 1264, Pablo Christiani (Paul Christian of Montpellier), another apostate Jew, with all the fervor of a convert, denounced the Talmud, reviving the well-worn theme that it contained passages of hostile import directed against Jesus and Mary. He persuaded Pope Clement IV. to issue a Bull to the Archbishop of Tarragona, commanding him to confiscate all copies of the Talmud that could be found and to submit them to the examination of the Dominicans and Franciscans, and decreed that if they declared them to be blasphemous then they were to be burned. Pablo, himself, conveyed this Bull to Spain, whereupon King James issued his royal edict for the examination of the Talmud and ordered that the passages containing abuse or slander should be struck out. The Bishop of Barcelona, Raymond of Penjaforte (General of the Dominicans, Confessor to King James, and Collector of Papal Decretals), Raymund Martial, the well-known author of the *Pugio Fidei*, was also a mem-

ber, as were Arnoldus de Sagurra and Petrus Janus, all Dominicans, together with Pablo Christiani. They were appointed censors by Clement IV. to expunge all passages considered derogatory to the Church. They marked the passages in the Talmud which were to be obliterated and thus this company formed the first Dominican censorship undertaken against the Talmud in Spain. Pablo Christiani challenged the greatest Rabbi of his day, Moses ben Nahman (Nachmanides) to a disputation, which was presided over by King James, being held in his Barcelona Palace during the four days of 20th, 27th, 30th, and 31st July, 1263. Each champion boasted of victory. Eventually the king dismissed Nachmanides not only with honor, but also with the handsome reward of three hundred pieces of gold. Yet he ordered a number of Jewish books to be burned and, in other instances, alleged blasphemous passages in the Talmud to be expunged, whilst the Pope, in a decree dated 12th August, 1263, ordered the Jews of Aragon to submit all their books to Pablo Christiani for examination. Two accounts of this disputation also are in existence, one in Latin, edited probably by the Dominicans, and the other, in Hebrew, edited undoubtedly by Nachmanides.

In 1264, Pope Clement IV. placed the penalty of death on any person who should harbor a copy of the Talmud in his house and, in 1267, he instructed the Archbishop of Tarragona to coerce by excommunication the King of Aragon and his nobles to force the Jews to deliver up their Talmuds and other books to the Inquisitors for examination when, if they contained no blasphemous statements, they might be returned to them, but, if otherwise, they were to be sealed up and kept securely.

On 30th November, 1286, Pope Honorius IV. wrote to the Archbishops of Canterbury and York *anent* "that damnable book," the Talmud, "vehemently to see that it be not read by anybody, since all other evils flow out of it," but there was no mention of confiscation in the mandate.

In 1299 and, again, in 1309, the Talmud, in wagon-loads, was burned in Paris, by command of Philip the Fair, who ordered his judges to aid the Inquisition in its extermination. This last conflagration was in accordance with the orders of Bernard Gui, the inquisitor. He is said to have employed experts in the Hebrew language in a careful examination of the forbidden volume.

In 1307, Pope Clement V. was asked to condemn the book, but before doing so, expressed a desire to know something about it, and there was no one to satisfy that desire. He then proposed, though

in language so abstruse that it left the door open to many interpretations, that three chairs be founded for Hebrew, Chaldee, and Arabic, these being the three tongues nearest to the idioms of the Talmud. He suggested that these chairs be founded at the universities of Paris, Salamanca, Bologna, and Oxford. He hoped that in time one or other of these universities might be able to produce a translation of the mysterious work.

In 1315, Louis, the son and successor of Philip the Fair, invited the Jews who had been expelled from the country by his father to return to France, when he restored to them their property, but still denied them the Talmud. This gave Bernard Gui an opportunity for further activity. He caused an extensive search to be made in the Jewish houses and he was rewarded by finding a sufficient number of volumes to fill two carts. After mature counsel between the inquisitors and the priests called in to assist, the condemned books were taken in the carts through the streets of Toulouse, when they were solemnly burned. Gui ordered all priests for three successive Sundays to publish an injunction commanding the delivery to the Inquisition for examination of all Jewish books, including the "Talamuz," under pain of excommunication.

