

RELIGIOUS

And Bible Society, Miss

E. McLEOD, Editor.

That God in

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tention.

G. W. DAY, PRINTER.

The Inquisition.

No. III.

Having considered the origin of the so called
Holy Inquisition, we now proceed to investigate
its laws, constitution, and practice, confining our-
selves principally to it as it existed in Spain.

At the head of all was the Inquisitor General.
The King, nominally, had the appointment, but it
was really possessed by the Church of Rome, for
the Pope had a veto on the appointment of the
King, which he never failed to use when he thought
fit. So completely was the appointment of the Pope's,
that the Inquisitor did not dare to take one single
step in his new office unless confirmed in it by
him. When this was done, however, the appoint-
ment to all subordinate offices was vested in the
hands of the Inquisitor General, the only limita-
tion being that these appointments should be sub-
ject to the approval of the King; an arrangement
which, like many others in that church, was made
merely for decency's sake. Next to the Inquisitor
General were five counsellors, who were called
"Apostolic Inquisitors;" their duty was to delib-
erate with the Inquisitor General, to settle dis-
putes—to punish the familiars belonging to the
office, and to receive appeals: then there was the
Advocate-fiscal, two secretaries, and some inferior
functionaries, who made up the supreme council
or the high court of Inquisition.

The power of the Inquisitors was very great:
they might compel the governors of cities to pro-
ceed against heretics, and if they refused to do so,
they were to be deprived of the honour they pos-
sessed, and never to be raised to any other. The
Inquisitors might also compel all temporal lords to
revoke such statutes as hindered the office of the
Inquisition; the magistrates were bound to seize
and keep in custody heretics whenever commanded
by the Inquisitors, and to carry them wherever
they chose to direct. The magistrates were com-
pelled to receive them kindly, and to entertain
them courteously. The latitude allowed to the In-
quisitors in their dealing with the laws left very lit-
tle chance for any they were detained to com-
demn; for while they compelled the magistrates to
observe and execute the statutes and laws both ec-
clesiastical and secular against heretics, they had
permission from the Popes (Innocent IV. and
Alexander IV.), whenever anything difficult or
ambiguous arose, to interpret the laws according
to their own judgment! The Inquisitors were
also to have an armed attendance, and to go armed
themselves, and their officials (called in Italy,
"cross-bearers," in Spain, "familiars") were to
wait on the Inquisitor whenever he commanded,
to fulfil, by day or night, any order he chose to
give. They had, moreover, the power of summon-
ing persons of any rank before them, and if they
refused to give evidence, they could examine them
by torture. They enjoyed all the rents of their
benefices without rates or taxes. They could mu-
tually absolve and dispense themselves, and they
could release their servants for the space of three
whole years from any penances which might have
been enjoined them.

These were some of the powers of which they
were possessed; we now proceed to inquire how
they made use of them.

When the chief Inquisitor arrived in any of the
provinces, he first delivered a sermon concerning
the purity of the Catholic doctrine, exhorting the
people to purge away all heresy. Then followed the
letters monitory, or the edict of faith, by which
all persons of every condition were called upon to
come in, under pain of excommunication, with-
in the next twelve days, and make known any per-
sons that they suspected of heresy; then the sen-
tence of excommunication was read, and com-
munications made upon it, and indulgences offered to
the diligent. There was an indulgence of three
years to whoever favoured the Inquisitor in his
work, and a farther indulgence of three years to
whoever gave information against a heretic.

The three ways in which a process began were
these:—

I. *Investigation*: When the Inquisitor sum-
moned certain individuals into his presence, and in-
quired the state of the town or district in which they
lived.

II. *Accusation*: When a direct charge of her-
esy was brought before the court against one or
more persons distinctly named.

III. *Denunciation*: When the Inquisitor was
merely informed that certain persons suspected of
heresy (whose names were given) resided within
the district.

