

place, and in that manner? I have heard some Popish Ecclesiastics, trying to defend the Inquisition from the charge of having condemned its victims to a secret death, say that the palace of the Inquisition was built on a burial-ground belonging, *anciently*, to a hospital for pilgrims, and that the skeletons found were none other than those of pilgrims who had died in that hospital. But everything contradicts this Papistical defence. Suppose that there had been a cemetery there, it could not have had subterranean galleries and cells, laid out with so great regularity; and even if there had been such,—against all probability,—the remains of bodies would have been removed on laying the foundations of the palace, to leave the space free for the subterranean part of the Inquisition. Besides, it is contrary to the use of common tombs, to bury the dead by carrying them through a door at the side; for the mouth of the sepulchre is always at the top. And, again, it has never been the custom in Italy to bury the dead, singly, in quick-lime; but, in time of plague, the dead bodies have been usually laid in a grave until it was sufficiently full, and then quick-lime has been laid over them to prevent pestilential exhalations, by hastening the decomposition of the infected corpses. This custom was continued, some years ago, in the cemeteries of Naples, and especially in the daily burial of the poor. Therefore, the skeletons found in the Inquisition of Rome could not belong to persons who had died a natural death in a hospital; nor could any one, under such a supposition, explain the mystery of all the body being buried in lime, with exception of the head. It remains, then, beyond doubt, that that subterranean vault contained the victims of one of the many secret martyrdoms of the butcherly Tribunal. The following is the most probable opinion, if it be not rather the history of a fact.

“The condemned were immersed in a bath of slaked lime, gradually filled up to their necks. The lime, by little and little, enclosed the sufferers, or walled them up all alive. The torment was extreme, but slow. As the lime rose higher and higher, the respiration of the victims became more and more painful, because more difficult. So that what with the suffocation of the smoke, and the anguish of a compressed breathing, they died in a manner most horrible and desperate. Some time after their death, the heads would naturally separate from the bodies, and roll away into the hollows left by the shrinking of the lime. Any other explanation of the fact that may be attempted, will be found improbable and unnatural.

“You may make any use of these notes of mine, in your publication, that you please, since I can warrant their truth. I wish that writers, speaking of this infamous Tribunal of the Inquisition, would derive their information from pure history, unmingled with romance; for so many and so great are the historical atrocities