On 19th June, 1320, Pope John XXII. commanded the Archbishop of Bourges to seize and burn all copies of the Talmud he could find in the city, and on the following 4th September, he issued a Bull against the Talmud to the French Bishops, while, in 1322, the Talmud was publicly burned in Rome by the orders of the same Pope. This occurred during the Feast of Weeks and the leaders of the community endeavored by force to prevent the execution of the sentence. In the *Jewish Quarterly Review* for January, 1890, H. Graetz refers to this burning, which followed a massacre of the Jews by hordes of shepherds and a second slaughter on account of the lepers. Calumniators then came before the Pope to annihilate the law of truth, audaciously boasting that they would quench Israel's light. An active part in the destruction of the Talmud was taken by Frederick, the rival of Lewis of Bavaria.

In 1380, Pedro Alphonso, another Jewish apostate, falsely asserted that the Jews, in their prayers, daily invoked maledictions on Christians, which induced Charles II. of Navarre to issue the following decree at the Cortes of Soria in the same year:

Whereas we have been informed that the Jews are commanded by their books and other writings of the Talmud daily to say the prayer against heretics, which is said standing, wherein they curse

Christians and churches, we strictly command and forbid any of them, hereafter, to say it or have it written and in the said books, they are to erase and cancel it in such a manner as not to be legible, which is to be done within two months after the publication hereof, and any one who says or responds to it shall publicly receive one hundred lashes. And if it be found in his breviary or other book, he is to be fined one thousand maravedis: and if he cannot pay the fine, one hundred lashes are to be given to him.

Joseph ha-Cohen has left on record, under date of 1394, the fact that he saw volumes that were rescued from hiding-places, particularly one which was externally in a very bad condition "because it was one of those which the Jews in these evil days hid for so long a time in the wells to await the passing of God's anger."

Then another persecution in consequence of a "conversion." Joseph Halorqui, so called from the name of his birthplace, Lorca, near Muria, was a Spanish physician, who, on his adoption of Christianity, assumed the name of Geronimo de Santa Fe. He became an ardent anti-Talmudist and offered to prove from the Talmud that the Messiah had already come in the person of Jesus. He wrote two articles in which he repeated the old slanderous charges against the Jews and manufactured fresh accusations. As physician to the anti-Pope, Benedict XIII., he had great influence with that usurper, who, at that time, had a large following, and he persuaded him to arrange public disputations with learned Jews. This Pope, says Graetz, had been deposed by the Council of Pisa as schismatic, and the Council had deprived him of his spiritual functions and even excommunicated him, but on the Pyreanean peninsula he was still regarded as the legitimate Pope, and, in order to maintain his position, he essayed the conversion of the entire body of Jews in Spain to the Church, which he thought would procure a general acknowledgment of his authority. In his program in arranging the public disputations he was assisted by the King, Don Ferdinand, and the meetings were held at Tortosa towards the end of 1412, about twenty of the most influential of Aragonese Jews answering the summons. The *Archiv. de la Corona de Aragon*, xii., c. 45, gives the following account of the disputation:

By the Pope's command the principal doctors and rabbis of all the Aljanas in the Kingdom assembled in the city of Tortosa for the purpose of being publicly admonished in his presence and in that of the whole Court, to acknowledge the error and blindness in which they walked. The principal Rabbins were Rabbi Fener, Master Solo-

mon Isaac, Rabbi Astruth el Levi of Alcania, Rabbi Joseph Albo, Rabbi Matatias of Zaragosa, Master Touros, Benastrue Desmaestre of Girona, and Rabbi Moses Abenabez; and though there were many distinguished Masters and Doctors of Divinity at the Pope's Court, who were men of learning and great divines, the Pope was, nevertheless, anxious that in the questions and disputations propounded, the care of instructing and teaching these Rabbis should be more especially and particularly entrusted to Geronimo de Santa Fe, his physician, inasmuch as the latter was well read and grounded in the Old Testament, together with the glosses upon it, and all the treatises of the Rabbis, as well as their Talmud, by the authorities and sentences of which it was the Pope's intention that they should be convinced and led to see the blindness and unsoundness of their doctrine, the obstinacy of their errors and lives, their rash and perverse interpretation of their Law.

