

annual pension of 12,000 livres in lieu of the Bishopric of Tournay, and also held the Bishopric of Badajoz in Spain. Thus an individual churchman might be bishop of one diocese, abbot of a convent in another area, and priest of a church in still another region, receiving the income from many offices, but never actually going near the locality where any one of them was supposed to be exercised. A small part of the income received might be used to pay for the carrying on of the local work. It is no wonder that the local clergy were often corrupt and ignorant. Some local priests who won great reputations as exorcists or as wizards were not only unable to understand the Latin service, but even incapable of repeating the Lord's prayer or the creed in any language.

The worship of saints was greatly stressed and to the ignorant became almost a sort of polytheism. Churches gathered great numbers of relics. Erasmus said that the various collections of relics included enough 'wood of the true cross' to build a ship, and that five shin bones of the ass on which Christ rode were exhibited at various places.

One particular evil that had existed in the church for a long time, and that still continues to some extent, appeared in a particularly aggravated form at the beginning of the 16th century. This was the evil of selling indulgences. As we shall see in our next lecture, when we shall discuss the life of Martin Luther, this particular evil was the immediate occasion of the commencement of the Reformation.

For a long time it had been recognized that there were many abuses connected with the matter of indulgences. The attitude that it sometimes produced is illustrated by the remarks of a papal vice-chamberlain who said, "The Lord wishes not the death of the sinner, but that he should pay and live." Many a ruler forbade the sale of indulgences in his territory. Duke George of Saxony, who became one of Luther's most bitter opponents, criticized the sale of indulgences before Luther was even