This last was the commonest mode, and the
one the Inquisition loved most to encourage. It
did not in the least matter as to the character and
quality of the person informing; even children
were allowed and invited to come forward. The

name of the informer was kept a perfect secret,
for secrecy was the main-spring of the whole in-
famous concern. The consequence of this was,
that no man was for a moment safe,—whoever
owed another a grudge, had only to denounce him
to the Holy Office, and this generally put him ef-
fectually out of the way. Now, when we speak
of witnesses against a man, let us not confound
what the Inquisition called a witness, with what we
understand by such a term. Amongst us, the
witness is confronted with the prisoner, watched
by the judge, on the criminal's behalf as well as
upon that of the crown; the eyes of the whole
court are upon him; but in the Inquisition, there
was none of this: when the witnesses were sum-
moned, the party accused had not been even taken
into custody; he remained in his own house, per-
haps employed in his ordinary avocations,—per-
haps enjoying the social blessings of a happy
home, utterly ignorant of the storm that was brew-
ing, in only too many instances, against his life.
And the most hideous feature in the case was this,
that in many instances brothers and sisters gave
evidence against each other, the wife gave evi-
dence against her husband, and the husband against
his wife.

The next step was the apprehension of the vic-
tim. This was of two kinds, either verbal or real.
The verbal was used for lesser crimes, and was a
civil message that the Inquisitor would be glad of
a call from the gentleman, as he wished to have a
little conversation with him. The real, was an
actual and forcible taking possession of the person
in question. This, we are told, usually took place
in the night; and an opportunity was generally
selected when all things were favourable,—when
some combination of circumstances made the pro-
ceeding, by its sudden and appalling character,
most likely to overpower resistance—to prevent
inquiry, and to increase secret fear. Like the
tiger surveying the wild animal from the thicket,
the Inquisitor meditated his purpose in horrid si-
lence, regarding his prey with anxious vigilance,
considered the whole case maturely and well, and
selected his opportunity. Not the slightest hint of
insecurity is given, not a suspicion is breathed,
till, in the dead of the night, a band of monsters
calmly approach the residence of the victim, and
demand an entrance. When the question is asked,
"In whose name is this required?" the answer is,
"The Holy Office." In an instant the ties of na-
ture are broken, every feeling of friendship is
suppressed, and parents or children, or sisters, or
brothers, with a promptitude altogether inconceiv-
able, hasten to deliver up the victim; and the
wretched victim, scarcely recovered from his sur-
prise, and without knowing what he is accused of,
is hurried away into the prisons of the Inquisition.
Should he be convicted (and the rich merchant,
the substantial citizen very rarely escaped), his
property is confiscated, not only from the date of
his apprehension, but from the time that his ortho-
doxy was suspected.

Then comes the prisoner's examination; he is
not accused of anything, the plan of the Inquisition
being to draw a confession from the man's own
lips. The process is this:—

First: every question to answer, sincerely and di-
rectly, every question that is put to him: then he
is asked if he knows where he is, and why he is
there? Then he is desired to recollect himself,
and think whether he has said or done some-
thing against the Catholic faith and the Inquisition.
Every engine is put into requisition to extract
some grounds for his accusation from his own lips:
the Inquisitors soothe and terrify him; they lay
all sorts of traps and quibbles for him, and if the
prisoner persist in declaring himself innocent, they
send him back to his dungeon to aid his memory
by reflection,—to commune with his own heart,
and to bend the resolution of a haughty spirit to
the dominion of conscience. There, in the misery
of a filthy and contracted cell, the prisoner pines
away, and many a wretch looks forward with an-
xiety to the next auto-da-fe to be freed at once
from torment and from life.

The limits of this sketch prevent our giving fur-
ther space to this portion of the subject; we would
only remind our reader of the fact, which will
ever be specially hateful to an English mind, that
the accused was never confronted with his accuser,
or with any witness; and if the evidence against
him was given to him in writing, it was drawn out
in such a way as to make it impossible for him to
discover who the witnesses were, or how the pre-
tended proofs were obtained.

So crying and terrible was this evil, that in the
beginning of the sixteenth century the Moors and
Jews residing in Spain offered Charles V. 800,000
pieces of gold, provided he would introduce a law,
ordaining that the names of the witnesses in the
inquisitorial courts should be published. Charles
was anxious to take the money, but Ximenes, at
that time Inquisitor General, would not allow him,
saying it would cause irreparable injury to the holy
church.