The disputations, which are said to have extended over sixty-eight sessions and eighteen months and were conducted in Latin, not meeting with the success which Geronimo de Santa Fe seems to have anticipated, he then came before the Pope as the censor of the Talmud, accusing it of containing all kinds of abominations, immoralities, and heresies, and demanded that it should be condemned. He stated that the Talmud countenanced the beating of parents, blasphemy, the practice of idolatry, also the breaking of oaths, provided that on the preceding Day of Atonement the precaution had been taken to declare them invalid. He was so far successful that on 11th May, 1415, Benedict XIII., who was violent in his hostility towards the Jews, issued a Bull of eleven clauses forbidding the Jews to study or to teach the Talmud or any other Jewish book attacking Christianity and ordering the clergy to seek out and confiscate all copies of the Talmud. The first article of this Bull, as given in the *Biblioteca de los Rabinos Espanoles*, reads as follows:

All people in general, without respect of persons, are forbidden to hear, read, or teach the doctrine of the Talmud, publicly or privately, and within the space of one month all copies of the Talmud, glosses upon it, summaries, compendiums, and other writings whatsoever, bearing directly or indirectly upon the said doctrine, that can be found, are to be deposited in the Cathedral church of each diocese, and diocesans and inquisitors must look to the due observance of this decree, and visit in person, or by procurator (once every two years at least) all those places within the limits of their jurisdiction in

which there are any Jews living, and punish all offenders with the utmost rigor.

His decree, however, was never carried into effect, although a further Bull against the Talmud was issued by this Pope in 1417. Benedict XIII. was never recognized as other than anti-Pope by the mass of Christendom. He was supported in his pretensions by the King of Aragon and held his Court in great state at Tortosa from 1412 to 1417. In the latter year he was deposed by the Council of Constance and left to die in obscurity, abandoned by his Spanish protectors and denounced as "unfrocked and spurious" by his favorite, the flagellant priest, Vincent Ferrer, who had rendered him great assistance in his plans against the Talmud. Martin V., who appears to have been favorably inclined towards the Jews, was recognized as the successor of St. Peter in his stead. He issued several Bulls favoring the Jews in different parts of Europe. One permitted the Jews to study books of Jewish science and philosophy, "provided they did not read, hear, or study Hebrew or Latin works containing anything contrary to the Catholic faith."

Alfonso V., the Wise, of Castile, caused the Talmud to be translated in order that its errors might be exposed to the public, and, in 1426, the Jews of the Savoy expunged from the Talmud and prayer-books passages which the Inquisition pointed out as objectionable.

In 1426, when the Jews were expelled from Cologne, that city became the headquarters of an anti-Jewish movement, whence arose a crusade against Jewish books. It was there that afterwards Reuchlin encountered his bitterest enemies and a city once noted for its liberality of thought became a noted center of bigotry.

In 1442, Pope Eugene took away all rights from the Jews and forbade them, under threat of confiscation of all their property, to busy themselves with the study of sacred matters outside the Bible. Duke John Francis then opened Mantua to them as a city of refuge and, shortly afterwards, on payment of a large sum of money collected by the Italian communities, he secured a repeal of the restrictions.

In 1490, Torquemada caused many Hebrew Bibles to be burned publicly and shortly afterwards more than six thousand volumes of Oriental literature were treated in a similar manner at Salamanca, under an imputation that they inculcated Judaism, sorcery, or heresy. Many Jews at that time swelled the coffers of the Papal government by purchasing at high cost dispensations securing them freedom from the unwelcome attentions of the inquisitors.

In the fifteenth century we come across Joseph, afterwards, by baptism, John, Pfefferkorn (born 1469) a Moravian Jewish convert to Christianity, a butcher by trade, who, it is said, embraced the Christian religion on his release from prison, whither he had been committed for burglary, a fact which has been established by documentary evidence. He was placed in charge of the Dominicans and under their auspices he published several anti-Jewish pamphlets.

