

Extract from

THE RISE

OF THE

DUTCH REPUBLIC:

A HISTORY

BY

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The 16th century Inquisition in the Netherlands.

PART OF CHAPTER III (p.164-175)

THE great cause of the revolt which, within a few years, was to break forth throughout the Netherlands, was the inquisition. It is almost puerile to look further or deeper, when such a source of convulsion lies at the very outset of any investigation. During the war there had been, for reasons already indicated, an occasional pause in the religious persecution. Philip had now returned to Spain, having arranged, with great precision, a comprehensive scheme for exterminating that religious belief which was already accepted by a very large portion of his Netherland subjects. From afar there rose upon the provinces the prophetic vision of a coming evil still more terrible than any which had yet oppressed them. As across the bright plains of Sicily, when the sun is rising, the vast pyramidal shadow of Mount Etna is definitely and visibly projected—the phantom of that ever-present enemy, which holds fire and devastation in its bosom—so, in the morning hour of Phillip's reign, the shadow of the inquisition was cast from afar across those warm and smiling provinces—a spectre menacing fiercer flames and wider desolation than those which mere physical agencies could ever compass.

There has been a good deal of somewhat superfluous discussion concerning the different kinds of inquisition. The distinction drawn between the papal, the episcopal, and the Spanish inquisitions, did not, in the sixteenth century, convince many unsophisticated minds of the merits of the establishment in any of

its shapes. However classified or entitled, it was a machine for inquiring into a man's thoughts, and for burning him if the result was not satisfactory.

The Spanish Inquisition, strictly so called, that is to say, the modern or later institution established by Pope Alexander the Sixth and Ferdinand the Catholic, was doubtless invested with a more complete apparatus for inflicting human misery, and for appalling human imagination, than any of the other less artfully arranged inquisitions, whether papal or episcopal. It had been originally devised for Jews or Moors, whom the Christianity of the age did not regard as human beings, but who could not be banished without depopulating certain districts. It was soon, however, extended from pagans to heretics. The Dominican Torquemada was the first Moloch to be placed upon this pedestal of blood and fire, and from that day forward the "Holy Office" was almost exclusively in the hand of that band of brothers. In the eighteen years of Torquemada's administration, ten thousand two hundred and twenty individuals were burned alive, and ninety seven thousand three hundred and twenty-one punished with infamy, confiscation of property, or perpetual imprisonment, so that the total number of families destroyed by this one friar alone amounted to one hundred and fourteen thousand four hundred and one.¹ In course of time the jurisdiction of the office was extended. It taught the savages of India and America to shudder at the name of Christianity. The fear of its introduction froze the earlier heretics of Italy, France, and Germany into orthodoxy. It was a court owning allegiance to no temporal authority, superior to all other tribunals. It was a bench of monks without appeal, having its familiars in every house, diving into the secrets of every fireside, judging and executing its horrible decrees without responsibility. It condemned not deeds, but thoughts. It affected to descend into individual conscience, and to punish the crimes which it pretended to discover. Its process was reduced to a horrible simplicity. It arrested on suspicion, tortured till confession, and then punished by fire. Two witnesses, and those to separate facts, were sufficient to consign the victim to a loathsome dungeon. Here he was sparingly supplied with food, forbidden to speak, or even to sing—to which pastime it could hardly be thought he would feel much inclination—and then left to himself, till famine and misery should break his spirit. When that time was supposed to have arrived he was examined. Did he confess, and forswear his heresy, whether actually innocent or not, he might then assume the sacred shirt, and escape with confiscation of all his property. Did he persist in the avowal of his innocence, two witnesses sent him to the stake, one witness to the rack. He was informed of the testimony against him, but never confronted with the witness. That accuser might be his son, father, or the wife of his bosom, for all were enjoined, under the death-penalty, to inform the inquisitors of every suspicions word which might fall from their nearest relatives. The indictment being thus supported, the prisoner was tried by torture. The rack was the court of justice; the criminal's only advocate was his fortitude—for the nominal counsellor, who was permitted no communication with the prisoner, and was furnished neither with documents nor with power to procure evidence, was a puppet, aggravating the lawlessness of the proceedings by the mockery of legal forms. The torture took place at midnight, in a gloomy dungeon, dimly lighted by torches. The victim—whether man, matron, or tender virgin—was stripped naked and stretched upon the wooden bench. Water, weights, fires, pulleys, screws—all the apparatus by which the sinews could be strained without cracking, the bones bruised without breaking, and the

body racked exquisitely without giving up its ghost—was now put into operation. The executioner, enveloped in a black robe from head to foot, with his eyes glaring at his victim through holes out in the hood which muffled his face, practised successively all the forms of torture which the devilish ingenuity of the monks had invented. The imagination sickens when striving to keep pace with these dreadful realities. Those who wish to indulge their curiosity, concerning the details of the system, may easily satisfy themselves at the present day. The flood of light, which has been poured upon the subject, more than justifies the horror and the rebellion of the Netherlanders.

