

Source: Solomon Maimon, *Autobiography*, c. 1760-1765

Prince Radziwill [1734-1790] was, as Hettman [a general] in Poland and Voivode [a high official] in Lithuania, one of the greatest magnates, and as occupant of three inheritances in his family owned immense estates. ...

Once he sent for respectable Jewish barber, who, suspecting nothing but that he was wanted for some surgical operation, brought his instruments with him, and appeared before the prince.

“Have you brought your instruments with you?” he was asked. “Yes, Serene Highness” he replied. “Then,” said the prince, “give me a lancet, and I will open one of your veins.”

The poor barber had to submit. The prince seized the lancet; and as he did not know how to go about the operation, and beside his hand trembled as a result of his hard drinking, of course he wounded the barber in a pitiable manner. But his courtiers smiled their applause, and praised his great skill in surgery.

He went one day into a church, and being so drunk ... he stood against the altar, and commenced to pollute it. All who were present became horrified. Next morning when he was sober, the clergy brought to his mind the misdeed he had committed ... Thereupon he issued a command to the Jews of the place, to provide at their own expense, [1100 pounds] of wax for burning in the church. The poor Jews were therefore obliged to bring a sin-offering for the desecration of a Christian Church by a ... Catholic Christian.

Once he drove with the whole pomp of his court to a Jewish synagogue, and, without any one to this day knowing the reason, committed the greatest havoc, smashed windows and stoves, broke all the vessels, threw on the ground the copies of the Holy Scriptures kept in the ark, and so forth. A learned, pious Jew, who was present, ventured to lift one of these copies from the ground, and had the honor of being struck with a musket-ball by His Serene Highness' own hand. From here the train went to a second synagogue, where the same conduct was repeated, and from there they proceeded to the Jewish burial-place, where the buildings were demolished, and the monuments cast into the fire.