His first publication, issued in 1507, entitled *Das Judenspiegel*, urged the people to check Jewish usury, to compel them to attend church, and to listen to sermons, and to burn the Talmud, this last being characterized as a very venial offence. It was thought that if the ruling powers could be induced to sequester all copies of the Talmud, the Dominicans, as Inquisitors, would have the disposal of them, and the Jews, who could not do without the Talmud, would pour their wealth into the Dominican coffers, in order to get the confiscation annulled. This pamphlet, having little or no effect, and not inaugurating, as the author and the Dominicans had hoped, a persecution of the Jews, further and more scurrilous pamphlets were issued, but with like negative result. Through Pfefferkorn's machinations, an edict was promulgated by the Emperor Maximilian, dated 19th August, 1509, to the effect that all Jewish writings against Christianity should be destroyed. This was followed by a second decree, dated 10th November, 1509, ordering the destruction of all Hebrew books, except the Old Testament. Pfefferkorn went the same year to Frankfort-on-the-Maine, where there were many Jews and, on 10th April, 1510, the Jews were forced to surrender to him all books in their possession. He was aided in his campaign by Ortwin de Grace, one of the chiefs of the Dominicans in Cologne.

The edict of 19th August, 1509, gave Pfefferkorn full power over the Jews, which was exactly what he had wanted to secure. It gave him authority to examine all Hebrew writings throughout the German Empire and to destroy any whose contents were hostile to the Bible and to the Christian faith, according to his judgment. The Jews, however, demanded a delay of the confiscation, although fifteen hundred manuscripts were seized in Frankfort alone, in order that they might appeal to the Emperor and the Supreme Court of Judicature, and so effectual was their protestation that the Archbishop of Mayence, in whose diocese Frankfort was situated (Uriel von Gemmingen, by name) prohibited his clergy from lending Pfefferkorn any assistance. Confiscations, however, had already taken place in Worms, Lorch, Bingen, Laufen, Mayence, and Deutz. A

remarkable man, named John Reuchlin, the legal adviser of the Dominicans, was appointed coadjutor with Pfefferkorn in the examination of the Jewish books. Reuchlin is said to have been the only Christian in Europe at that time familiar³ with the Hebrew language. He was certainly the first Christian to compose and publish a Hebrew grammar. It was through his influence that on 24th May, 1510, the Emperor rescinded his edict for the destruction of the Talmud. Reuchlin issued his report on 10th October, 1510. The question propounded to him was whether it was godly, laudable, and advantageous to Christianity to burn Jewish writings, whereby the Talmud specially was meant. From personal investigation he arrived at the conclusion that the Talmud, the Zohar, the commentaries of Rashi, and other books should not be burned, as they were useful for theology and science, and no heresy was contained in them, but he recommended the destruction of the *Toledot Yeshu* (a Life of Jesus that originated in the Middle Ages, previously condemned and viewed with disfavor by the Jews). He also recommended the destruction of Lipman's anti-Christian writings. With regard to the Talmud, he declared he must oppose the destruction of "a book written by Christ's nearest relations." In this report he was supported only by the University of Heidelberg, but only to the point of recommending the appointment of a committee for further deliberation. The university of Mayence recommended that the Talmud be burned, while the other faculties and the Dominicans urged the establishment of a perpetual Court of Inquisition for the Jews. Reuchlin seems to have entered upon his task in the true spirit of a researcher—he tried to forget that he was the advocate of any special form of religion and that, as an earnest Christian, he was supposed to be an opponent of the Jews. He admitted his inability to understand the Talmud, but he expressed the opinion that, even if it contained libels on the founder of Christianity, which he did not admit, still it ought not to be destroyed, for, he said, "if the Talmud were deserving of such condemnation, our ancestors of many hundreds of years ago, whose zeal for Christianity was much greater than ours is, would long ago have burned it." As an alternative to confiscation and burning he suggested that at every German university two professors of Hebrew should be appointed for ten years, who might also be asked to teach Rabbinical Hebrew, and thus "the Jews might be led by gentle means to embrace Christianity." The report was ordered to be sent for review to Pfefferkorn. It is not, therefore, surprising that Reuchlin was bitterly attacked by the Dominicans