The period during which torture might be inflicted from day to day was unlimited in duration. It could only be terminated by confession; so that the scaffold was the sole refuge from the rack. Individuals have borne the torture and the dungeon fifteen years, and have been burned at the stake at last.

Execution followed confession, but the number of condemned prisoners was allowed to accumulate, that a multitude of victims might grace each great gala-day. The *auto-da-fé* was a solemn festival. The monarch, the high functionaries of the land, the reverend clergy, the populace, regarded it as an inspiring and delightful recreation. When the appointed morning arrived, the victim was taken from his dungeon. He was then attired in a yellow robe without sleeves, like a herald's coat, embroidered all over with black figures of devils. A large conical paper mitre was placed upon his head, upon which was represented a human being in the midst of flames, surrounded by imps. His tongue was then painfully gagged, so that he could neither open nor shut his mouth. After he was thus accoutred, and just as he was leaving his cell, a breakfast, consisting of every delicacy, was placed before him, and he was urged, with ironical politeness, to satisfy his hunger. He was then led forth into the public square. The procession was formed with great pomp. It was headed by the little school children, who were immediately followed by the band of prisoners, each attired in the horrible yet ludicrous manner described. Then came the magistrates and nobility, the prelates and other dignitaries of the Church, the holy inquisitors, with their officials and familiars, followed, all on horseback, with the blond-red flag of the "sacred office" waving above them, blazoned upon either side with the portraits of Alexander and of Ferdinand, the pair of brothers who had established the institution. After the procession came the rabble. When all had reached the neighbourhood of the scaffold, and had been arranged in order, a sermon was preached to the assembled multitude. It was filled with laudations of the Inquisition, and with blasphemous revilings against the condemned prisoners. Then the sentences were read to the individual victims. Then the clergy chanted the fifty-first psalm, the whole vast throng uniting in one tremendous *miserere*. If a priest happened to be among the culprits, he was now stripped of the canonicals which he had hitherto worn, while his hands, lips, and shaven crown were scraped with a bit of glass, by which process the oil of his consecration was supposed to be removed. He was then thrown into the common herd. Those of the prisoners who were reconciled, and those whose execution was not yet appointed, were now separated from the others. The rest were compelled to mount a scaffold, where the executioner stood ready to conduct them to the fire. The inquisitors then delivered them into his hands, with an ironical request that he would deal with them tenderly, and without bloodletting or injury. Those who remained steadfast to the last were then burned at the stake; they who in the last extremity renounced

their faith were strangled before being thrown into the flames. Such was the Spanish Inquisition—technically so called. It was, according to the biographer of Philip the Second, a “heavenly remedy, a guardian angel of Paradise, a lion’s den in which Daniel and other just men could sustain no injury, but in which perverse sinners were torn to pieces.”² It was a tribunal superior to all human law, without appeal, and certainly owing no allegiance to the powers of earth or heaven. No rank, high or humble, was safe from its jurisdiction. The royal family were not sacred, nor the pauper’s hovel. Even death afforded no protection. The Holy Office invaded the prince in his palace and the beggar in his shroud. The corpses of dead heretics were mutilated and burned. The inquisitors preyed upon carcasses and rifled graves. A gorgeous festival of the Holy Office had, as we have seen, welcomed Philip to his native land. The news of these tremendous *autos-da-fé*, in which so many illustrious victims had been sacrificed before their sovereign’s eyes, had reached the Netherlands almost simultaneously with the bulls creating the new bishoprics in the provinces. It was not likely that the measure would be rendered more palatable by this intelligence of the royal amusements.³

The *Spanish* Inquisition had never flourished in any soil but that of the peninsula. It is possible that the King and Granvelle were sincere in their protestations of entertaining no intention of introducing it into the Netherlands, although the protestations of such men are entitled to but little weight. The truth was, that the inquisition existed already in the provinces. It was the main object of the government to confirm and extend the institution. The Episcopal Inquisition, as we have already seen, had been enlarged by the enormous increase in the number of bishops, each of whom was to be head inquisitor in his diocese, with two special inquisitors under him. With this apparatus and with the edicts, as already described, it might seem that enough had already been done for the suppression of heresy. But more had been done. A regular Papal Inquisition also existed in the Netherlands. This establishment, like the edicts, was the gift of Charles the Fifth. A word of introduction is here again necessary—nor let the reader deem that too much time is devoted to this painful subject. On the contrary, no definite idea can be formed as to the character of the Netherland revolt without a thorough understanding of this great cause—the religious persecution in which the country had stood, breathed, and had its being, for half a century, and in which, had the rebellion not broken out at last, the population must have been either exterminated or entirely embruted. The few years which are immediately to occupy us in the present and succeeding chapter, present the country in a daily increasing ferment from the action of causes which had existed long before, but which received an additional stimulus as the policy of the new reign developed itself.

