

Poetry.

THE VENAL SANCTUARY.

BY THE REV. JAMES GILBORNE LYONS, L. L. D.

Where in our churches is the place for the poor? I ask
this question with shame and sorrow. WHERE IS THE PLACE
FOR THE POOR?—Admit that here and there a poor per-
son has a seat: WHERE IS IT? Is he invited to sit with us
“in a good place,” or do we say to him “Stand thou there,
or sit here under my footstool?”—*Right Rev. Bishop Ives.*

“I WILL BRING YOUR SANCTUARIES UNTO DESOLATION.”

Leviticus, xxvi. 31.

I trod the hallow'd ground that bore
A Christian temple tall and proud,
When at each tall and lofty door,
Went streaming in a gorgeous crowd:—
A welcome day bid all rejoice—
A fair and ancient festival,
And the glad organ's mighty voice,
Shook the strong roof and Gothic wall.

Full many a token mark'd the fold,
Where rich and high believers meet,
The sacred volume clasp'd in gold,
The costly robe and drowsy seat:—
Priest, people, altar, chancel, choir,
Arch, column, window, porch, and gate—
That ample fane from vault to spire
Look'd solemn all and calmly great.

But mark! An old and weary man—
A stranger clad “in raiment vile,”
With failing steps and features wan,
Went tottering up the fair broad aisle:—
They cast him out—Oh faithless race!
On a rude bench—unseen—remote—
Found guilty, in that hour and place,
Of—a lean purse and threadbare coat!

Yes! and if He who sav'd the lost
Stood fainting on that haughty floor,
Array'd in weeds of little cost,
Meek as He sought our world before;
In spite of words which none might blame,
And words of goodness freely done,
That sordid post of wrong and shame
Would greet—JEHOVAH'S ONLY SON.

Oh for a prophet's tongue or pen
To warn the great in wealth and birth,
Who build their God a house, and then
Plant there—the meanest pomps of earth:—
To brand that Church which spurns the poor
From every vain and venal pew,
Where “cloth'd in purple” here secure,
To kneel or sleep—the lordly few!

Give me the shed, low, bare, and plain,
Where love and humble truth abide,
Rather than earth's most noble fane
Defil'd by selfish pomp and pride;
Give me the damp and desert sod
Wall'd in by the dark old forest trees,
Roof'd over by the skies of God,
But perish temples such as these!

Church History.

DESTRUCTION OF THE INQUISITION.

[The following account of the destruction of the Inquisition at Madrid is related by Col. Lehmanowsky, a Colonel in the French army, who was entrusted with the duty of demolishing the Inquisitorial buildings in 1809. Col. L. is now a minister of the Lutheran church in one of the Western States.]—*Am. Paper.*

It had been decreed by the Emperor Napoleon, that the Inquisition should be suppressed, but the decree was not executed. Months passed away, and the prisons of the Inquisition had not yet been opened. One night, about ten o'clock, as Col. L. was walking one of the streets of Madrid, two armed men sprang 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, told him what had taken place, and reminded him of the decree to suppress this institution.—Marshal Soult, replied that he might go and destroy it. Col. L. told him that his regiment was not sufficient for such a service, but if he would give him two additional regiments, he would undertake the work. The troops required were granted, and I proceeded, (said Col. L.) to the Inquisition, which was situated about five miles from the city. It was surrounded with a wall of great strength, and defended with a company of soldiers. When we arrived at the walls, I addressed one of the sentinels, and summoned the “Holy Father” 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 some one 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, only as they partially exposed themselves as they discharged their muskets. Our troops were in an open plain, and exposed to a 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 that 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 they could exert, while the 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. I caused the “Holy Fathers” 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, and found everything to please the eye, and gratify a cultivated taste; but where were those horrid instruments of torture of which we had 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. He advised that water should be poured over the floor of the Inquisition, which was composed of large and beautifully polished slabs of marble, and a careful examination made of every seam in the floor, to see if the water passed through. 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's, 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 we reached the foot of the stairs, we entered a large square room, which was called the Hall of Judgment. In the centre 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 an elevated seat, called the Throne of Judgment. This the Inquisitor General occupied, and on either side were seats, less elevated, for the Holy 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 hope never to see again!

These 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 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 their dungeon.

In other cells, we found living sufferers of both sexes, and of every age, from threescore years and ten, down to fourteen or fifteen years—all naked as when born into the world! and all in chains! Here were old men and aged women; who had been shut up for many years! Here, too, were the middle aged, and the young man and maiden of fourteen years old. The soldiers immediately went to work to release these 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. L., aware of the danger, had food given them, and then brought them out gradually to the light as they were able to bear it.

We then proceeded 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. L. 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 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 a 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. L. said that the sight of these 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 ungovernable. Col. L. 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 joints. The torture of the Inquisitor, put to death by the dropping of water on his head, was most excruciating. The poor man 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 begged to be excused. “No” said they, “you have caused others to kiss her, and you must do it.” They interlocked their bayonets so as to form large forks, and with these they 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. L. said he witnessed the torture of four of them—his heart was 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. L., caused the library, paintings, furniture, &c., to be removed, and having sent to the city for a waggon-load of powder, he deposited a large quantity in