for his expression of opinion and, indeed, there was inaugurated a prolonged conflict between him and the Dominicans into which the whole scientific world of Europe was drawn. He was even summoned by Jacob von Hoogstraten, professor of theology at Cologne University and Chief Inquisitor, to appear before the Inquisition and be examined on charges of heresy and of favoritism towards the Jews. When the trial was almost ended, however, a mandate arrived from Archbishop von Gemmingen ordering judgment to be suspended for a month and, in the event of disobedience, he took away from Hoogstraten and his colleagues their privileges as judges of the Inquisitorial Court and decreed that all previous sentences passed by them should become null and void. Reuchlin was a prominent German Humanist and he was strongly supported in his feud with Pfefferkorn by Ulrich von Hutten, another Humanist. Reuchlin, also, was, with Luther, Melancton, Erasmus (who, with Franz von Sickingen, became an adherent to the cause of the Talmud), and Hitten among the promoters of the Reformation, although, in 1520, he had declared himself against the movement. Hoogstraten was the prime mover in the burning of Luther's works at Cologne in November, 1519. Reuchlin published a treatise on the Kabbala, called *De Verbo Mirifico*, which is in the form of a conference between Beruchias, a Jewish sage; Capinon, a Christian scholar; and a Greek philosopher, the outcome of which is a declaration of the supremacy of Jewish wisdom and of the Hebrew language. Eventually the Dominicans were ordered to pay the costs of their proceedings against Reuchlin. It may be noted, in passing, that, in 1520, Pope Leo X. permitted the Talmud to be printed by Daniel Bomberg at Venice, the very year in which Luther burned the Pope's Bull at Wittenberg.

As noted already much of the trouble was caused by the machinations of apostates from the Jewish faith, who seemed with their change of religion to have lost all sense of honesty and truthfulness. In this connection the following letter from Joseph ha-Cohen, a contemporary of this period, quoted by Popper, is of special interest:

In those days certain worthless men came forth from our community, and began to commit in secret, offences against the Lord our God: they became stiff-necked, deserted the Lord, and violated the covenant which He had made with our fathers. They walked in the way of those people whom God has forbidden us to follow, and roused them with lying words to anger, thus heaping sin on sin. They even laid before the Pope a derogatory opinion of the Talmud,

and said: "The Talmud, a work possessed by the Jews, contains laws, which differ from those of every other people, and it preaches opposition to your Messiah: there can then be absolutely no advantage to the Pope in permitting it to exist." The names of these slanderers are Hananael de Foligno, Joseph Moro, and Solomon Romano (after baptism John Battista Romano Eliano—he was a grandson of the well-known Hebrew grammarian, Elias Levita) O God! may their sins not be blotted out: on the day of wrath call them to judgment.

These renegades were the cause of much suffering to the Jews. They invented false charges against their former co-religionists and denounced them. A good example of this is furnished by the well-known Alenu prayer, which was said to contain an expression directed against Christianity. The prayer contains the lines: "They bow down to vanity and naught and worship a god who cannot save them." The words "and naught," quoted from Isaiah xxx., 7, were said by the apostates to be numerically equivalent to "Jesus." Similarly, the common abbreviation "Akum," i. e., worshippers of planets and constellations, was supposed to represent worshippers of Jesus and Mary. These false charges led to persecution. Thus to this day the passage from the Alenu prayer is expunged from the Ashkenazi liturgy, though it survives among the Sephardim, who lived under the more tolerant rule of the Crescent, but so late as 1777, the charge of blaspheming Jesus in the Alenu prayer was brought against the Jews and refuted by Moses Mendelssohn.

The following letter from Rabbi Abraham Saba, exiled from Portugal in 1497, also speaks for itself:

I brought all my books into the city of Porto in obedience to the royal decree: but yet I took my life in my hands by carrying with me to Lisbon a *Commentary on the Law*, which I had composed, as well as a commentary on the treatises *Ethics of the Fathers*, and one on the *Five Scrolls*. But when I reached Lisbon all the Jews came to me and told me that it had been proclaimed to the community that every Jew who might be found with a book or with phylacteries in his possession would be put to death. So straightway before I entered the quarter outside the city, I took these books in my hands, two brothers went with me, and dug a grave among the roots of a blossoming olive-tree: there we buried them. Yet, although a tree flourishing with lovely fruit stood there, because of the Law which was in it, but I called it "Tree of Sorrow," for I had buried there all that was pleasing in my sight—the *Commentary on the Law* and

the Commandments, more precious than gold, yea, than much fine gold. For in them I had found consolation for the loss of my two little ones, torn from me by force to become unwilling converts.

