

A REVOLTING CHAPTER

In the History of the Roman Catholic Church.

The "Holy Inquisition" a Satanic Institution of Bloody Cruelty and a Frightful Tribunal of Torture.

Except, perhaps, the order of the Jesuits, the so-called "holy inquisition" of the Roman Catholic church is the most hellish institution in the lower universe. This frightful tribunal of torture was established in France by Pope Gregory IX., A. D. 1229. The inquisition was a court above and independent of the state, having jurisdiction over life and property in defiance of all civil laws. The pope himself is the chief inquisitor. The same terrible institution exists with all the papal sanction today as it did in the time of the so-called St. Dominic, though it is not sanctioned and endorsed, as before, by the civil governments. It is now compelled to carry on its horrible work in deep dark vaults of convent prisons. To add insult to injury, this satanic institution of bloody cruelty is called the "holy inquisition." One of the most revolting chapters in the diabolism of Roman Catholic cruelty is recorded in the history of the old Albigenses by Dr. Jean Paul Perrin. We quote, beginning on page 267, (appendix to book 2) as follows:

"Among the novel disclosures respecting the secrets of the Romish inquisition, probably not one is more authentic and valuable than the recent statement made by Mr. Lehmanowsky, formerly a Polish officer in the army which Napoleon sent to Spain under the command of Marshal Soult. That officer is now a minister of the Gospel residing in the United States; and his narrative so perfectly corroborates the history of the inquisition, by Bower, Gavin, Limborch, Lorente, and the other testimonies upon that subject, that it claims insertion in this form as elucidating the history of the Albigenses, for whose extermination that ungodly contrivance was originally instituted.

The following detail comprises Mr. Lehmanowsky's description of the "Destruction of one of the Spanish dens of the inquisition at Madrid," which was performed under his own direction and authority.

In 1809 Col. Lehmanowsky was attached to that part of Napoleon's army which was stationed at Madrid. While in that city, said Col. Lehmanowsky, I used to speak freely among the people what I thought of the priests and Jesuits, and of the inquisition. It had been decreed by the Emperor Napoleon, that the inquisition and the monasteries should be suppressed, but the decree was not executed. Months had passed away, and the prisons of the inquisition had not been opened. One night, about ten or eleven o'clock, as he was walking along one of the streets of Madrid; two armed men sprang upon him from an alley, and made a furious attack. He instantly drew his sword, put himself in a posture of defence, and while struggling with them, he saw at a distance, the lights of the patrols, French soldiers mounted, who carried lanterns, and who rode through the streets of the city at all hours of the night to preserve order. He called to them in French, and as they hastened to his assistance, the assailants took to their heels and escaped, not however before he saw by their dress that they belonged to the guards of the inquisition.

He went immediately to Marshal Soult, then governor of Madrid, and reminded him of the decree to suppress that institution. Marshal Soult replied that he might go and destroy it. Col. Lehmanowsky told him that his regiment, the 9th of the Polish lancers, was not sufficient for such service, but if he would give him two additional regiments, the 117th and another, which he named, he would undertake the work. The 117th regiment was under the command of Col. De Lile, who is now, like Col. Lehmanowsky, a minister of the Gospel, and pastor of an evangelical church in France. The troops required were granted, and I proceeded, said Col. Lehmanowsky, to the inquisition, which was situated about five miles from the city. It was surrounded with a wall of great strength, and defended by a company of soldiers. When we arrived at the walls, I addressed one of the sentinels, and summoned the fathers to surrender to the imperial army, and open the gates of the inquisition. The sentinel, who was standing on the wall, appeared to enter into conversation for a moment with someone within, at the close of which he presented his musket and shot one of my men. This was a signal of attack, and I ordered my troops to fire upon those who appeared on the walls.

It was soon obvious that it was an unequal warfare. The walls of the inquisition were covered with the soldiers of the holy office; there was also a breast work upon the wall, behind which they kept continually, and only partially exposed themselves as they discharged their muskets. Our troops were in the open plain and exposed to the destructive fire. We had no cannon, nor could we scale the walls,

and the gates successfully resisted all attempts at forcing them. I could not retire and send for a cannon to break through the walls, without giving them time to lay a train for blowing us up. I saw it was necessary to change the mode of attack, and directed some trees to be cut down and trimmed, to be used as battering-rams. Two of these were taken up by detachments of men, as numerous as could work to advantage and brought to bear upon the walls with all the power which they could exert, while his troops kept up a fire to protect them from the fire poured upon them from the walls. Presently the walls began to tremble, a breach was made, and the imperial troops rushed into the inquisition. Here we met with an incident for which nothing but Jesuitical effrontery is equal. The inquisitor general, followed by the father confessors in their priestly robes, all came out of their rooms, as we were making our way into the interior of the inquisition, and with long faces and their arms crossed over breasts, their fingers resting on their shoulders, as though they had been deaf to all the noise of the attack and defence, and had just learned what was going on, they addressed themselves in the language of rebuke to their own soldiers, saying, 'Why do you fight our friends, the French?'