If there were not proof enough against the sus-
pected person, and yet the judges said they did
not see his innocence—or, if the prisoner were
found faltering or trembling (a very natural pro-
ceeding under the circumstances in which he was
placed), or, if he refused to make an answer—or,
if a man were cited to appear at a certain time
and did not come, and yet made his appearance
afterwards, for all these things the torture was in-
flicted. Sometimes the prisoner was only fright-
ened, and then it was done in this way. The in-
struments of torture were shown to him at a dis-
tance; he was led through many windings, and a
succession of doors, into a large room, feebly
lighted, where the executioner was pointed out to
him, covered with a black linen garment which

reached down to his feet, and having a long cowl
of the same colour drawn over his head and face.
This horrid apparition carried in his hand an iron
collar, or a whip, or some other instrument of tor-
ture, and appeared to stare in solemn silence at
the prisoner through two small openings made for
the purpose in his cowl. Gonsalvus says, "this
man looks like the very devil."

This, whatever its effects might have been upon
the nerves, often ruining them for life, was the
mildest form of torture; the remaining forms we
shall consider in our next number.

A Word in the Ear of the Professed Christians.

Are you not asleep? What! you cannot be
dead! And one or the other must be the fact.
If loath to admit the first, how startling must be
the thought of the last. But try.

You believe there is an eternity; that in it God's
justice will display itself in the everlasting punish-
ment of sinners; that there is but one single hope
of escape from so tremendous a doom, and that it
is held out to us in the blood of the Son of God.
Now, on that blood have you really cast yourself?
And is it the hope which springs from this alone
that supports you in the view that all is to come?
Oh, then, if it be indeed so, you are not dead.

But are you not asleep? That question is still
to be tried. And if you have fairly passed the
trial of the other, you would not, for the world,
leave this one unsettled. Try, then, again.

Just lift up your eyes. Behold the crowds around
you, and among which you walk, and sit, and
stand every day of your life. How many souls of
them, think you, have, like you, cast themselves
on the blood of Christ, and are, as you think you
are, placed beyond the reach of perdition? Mark
them,—but with the dull eye of this world's chari-
ty, but as they stand, exposed in the light that
shines from God high. How many such are there?
Now, look over the immense remainder, and say,
What are you doing for them?

Behold the numbers who profess to know the
great transforming truths of the gospel, and yet
going steadily after their vanities,—and their
lusts, and walking in the ways of that very world
whose every maxim and passion are in direct hos-
tility to Christ. And then, behold here, there, and
everywhere, the multitudes who do not even pro-
fess submission to God the Saviour, are at this mo-
ment in the open field of rebellion against him;
and stand habitually aloof from the temples of his
grace, where the offers of reconciliation are held
out. Now, ask again, For these perishing crea-
tures, what are you doing? How many of them
have you taken hold of, and warned, and besought
as for their life? Oh! are you not asleep?

You understand, it is supposed, what is their
condition,—how dreadful? You foresee what is to
be their lot,—how appalling! And you behold
them all the time, passing in rapid succession from
our streets, and going down, by scores, every
week, to that place where they will realise for the
first time,—when for ever too late,—that a Re-
deemer has indeed appeared on the earth, and that
in Jesus they have rejected him, to their endless
undoing. And yet you will not lift a hand, or ut-
ter a word to stop them. Oh! are you not asleep?

You believe yourself a firm disciple, and a true
follower of Him who wept at the tomb of Lazarus,
and shed floods of tears over a whole nation; nay,
poured out his life-blood, and sustained the storms
of almighty wrath for a whole world of enemies.
And here are your countrymen and fellow citizens,
who are all good-will to you, and among them ac-
quaintances and friends, and perhaps your own
kindred,—it may be, father and mother, and hus-
band or wife, and children, the "bone of your
bones, and the flesh of your flesh," hastening to
their graves, and falling into that eternity from
which they shall never be called forth: and you
will not give an hour in the day, or a half day of
the week, to avert from them such a destiny,
though it be also to bring them to immortal life.
Oh! are you not asleep?