On 12th August, 1553, Pope Julius III. issued an edict demanding the burning of the Talmud (which he called *Gemaroth Talmud*) which decree was carried out at Barcelona, Venice, Romagna, Urbino and Pesaro. On 9th September of that year, a large number of copies were publicly burned in Rome. The copies were carried across the river to the public square, the Campo di Fiori, some distance northwest of the future ghetto. A vast crowd was assembled there and the pyre was lighted "amid the greatest applause of the populace." Over in the synagogue a multitude had assembled also and the sound of applause was echoed back with sighing and wailing as "the Jews bemoaned the pyre which the Lord's enemies had prepared." Julius III. also prohibited the printing of the Talmud by Christians. Again, on 29th May, 1554, the Talmud was publicly burned in Rome and a Papal Bull commanded the Jews, on pain of heavy punishment, to give up, within four months, all books containing alleged blasphemous utterances or vituperations against Jesus, but they were allowed to retain other Hebrew books that contained no objectionable passages. Thus, the expurgation of all Hebrew books was practically demanded. An ecclesiastical decision from Rome given through the *Essecutori contra la Biastema*, towards the end of 1553, declared, in answer to an inquiry as to what Talmudic books outside the Talmud itself should be burned, that the non-Talmudic books should be revised by Christians who knew Hebrew. At this time also there was a burning of condemned books in Romagna, and a little later in the Duchy of Urbino. The inquisitor, Gerolamo Muzio, in Pesaro ordered a search throughout the Duchy and had all the seized books brought to that city. He sent to Rome for an expert and one, Raphael, was commissioned. All the books he condemned were burned in the public market-place on 16th December, 1553. Previously, in the same year—on 12th September—the Inquisitors had issued a manifesto, as follows:

By these presents, and by the authority of our office, and by special order of our most sacred master, Pope Julius III., given to us lately viva we exhort every Christian prince, every state ruler, every Ordinary, and every Inquisitor, warn and charge them under threat of excommunication: As soon as these presents shall come to their notice they shall cause all copies of the Talmud to be sought for throughout the homes and synagogues of the Hebrews who dwell in

their respective states and countries, and when found to be publicly burned.

Furthermore, we command all Hebrews dwelling in Christian states and countries under penalty of confiscation of all their property . . . that within three days . . . they shall surrender all copies of the Talmud, both Babylonian and Palestinian, and each and every part of them which they may possess. They shall hand them to the Cardinals themselves, or to their officials, to the Ordinaries, or to the Inquisitors in Rome, either at the Campo di Fiori, or in their own synagogues, in other cities or countries at designated public or private places. And henceforth they may not and must not have such similar books written, printed, or bought through faithless countries to the countries of the faithful, nor shall they in any way seek to have or retain them.

Finally, we warn all faithful Christians . . . that they shall not presume to read the above-mentioned work, the Talmud, inasmuch as it has been condemned by the Church . . . nor shall they dare give advice, aid, or favor to the Hebrews in holding, writing, or printing books of this sort. Every transgressor of this provision in addition to excommunication shall receive the punishments meted out by law to the protectors of heretics.

The first officially appointed censor was Jacob Geraldino, a baptized Jew, who was proposed by the Jews themselves, made Apostolic Commissioner by the Pope in 1555, and given general charge for his work over the whole Papal territory, his salary being paid by the Jews. In 1556, he was appointed Ducal Commissioner by the Duke of Modena, which position gave him supervision outside Papal territory. Another apostate, Andrea del Monte, the baptismal name of Joseph Zarphati Alíasi, was appointed, not by the Pope, but at the request of the Jews, and became associated with the first-named. The Jews, however, received no leniency from either, for both had the customary zeal of converts.

In 1554, the Talmud was publicly burned at Ancona (although in a Bull dated 5th December, 1553, the Pope had shown himself especially friendly to the Jews of that city), Ferrara, Mantua, Padua, Candia, and Ravenna. Emanuel ben Jehutiel, an eye-witness of one of the burnings, writes:

And when I came over the sea to my home in Ancona, and saw the dastardly burning of my Talmud, strong man though I was, in the bitterness of my soul, I wrent my garments and burst into tears.

It is said that there was great mourning by the Jews for the books were burned by the hundred thousand. On 29th May of that year Julius III., after consultation with the Cardinals, issued a Bull forbidding absolutely any interference with books not expressly proscribed by the Inquisition. He further stipulated, however, that in the future, before any book should be published it should be submitted to the authorities for revision and that all books already in the possession of the Jews which contained statements derogatory to Christianity should, under penalty of fines and corporal punishment, amounting to death, if deemed necessary, be surrendered within four months. The obnoxious passages were then to be blotted out and the books returned to their owners.