Their intention, no doubt, was to make us think that this defence was wholly unauthorized by them, hoping, if they could make us believe that they were friendly, they would have the better opportunity in the confusion of the moment to escape. Their artifice was too shallow, and they did not succeed. I caused them to be placed under guard, and all the soldiers of the inquisition to be secured as prisoners. We then proceeded to examine all the rooms of the stately edifice. We passed through room after room, found all perfectly in order, richly furnished, with altars and crucifixes, and wax candles in abundance, but could discover no evidences of iniquity being practiced there, nothing of those peculiar features which we expected to find in an inquisition. We found splendid paintings, and a rich and expensive library. Here were beauty and splendor, and the most perfect order on which my eyes ever rested. The architecture—the proportions were perfect. The ceiling and floors of wood were scoured and highly polished. The marble floors were arranged with a strict regard to order. There was everything to please the eye and gratify the cultivated taste; but where were those horrid instruments of torture of which we have been told, and where those dungeons in which human beings were said to be buried alive? We searched in vain. The holy fathers assured us that they had been belied; that we had seen all, and I was prepared to give up the search, convinced that this inquisition was different from others of which I had heard.

But Col. De Lile was not so ready as myself to give up the search, and said to me, "Colonel, you are commander today, and, as you say, so it must be, but if you will be advised by me, let this marble floor be examined. Let water be brought and be poured upon it, and we will watch and see if there is any place through which it passes more freely than others." I replied to him, "Do as you please, Colonel," and ordered water to be brought accordingly. The slabs of marble were large and beautifully polished. When the water had been poured over the floor, much to the dissatisfaction of the inquisitors, a careful examination was made of every seam in the floor, to see if the water passed through. Presently Col. De Lile exclaimed that he had found it. By the side of one of these marble slabs the water passed through fast, as though there was an opening beneath. All hands were now at work for further discovery. The officers with their swords, and the soldiers with their bayonets, seeking to clear out the seam and pry up the slab. Others with the butts of their muskets, striking the slab with all their might to break it, while the priests remonstrated against our desecrating their holy and beautiful house. While thus engaged, a soldier who was striking with the butt of his musket, struck a spring, and the marble slab flew up. Then the faces of the inquisitors grew pale as Belshazzar when the hand writing appeared on the wall; they trembled all over. Beneath the marble slab, now partly up, there was a stair case. I stepped to the altar and took from the candlestick one of the candles four feet in length, which was burning, that I might explore the room below. As I was doing this, I was arrested by one of the inquisitors, who laid his hand gently on my arm, and, with a very demure and holy look, said: "My son, you must not take those lights with your bloody hands; they are holy."

"Well," said I, "I will take a holy thing to shed light on iniquity; I will bear the responsibility." I took the candle and proceeded down the stair case. As we reached the foot of the stairs, we entered a large square room, which was called the hall of judgment. In the center of it was a large block and a chain fastened to it. On this they had been accustomed to place the accused, chained to his seat. On one side of the room was one elevated seat, called the throne of judgment. This

the inquisitor general occupied and on either side were seats less elevated, for the ungodly fathers when engaged in the solemn business of the holy inquisition.

From this room we proceeded to the right, and obtained access to small cells, extending the entire length of the edifice; and here such sights were presented as we hoped never to see again.

Those cells were places of solitary confinement, where the wretched objects of inquisitorial hate were confined year after year, till death released them from their sufferings, and there their bodies were suffered to remain until they were entirely decayed, and the rooms had become fit for others to occupy. To prevent this from being offensive to those who occupied the inquisition, there were flues or tubes extending to the open air, sufficiently capacious to carry off the odor. In these cells we found the remains of some who had paid the debt of nature; some of them had been dead apparently but a short time, while of others nothing remained but their bones, still chained to the floor of the dungeon.

In other cells, we found living sufferers of both sexes—and of every age, from three-score years and ten down to fourteen and fifteen years—all naked as when born into the world, and all in chains! Here were found old men and aged women, who had been shut up for many years. Here too were the middle aged, and the young man and the maiden of fourteen years old. The soldiers immediately went to work to release those captives from their chains, and took from their knapsacks their overcoats and other clothing which they gave to cover their nakedness. They were exceedingly anxious to bring them out to the light of day, but Col. Lehmanowsky, aware of the danger, had food given them and then brought out gradually to the light as they were able to bear it.