But you think that you pity them and pray for
them. But what is that pity that succours not,
when it may? And are you to be told that pray-
ing and doing, when anything can be done, always
go together; and that the earnest desire of the
heart ever prompts to the actual effort of the hands?
You pity and pray for them, but can you do no-
thing for them? Have you not a tongue to speak
to them? Have you not feet to bear you about
among them? And can you not sound the alarm
in their houses and walks? Can you not place be-
fore their eyes God's own warnings; and circulate
through their habitations God's own written of-
fers of mercy; and urge their attention to all that
they there read about the coming wrath, and the
glorious salvation? Can you not? And if you
do it not, what is your pity but a mockery of man;
and your prayer but a mockery of God? Oh!
are you not asleep?

Now, you who will not warn others, at least open
your ear to a word of warning to yourself,—which
comes from every quarter from which such a word
can come; from God on high, who sees all that is
going on; from holy angels and glorified saints,
who know what heaven is, and what hell is; from
your fellow-Christians, who, here and elsewhere,
are toiling in the work of salvation, and ready to
faint with the greatness of it and the fewness of
their number: and if you are proof against this,
listen, at any rate, to that voice which comes from
within yourself,—from the recesses of your own
soul, as it cries to you from mercy to your own
undying spirit, to awake and arise; for in a sleep
like this, how can you know, after all, that you are
even alive? Is it not, at least, a death-like sleep;
and may it not be, in fact the sleep of death?

Without the vivid and effective sympathies of
the Christian, how can you think that you are a
Christian indeed? Without the feelings of fear,
of horror, of sorrow, and compassion, in the view
of perishing immortals of your own race, perish-
ing, as it were, under your own eyes; and without
the feelings of joy or hope at the very thought of
their rescue, and of confidence in the means divinely
appointed for it,—all animating your conduct,
and exciting you to action, and sustaining you in
ardent endeavours for their salvation,—how can it
be otherwise than that, either you see not their
danger, and so cannot have any right apprehension
of eternal things, and are still yourself in the dark-
ness of nature; or you care not for them, and so
are still wrapt in the selfishness of nature's cor-
ruption? And in either case, if they are two
cases, must you not be dead?

Would you escape so frightful a view of your
own condition and prospects? There is but one
way! Would you know that you are indeed a liv-
ing soul, and not buried yourself in the death around
you? Once more, Hear! Awake! Arise!
Walk abroad in the spirit of life, and do the works
of a living man. Go forth, and take your stand
and your rounds among the dead of your own
flesh, and show and prove yourself a living soul,
by calling on them, in the name of the Lord of
life, to live also. Behold! eternity is at hand,—
and what a transient moment separates you from
it! The judgment is before you, and that day of
transport and of terror,—'tis but as to-morrow,
when every man shall be judged according to his
works! Death beckons! Should you be pre-
sently in his hand, how would you wish you had
received this appeal!—Am. Tract.

Reader, be honest with your soul. Are you
hugging a delusion? Perhaps friends have warn-
ed and you have scoffed; the Holy Spirit has re-
proved, and you have spoken stout words against
him." (Mal. iii. 13.) Are you grasping a lie in
your right hand? Abandon it now, or it will by
and by betray thee. Shun it ere it prove thy ruin,
for "he, that being often reproved, hardeneth his
neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that with-
out remedy."—(Prov. xxix. 1.)—Am. Messenger.

Correspondence.

Letter from Rev. D. M. Graham.
The Season—Mulbury Grove—Family Burying ground
—Miscellaneous Graves—"My own Dead"—The
cave of Machpelah—Freeville Baptist Churches in
Providence.

