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### **The Inquisition in the Spanish Dependencies**

Henry Charles Lea's account of the Inquisition in Italy, Spain and South America was first published in 1908. Drawing on primary source material, the American historian gives a detailed account of the workings of the Inquisition and its individual tribunals in Sicily, Naples, Sardinia and Milan. He also describes the Inquisition in Malta, the Canary Islands, Mexico, Peru, New Granada and the Philippines. According to Lea the Inquisition persisted from the sixteenth right up to the nineteenth century. He demonstrates how some of the individuals entrusted with implementing the Inquisition abused their powers, and how the Inquisition in the Spanish colonies prevented the efficient running of governmental administrations. He focuses on some of the consequences of the Inquisition: Jews were banished from Naples, there were moves to exclude new Christians from the Church in Mexico, and the mysticism practised in New Granada was considered a grave threat to the Church.

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# The Inquisition in the Spanish Dependencies

*Sicily, Naples, Sardinia, Milan, the Canaries,  
Mexico, Peru, New Granada*

HENRY CHARLES LEA



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THE  
INQUISITION  
IN THE  
SPANISH DEPENDENCIES

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SICILY—NAPLES—SARDINIA—MILAN—THE CANARIES—  
MEXICO—PERU—NEW GRANADA

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BY  
HENRY CHARLES LEA, LL.D., S.T.D.

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1908

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## PREFACE.

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THE scope of my History of the Spanish Inquisition precluded a detailed investigation into the careers of individual tribunals. Such an investigation, however, is not without interest, especially with respect to the outlying ones, which were subjected to varying influences and reacted in varying ways on the peoples among whom they were established. Moreover, in some cases, this affords us an inside view of inquisitorial life, of the characters of those to whom were confided the awful irresponsible powers of the Holy Office and of the abuse of those powers by officials whom distance removed from the immediate supervision of the central authority, suggesting a capacity for evil even greater than that manifested in the Peninsula.

This is especially the case with the tribunals of the American Colonies, of which, thanks to the unwearied researches of Don José Toribio Medina, of Santiago de Chile, a fairly complete and minute account can be given, based on the confidential correspondence of the local officials with the Supreme Council and the reports of the *visitadores* or inspectors, who were occasionally sent in the vain expectation of reducing them to order. While thus in the colonial tribunals we see the Inquisition at its worst, as a portion of the governmental system, we can realize how potent was its influence in contributing to the failure of Spanish colonial policy, by preventing orderly and settled administration and by exciting disaffection which the Council of Indies more than once warned the crown would lead to the loss of its transatlantic empire. It is perhaps not too much to say that these revelations moreover go far to explain the influences which so long retarded the political and industrial development of the emancipated colonies, for it was an evil inheritance weighing heavily on successive generations.

I have not attempted to include the fateful career of the Inquisition in the Netherlands, for this cannot be written until the completion of

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*PREFACE*

Professor Paul Fredericq's monumental "Corpus Documentorum Inquisitionis hæreticæ pravitatis Neerlandicæ," the earlier volumes of which have thrown so much light on the repression of heresy in the Low Countries up to the dawn of the Reformation.

It is scarce necessary for me to make special acknowledgement to Señor Medina in all that relates to the American tribunals, for this is sufficiently attested by the constant reference to his works. With regard to Mexico I am under particular obligation to David Fergusson Esq. for the use of collections made by him during long residence in that Republic and also to the late General Don Vicente Riva Palacio for the communication of a number of interesting documents. To the late Doctor Paz Soldan of Lima my thanks are also due for copies made in the archives of Peru prior to their dispersion in 1881.

PHILADELPHIA, OCTOBER, 1907.



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