We then proceeded, said Col. Lehmanowsky, to explore another room on the left. Here we found the instruments of torture, of every kind which the ingenuity of men or devils could invent. Col. Lehmanowsky here described four of these horrid instruments. The first was a machine by which the victim was confined, and then, beginning with the fingers, every joint in the hands, arms, and body were broken or drawn, one after another, until the victim died. The second was a box, in which the head and neck of the victim were so closely confined by a screw, that he could not move in any way. Over the box was a vessel, from which one drop of water a second fell upon the head of the victim—every successive drop falling upon precisely the same place on the head, suspended the circulation in a few moments, and put the sufferer in the most excruciating agony. The third was an infernal machine, laid horizontally, to which the victim was bound, the machine then being placed between two beams, in which were scores of knives so fixed, that by turning the machine with a crank, the flesh of the sufferer was torn from his limbs all in small pieces. The fourth surpassed the others in fiendish ingenuity. Its exterior was a beautiful woman, or large doll, richly dressed, with arms extended, ready to embrace its victim. Around her feet a semicircle was drawn. The victim who passed over this fatal mark touched a spring, which caused the diabolical engine to open, its arms clasped him, and a thousand knives cut him into as many pieces in the deadly embrace.

Col. Lehmanowsky said that the sight of those engines of infernal cruelty kindled the rage of the soldiers to fury. They declared that every inquisitor and soldier of the inquisition should be put to the torture. Their rage was unquenchable. Col. Lehmanowsky did not oppose them; they might have turned their arms against him, if he had attempted to arrest their work. They began with the holy fathers. The first they put to death in the machine for breaking the joints. The torture of the inquisitor, put to death by the dropping of the water on his head, was most excruciating. The poor men cried out in agony to be taken from the fatal machine. The inquisitor general was brought before the infernal engine called "the virgin." The soldiers commanded him to kiss the virgin. He begs to be excused. "No," said they, "you have caused others to kiss her, and now you must do it." They interlocked their bayonets so as to form large forks, and with these pushed him over the deadly circle. The beautiful image instantly prepared for the embrace, clasped him in its arms, and he was cut into innumerable pieces. Col. Lehmanowsky said he witnessed the torture of four of them—his heart sickened at the awful scene—and he left the soldiers to wreak their vengeance on the last guilty inmate of that prison-house of hell.

In the meantime it was reported through Madrid, that the prisons of the inquisition were broken open and multitudes hastened to the fatal spot. And O. what a meeting was there! It was like a resurrection. About a hundred who had been buried for many years, were now restored to life. There were fathers who found their long lost daughters; wives were restored to their husbands, sisters to their brothers, and parents to their children; and there

were some who could recognize no friend among the multitude. The scene was such as no tongue can describe.

When the multitude had retired, Col. Lehmanowsky caused the library, paintings, furniture, etc., to be removed, and having sent to the city a wagon load of powder, he deposited a large quantity in the vaults beneath the building, and placed a slow match in connection with it. All had withdrawn at a distance, and in a few moments there was a most joyful sight to thousands, the walls and turrets of the massive structure rose majestically towards the heavens, impelled by the tremendous explosion—and fell back to the earth an immense heap of ruin. The inquisition was no more.

Who can avoid feeling rapture in the prophetic contemplation, that the period is rapidly approaching when "Babylon the Great," that vast habitation of devils, the hold of every foul spirit, and a "cage of every unclean and hateful bird," (Revelation 18:2); that seven-hilled metropolis of corruption shall disappear from the world for ever; nor like the inquisition near Madrid amid a blaze of gunpowder, but as a mill stone cast from the height of heaven into the depths of the ocean to be found "no more at all;" amid heaven's thundering hallelujahs, and earth's universal responsive and adoring acclamations. Rev. 18: 20, 34; and 19: 1-6.

Therefore let us not attempt by hypocritical and anti-christian sensibilities to sympathize with that popery which is one entire mass of satanic depravity. When we oppose the Romish pestilential apostasy, we only contend against a hell-born contrivance which is blasphemous towards God and a curse to the human family; and which having arrogated the Divine titles of supremacy, tyrannizes over the bodies and souls, and brutalizes all the faculties of men.

How vast are our obligations to the great head of the church, who has delivered us from the dread of papal excommunication, and the mysterious horrors of that purgatory, which diminished all the energies of mankind, and which peopled the aerial regions and the dormitories of the dead with the most terrific spectres ever present, and ever inimical! How superior is our allotment! A crazy enthusiastic monk cannot now subvert the foundations of human society, that a fiendlike despot may be agrandized to God-like pre-eminence. How enrapturing the thought; that ere long, neither the Russian with his knout, shall trammel man with his superstitious absurdities; nor shall a Turk, with his bastinado, bow him to profess the delusion of Mohammed's apostasy; nor shall a Spanish inquisitor, while he racks life from the heart, extort blasphemy from the mouth! Their arms shall be withered forever; and the great multitude shall all combine into the ecstatic chorus: "Alleluia; for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth." Amen—Copied verbatim from appendix to Perrin's History of the Albigenses.

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