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A Rich Brown

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BARBARISM PRACTICED BY MANY CIVILIZED NATIONS

The Turkish Custom of Torturing Prisoners—Some of the Fearful Stories of Operation in Russia and Turkey. Russia Kills an Italian but Turkey Kills a Russian.

The examination of accused persons by torture is permitted today in only two European states, Turkey and Russia. The method in Russia is illustrated in the experience of forty-six prisoners recently condemned on political charges at Warsaw. The details may seem incredible, but they are circumstantially given by a delegate from Poland to Western Europe, the accuracy of whose statements there is no reason to doubt.

The charge against the forty-six Poles was that of "belonging to a secret society which had for its object to alter, amend or alter the existing form of government." This they were told verbally, no written document whatsoever being shown to them.

Political suspects are not allowed to seek any legal advice in self-defense. The investigation is managed not by judges or lawyers, but by officers of the gendarmerie. The gendarmes are paid double salary while engaged in political investigation, and it is therefore to their interests to protract the process as much as possible.

MAKING A PRISONER INSANE.

Among the accused was one Ladislus Guisbert. He was a private tutor of good reputation. While in prison he fell ill with a fever and became delirious. Little or no care was taken of him, but on the contrary attempts were made to profit by the disturbed condition of his mind to extort confessions from him. The gendarmes hit upon an ingenious device to weaken his mind by breaking up his rest. Every half hour or so during the night they would enter his cell under the pretext of attending to a small oil lamp. They made such a noise and clatter that the prisoner awoke, and then the gendarmes would question him, thinking that in his half-sleepy condition he might make some imprudent answers. Sometimes Colonel Bialanowski caused this unfortunate man to be brought out of his cell after midnight, so that he might sign the minutes or protocol of questions that had been put to him while he was in bed.

Such torture, inflicted at a moment when the patient was suffering from fever, so aggravated the delirium that ultimately Ladislus Guisbert completely lost his reason. After a time he became a raving lunatic and was removed to a madhouse.

Another prisoner, named Ferdinand Zaleski, was asked to give information about the propaganda carried on in the factories of Warsaw and neighborhood. He refused to turn informer. Thereupon the authorities gave orders that Zaleski should be conveyed to another part of the prison and severely flogged. Colonel Bialanowski accompanied the prisoner and took his seat at a little table well provided with writing materials and directed that the prisoner should be questioned while being flogged.

ONE MAN'S TORTURE.

The colonel was ready to take down his answers, and doubtless had these proved satisfactory the severity of the flogging would have been mitigated. Zaleski bravely endured the torture. He did not answer a question or utter a word. This man had been cruelly tortured because he would not say only what the gendarmes supposed or guessed he might know. The authorities, now fearing that this modern revival of the old and barbaric custom of questioning under torture might, if known, cause the outbreak of serious disturbances in the town, determined to prevent all further communication between the prisoners and their friends and relatives. All permissions for interviews were withdrawn, and it was only at the moment the prisoners were about to leave Warsaw that the authorities allowed them to see their friends. At this interview the truth became known.

In Turkey torture is a regular part of the criminal process, and not, as in Russia, comparatively exceptional. Foreigners, of course, are subject to the jurisdiction of the diplomatic representatives of their respective countries, but the natives, whether Christian or Turk, are at the mercy of the sultan and his agents.

Western forms of trial are unknown, and while imprisonment is the nominal penalty for many crimes, Turkish imprisonment is a lingering death. The methods of extracting information from accused persons in Turkey would be almost incredible in a civilized country.

TURKEY EVEN WORSE THAN RUSSIA.

The bastinado is freely applied on suspicion of the most trifling offences. It is true that the beating often includes the penalty of conviction. The magistrate causes the prisoner to be thrashed until he has confessed and then lets him go as sufficiently punished. But suspected political offenders, who in Turkey as in all despotic countries are considered among the gravest, are dealt with in ways that make the bastinado seem a pleasant pastime.

During the panic in Constantinople on the subject of an Armenian insurrection hundreds of Armenians were arrested and thrown into prison. It has been openly charged that several of them died under tortures applied with a view of obtaining evidence of a conspiracy that had no existence. One man was laid in the courtyard of the prison, in the glare of the sun, bound hand and foot, and his face besmeared with some sweet substance to attract flies.

Another was hung up by hands and feet, and still another was compelled to walk up and down, pulled along by soldiers, who r-beaved each other in detail, never permitting their victim to rest a moment. A number of the Armenians perished in this way before the Turks came to the conclusion that no insurrection was thought of. Then the sultan ordered the wholesale release of all that remained.—Chicago Herald.

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