

**THE DAWN OF MODERN
CIVILIZATION: OR, SKETCHES OF
THE THE SOCIAL CONDITION OF
EUROPE, FROM THE TWELFTH TO
THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY**

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The dawn of modern civilization: or, Sketches of the the social condition of Europe, from the twelfth to the sixteenth century by Various

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VARIOUS

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MODERN CIVILIZATION:

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LONDON:

THE RELIGIOUS TRACT SOCIETY:

Instituted 1799.

PREFACE.

THE sketches now submitted to the public are intended to form a sequel to "GLIMPSES OF THE DARK AGES." In the preface to that work, it was remarked, that in the twelfth century a new epoch in European society commenced; that new social elements were formed; that old ones received new life; and that events and institutions made their appearance, which belong to the later period of social progress. In this volume, an attempt is made to develop some of the leading phenomena of society, from the twelfth to the sixteenth century—the period of the dawn of modern civilization.

The same plan is pursued in this, as in the former work. A few glimpses are given of the social condition of Europe; but no attempt is made at historical detail.

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DAWN
OF
MODERN CIVILIZATION.

CHAPTER I.

RELIGION.

SECTION I.

SECULAR CLERGY.

“JESUS CHRIST, the King of kings and the Lord of lords, a Priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec, has so established his government and his priesthood in the church, that the government should be sacerdotal, and the priesthood should be royal, as Peter in his epistle, and Moses in the law, have testified, appointing one over all the rest, whom he has ordained his vicar upon earth; so that, as to Christ every knee must bow, of things in heaven, and things on earth, and things under the earth; so all must regard and obey the pope, that there may be one fold and one Shepherd. Him, therefore, secular kings should so venerate, for the sake of God, as that they may not consider themselves rightly

to rule unless they endeavour devotedly to serve him."* Such were the proud pretensions set forth by Innocent III. at the beginning of the thirteenth century, in a letter which he wrote to the pusillanimous king John of England. From the pontificate of Gregory VII., the papal claims had been increased in arrogance : they had now reached their climax ; and the noon-day of the papacy may be considered as extending to the time of Boniface VIII., or throughout the thirteenth century.† The progress of its dominion exhibits one of the most remarkable facts in the history of the world. It was a form of tyranny the most appalling.

"Ere it came,
Its shadow stretching far and wide was known,
And two who looked beyond the visible sphere,
Gave notice of its coming. He who saw
The Apocalypse ; and he of elder time,
Who, in an awful vision of the night,
Saw the four kingdoms, distant as they were :—
Those holy men ; well might they faint with fear."

It rose by degrees ; and they who laid the foundation had no idea of what the superstructure would be. Various causes contributed to its progress. The decline of learning, political changes, the ambition of popes, the servility of the clergy, the superstition of the age, the cultivation of architecture, painting, and music in the service of the church, the vices and virtues of distinguished ecclesiastics,

* Innocent III. Ep. 131, ad Joannem Anglorum R. Rymer's *Federa*, vol. 1. 119. † Hallam.