On 1st May, 1557, Rome ordered a new confiscation of Hebrew books, paying no attention to the previous prohibition of interference with non-Talmudic writings. All works in Hebrew, including even prayer-books, that could be found, were seized—even a copy of Abraham ibn Ezra's *Commentary*. In the same year the Talmud was burned in Poland, while in the Duchy of Milan, the Jews submitted willingly to a rigorous censorship and expurgation, in the hope of preserving their precious volumes from the flames. In 1558, the Talmud was again burned in Rome by Cardinal Ghielieri; again in Rome in 1559 by Paul IV., and in 1566 by Pius V. Pope Pius IV. (1559-1566), who founded the Vatican Press, in giving permission for a new edition of the Talmud, stipulated that it should appear without the name "Talmud." In 1559 a Papal Index was published by command of Paul IV., hated alike by Jews and Christians, and the prohibited books included the Talmud "with all its compendiums, glosses, notes, interpretations, and expositions." As soon as the Index was published in Cremona, Baptista Clarius, the Inquisitor-General of that city, ordered the Jews to deliver their Talmuds to him and in April or May of that year he burned between ten and twelve thousand volumes, under the superintendence of Sixtus Sinensis. Sixtus was a convert from Judaism, who became a Dominican friar. There is another record of a burning by him in the same year of two thousand volumes in one day in the public square of Cremona.

On 21st October, 1559, an edict was published at Venice by the Central Council of Ten in charge of State affairs decreeing that not only all copies of the Talmud, or portions of it, but also "all compendiums, summaries, or other works dependent on the Talmud" should be surrendered within eight days, those from outside Venice

should be sent there and with those of the city be burned on the Place St. Marcus. Violation of the order in any way was to be punished by exile from all portions and dependencies of the State and by fines, in the case of one found with forbidden books in his possession. A certain physician, Elazar ben Raphael, who had apostatized from Judaism, tried to have the decree extended to almost the whole of Jewish literature, and at one time it seemed as though even the Scrolls of the Law would be seized, but prompt action on the part of the leaders of the community prevented that outrage. The sentence was carried out on a Jewish Sabbath and R. Judah Lerma, a Spaniard, who was living in Venice at the time, says that the books taken from him included Alfazi's *Talmud Compendium*, Jacob ben Chabib's *Haggadoth*; and the *Mishamayoth*. He adds:

And among them they burned all the copies of my own works, which I had had printed, and which amounted to fifteen hundred volumes. I lost every book which I had in Venice, and nothing printed or written was left to me—not even a single page for remembrance. So I was forced to begin to write my work all over again from memory; but then, after I had written three chapters of it, I found a single copy of the edition in the possession of some Christians, who had snatched it from the fire, and this I secured at a great cost.

The Index issued on 24th March, 1564, by Pius IV. (who was not a Dominican), permitted the Jews to use Hebrew and even Talmudic books, provided they were purged from vituperations against the Christian religion, but prohibited the Talmud as before. In 1569, the famous Jewish library in Cremona was plundered and closed through the activities of a reactionist, Cardinal Carl Borromeo, and twelve thousand copies of the Talmud and other Jewish writings were committed to the flames. Between 1578 and 1581, a mutilated edition of the Babylonian Talmud appeared in Basel, by permission of Pope Gregory XIII., with many of its passages changed beyond recognition, issued under toleration, rather than under approbation. In 1592, the Inquisition declared, in accordance with the wishes of Pope Clement VIII., that the Jews had no right to keep any Hebrew books, except the Bible and grammars, and in the following year a Bull issued by the same Pope limited the prohibition to a few Talmudic and Kabbalistic works.