PROVIDENCE, R. I., April 9, 1855.
Mr. Editor,—Only a few days ago I wrote you of
snows and bleak winter in New York and Pennsylvania.
Last Saturday I noticed the farmers in this vicinity
were beginning to plough; though I should think the
soil rather too heavy yet to be stirred, yet the weather
is very pleasant and warm for the time of the year.
Some two miles from this place is a distinguished nur-
sery of fruit, and ornamental trees, the possession of
Deacon Dyer of our Church at Olneyville. Its name
is Mulbury Grove. When I was there Saturday last,
I learned that already this spring the proprietor has re-
ceived many trees from France. I noticed also the
men taking up a great number of trees to send to Bos-
ton and other places.

In one part of the extensive grounds is a family
burying-place, now a full hundred years old judging
by the inscriptions, a period of time which in our coun-
try's history is considerable. Here sleep together pa-
rents, grand parents, and other relatives so numerous
that the place seems more like a public than a private
burying-place. It is one of the pleasant places which
one sees in a life time for the purposes to which it is de-
voted. Its location upon the brink of a forest covered
hill, here and there a glimpse of water in the distance,
and it is embowered in choice ornamental trees
which surround it like a lofty wall, and within, it is
beautified by arbors.

At one end is a small opening through the walls of
trees into another burying-place which the generous
proprietor has laid out in lots and bestowed upon
the poor. Here sleeps the dust of
Brother Martin Cheney and many members of his
family; here also repose the remains of Brother V. R.
Stevens, another dear friend of mine; here Rev. Geo.
T. Day has a lot which he has consecrated by the re-
mains of his eldest son; here also has Brother A. D.
Williams a lot consecrated in like manner by the dust
of his first born. Several other friends have lots here
which they have consecrated already. Your humble
friend, the writer, is among the number who have a
peculiar fondness for visiting this hallowed spot;
here he reposes the dust of his second born, and here one
by one we expect all his family and himself too, to find
their last sleeping place, (such is the christian idea of
the graveyard, such too the meaning of the word cem-
etery.) Some seven years ago while on a journey
with my family, the child alluded to died in Roxbury,
a suburb of Boston, Mass. A friend kindly offered me
the privilege of leaving the dear dust in his private
tomb in Roxbury, till I should decide where to inter
Mr. Dyer, the generous proprietor of these grounds,
though a stranger to me, hearing of my affliction, sent
me a deed of the lot where I have since buried my
dead. Since this experience, the account of Abraham's
purchase of the field of Ephron has had a peculiar
charm for me. "Abraham stood up from before his
dead, and spake unto the sons of Seth, saying, I am a
stranger and a sojourner; give me a possession of a
burying-place with you, that I may bury my dust out
of my sight." A thousand blessings upon the children
of Seth for their attention to such a request of a stran-
ger; a thousand blessings upon Ephron the son of a
Zohar that he parted with "the cave of Machpelah"
that it might be made "sure unto Abraham for a pos-
session of a burying-place." What would it have ad-
ded to this scene had Ephron sought out this stranger
and made the possession "sure" and "a present"
without the stranger's knowledge! This was the kind-
ness shown me. For me to attempt to express in words
the gratitude due such actions would be quite too tame
for so sacred a subject. I was a stranger, several hun-
dred miles from my home at that time.

No matter what the time of the year when I visit
this city, what the haste of business, you can well be-
lieve I visit the sacred spot where I expect my dust to
be found sleeping, when the trumpet of the resurrec-
tion mourn shall sound. There is to me an inexpressi-
ble sweetness in holding communion with the future
beside the grave in which reposes the dust of my de-
parted child. It does me good to look at the ground
where I must shortly lie. It makes death as a person-
al matter familiar to one. It makes me feel that the
night in which no work can be done is near at hand.
I believe it makes me more diligent not to be overta-
ken as a thief in the night. But I shall overtax your
reader's patience with personal experiences.

There are four churches of our order in this place
and suburbs, now quite prosperous. Two of them are
about to build large brick edifices, as places of wor-
ship. The Roger Williams Church, whose house of
worship was destroyed by fire a few months ago, is
about building in a much more eligible location than
it before occupied. The Olneyville Church, is to
build, I believe, upon the location occupied by its pre-
sent house, and a much larger edifice than its present.
This is the church of which Rev. Maria Cheney was