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## Fifteen Centuries of Church Domination.

Continued from 1st page.

oppression; but the human race never suffered a more cruel outrage, industry never received a wound better calculated to plunge the world again into the darkness of the rudest antiquity. It suffices to say that the prediction of the approaching end of the world, industriously spread by the rapacious monks at this time, was received without terror."

The joy-hating insanities of the unnatural creed blighted the lives of thousands, and trampled the flowers of earth even on the bleak soil of North Britain, where the children of nature need every hour of respite from cheerless toil. "All social pleasures," says Buckle, "all amusements and all the joyful instincts of the human heart, were denounced as sinful. The clergy looked on all comforts as sinful in themselves, merely because they were comforts. The great object of life was to be in a state of constant affliction. Whatever pleased the senses was to be suspected. It mattered not what a man liked; the mere fact of his liking it made it sinful. Whatever was natural was wrong."

The dogma of exclusive salvation by faith made forcible conversion appear an act of mercy, and stimulated those wars of aggression that have cost the lives of more than thirty millions of our fellow-men. In the Crusades alone five millions of victims were sacrificed on the altar of fanaticism; the extermination of the Moriscos reduced the population of Spain by seven millions; the man-hunts of the Spanish-American priests almost annihilated the native population of the West Indies and vast areas of Central and South America, once as well-settled as the most fertile regions of Southern Europe. The horrid butcheries in the land of the Albigensis, in the mountain homes of the Vaudois, and in the Spanish provinces of the Netherlands exterminated the inhabitants of whole cities and districts, and drenched the fields of earth with the blood of her noblest children. — [Bible of Nature.

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