On 12th November, 1613, the Inquisitor-General, in a decree, graciously permitted all Rabbinical books in the royal library of the Escorial to remain, providing they were placed in a separate case

and marked as prohibited, but they could be read by the prior, chief librarian, and professors. In 1618, the Seville tribunal of the Inquisition was ordered to seize all Hebrew books that had belonged to Arias Montana. In 1686, Pope Sixtus V. permitted the printing of the Talmud, after it had been subject to censorship, but in the year following his death, the Inquisition wrote that the expurgation of the Talmud was a ridiculous and useless work. On 25th February, 1693, Clement VII. reimposed the old restrictions on the Jews in Rome, Ancona, and Avignon, the only Papal cities in which Jews were permitted to reside, and he forbade them to read or to possess the Talmud or other Rabbinical writings. Those Jews who were expelled from the Papal States were received by Ferdinand, Duke of Tuscany, who, in July, 1593, had assigned Pisa to them as a dwelling place. He allowed them to possess books of every kind and in all languages, these included the Talmud, but the copies had first to be expurgated, according to the regulations of the Commission instituted by Sixtus V. The Jews, moreover, were exposed to all kinds of annoyances and extortions. They had to pay various sums to the censors for the mutilation of their writings. These censors were generally baptized Jews and there was no assurance that the books would not again be confiscated and the owners punished, merely because some obnoxious word or other remained unobliterated. A notorious persecutor of the Talmud in the seventeenth century was one John Andreas Eisenmenger, who devoted almost the whole of his life to the attempt to destroy the Talmud.

In 1707, some copies of the Talmud were confiscated in the Province of Brandenburg, but were restored to their owners by command of Frederick, first king of Prussia. In 1731, there was a confiscation of Hebrew books throughout the Papal States by command of Pope Clement XII. (1730-1740), but it was cancelled and nearly all the seized books were returned to their owners. In 1738, however, there was a further search and seizure and R. Solomon Basilea was arrested on the charge of being in possession of uncensored books and condemned to remain within the ghetto. Two further confiscations took place during the pontificate of Benedict XIV. (1740-1758). At one, in April, 1753, thirty-eight carts were filled with books from the Ghetto of Rome alone. Again, on 10th August, 1753, there was a search and seizure at Lugo, in the province of Ravenna; in Pesaro, on 31st August, 1753; at Ferrara on 24th September; at Urbino, on 5th October; at Ancona, on 16th October, all in 1753; at Sinigallia (Ancona) on 29th January; at Carpentras, on 13th

April; at Avignon, Carpentras, Cavaglione, and at Lilla, on 5th August, all in 1754. A few, but very few, of the books seized on these occasions found their way back to the possession of the rightful owners. On 14th October, 1757, as an outcome of the Frankist movement, the last serious attack on the Talmud was made, when Bishop Dembowski ordered copies to be confiscated, brought to Kamieniec (Poland) and there publicly burned by the hangman. One thousand copies were dragged through the streets of the city, tied to horses' tails, and then delivered to the executioner to be burned. The Jews were powerless and could do nothing, except proclaim a fast-day for the "Burning of the Law." The clergy, in conjunction with other anti-Talmudists, daily made domiciliary visits into Jewish houses in order to seize any copies of the Talmud that might be found. Yet once more, however, was the censorship of books renewed and, for a time strictly enforced by Pope Pius VI. (1775-1798).

And why? Apart from a general hatred of the Jews, which has existed through the ages on the part of certain fanatical Christians, but which, happily, is disappearing, the question is, perhaps, best answered by Llorente, in his *History of the Inquisition*, in the following words:

Facts prove beyond a doubt that the extirpation of Judaism was not the real cause, but the mere pretext, for the establishment of the Inquisition by Ferdinand V. The true motive was to carry on a vigorous system of confiscation against the Jews, and so bring their riches into the hands of the government. Sixtus IV. sanctioned the measure, to gain the point dearest to the Court of Rome, an extent of domination. Charles V. protected it from motives of policy, being convinced it was the only means of preventing the heresy of Luther from penetrating into Spain. Philip II. was actuated by superstition and tyranny to uphold it; and even extended its jurisdiction to the excise, and made the exporters of horses into France liable to seizure by the officers of the tribunal, as persons suspected of heresy! Philip III., Philip IV., and Charles II. pursued the same course, stimulated by similar fanaticism and imbecility, when the reunion of Portugal to Spain led to the discovery of many Jews. Philip V. maintained the Inquisition from considerations of mistaken policy, inherited from Louis XIV., who made him believe that such rigor would ensure the tranquillity of the kingdom, which was always in danger when many religions were tolerated.