Previously to the accession of Charles V., it cannot be said that an inquisition had ever been established in the provinces. Isolated instances to the contrary, adduced by the canonists who gave their advice to Margaret of Parma, rather proved the absence than the existence of the system.⁴ In the reign of Philip the Good, the vicar of the inquisitor-general gave sentence against some heretics, who were burned in Lille (1443). In 1459, Pierre Troussart, a Jacobin monk, condemned many Waldenses, together with some leading citizens of Artois, accused of sorcery and heresy. He did this, however, as inquisitor for the Bishop of Arras, so that it was an act of Episcopal, and not Papal Inquisition.⁵ In general, when inquisitors were wanted in the provinces, it was necessary to

borrow them from France or Germany. The exigencies of persecution making a domestic staff desirable, Charles the Fifth, in the year 1522, applied to his ancient tutor, whom he had placed on the papal throne.⁶

Charles had, however, already, in the previous year, appointed Francis Van der Hulst to be inquisitor-general for the Netherlands.⁷ This man, whom Erasmus called a “wonderful enemy to learning,” was also provided with a coadjutor, Nicholas of Egmond by name, a Carmelite monk, who was characterised by the same authority as “a madman armed with a sword.” The inquisitor-general received full powers to cite, arrest, imprison, torture heretics without observing the ordinary forms of law, and to cause his sentences to be executed without appeal.⁸ He was, however, in pronouncing definite judgments, to take the advice of Laurens, president of the grand council of Mechlin, a coarse, cruel, and ignorant man, who “hated learning with a more than deadly hatred”⁹ and who might certainly be relied upon to sustain the severest judgments which the inquisitor might fulminate. Adrian accordingly commissioned Van der Hulst to be universal and general inquisitor for all the Netherlands.¹⁰ At the same time it was expressly stated that his functions were not to supersede those exercised by the bishops as inquisitors in their own sees. Thus the Papal Inquisition was established in the provinces. Van der Hulst, a person of infamous character, was not the man to render the institution less odious than it was by its nature. Before he had fulfilled his duties two years, however, he was degraded from his office by the Emperor for having forged a document.¹¹ In 1525, Buedens, Houseau, and Coppin were confirmed by Clement the Seventh as inquisitors in the room of Van der Hulst. In 1537 Ruard Tapper and Michael Drutius were appointed by Paul the Third, on the decease of Coppin, the other two remaining in office. The powers of the papal inquisitors had been gradually extended, and they were, by 1545, not only entirely independent of the Episcopal Inquisition, but had acquired right of jurisdiction over bishops and archbishops, whom they were empowered to arrest and imprison. They had also received and exercised the privilege of appointing delegates, or sub-inquisitors, on their own authority. Much of the work was, indeed, performed by these officials, the most notorious of whom were Barbier, De Monte, Titelmann, Fabry, Campo de Zon, and Stryen.¹² In 1545, and again in 1550, a stringent set of instructions was drawn up by the Emperor for the guidance of these papal inquisitors. A glance at their context shows that the establishment was not intended to be an empty form.

They were empowered to inquire, proceed against, and chastise all heretics, all persons suspected of heresy, and their protectors.¹³ Accompanied by a notary, they were to collect written information concerning every person in the provinces, “infected or vehemently suspected.” They were authorised to summon all subjects of his Majesty, whatever their rank, quality, or station, and to compel them to give evidence, or to communicate suspicions. They were to punish all who pertinaciously refused such depositions with death. The Emperor commanded his presidents, judges, sheriffs, and all other judicial and executive officers to render all “assistance to the inquisitors and their familiars in their holy and pious Inquisition, whenever required so to do;” on pain of being punished as encouragers of heresy—that is to say, with death. Whenever the inquisitors should be satisfied as to the heresy of any individual, they were to order his arrest and detention by the judge of the place, or by others arbitrarily to be selected by them. The judges or persons thus chosen were enjoined to

fulfil the order, on pain of being punished as protectors of heresy—that is to say, with death, by sword or fire. If the prisoner were an ecclesiastic, the inquisitor was to deal summarily with the case,” without noise or form in the process—selecting an imperial councillor to render the sentence of absolution or condemnation.”¹⁴ If the prisoner were a lay person, the inquisitor was to order his punishment, according to the edicts, by the council of the province. In case of lay persons suspected but not convicted of heresy, the inquisitor was to proceed to their chastisement, “with the advice of a counsellor or some other expert.” In conclusion, the Emperor ordered the “inquisitors to make it known that they were not doing their own work, but that of Christ, and to persuade all persons of this fact.”¹⁵ This clause of their instruction seemed difficult of accomplishment, for no reasonable person could doubt that Christ, had he reappeared in human form, would have been instantly crucified again, or burned alive in any place within the dominions of Charles or Philip. The blasphemy with which the name of Jesus was used by such men to sanctify all these nameless horrors, is certainly not the least of their crimes.

In addition to these instructions, a special edict had been issued on the 26th April 1550, according to which all judicial officers, at the requisition of the inquisitors, were to render them all assistance in the execution of their office, by arresting and detaining all persons suspected of heresy, according to the instructions issued to said inquisitors; and this, *notwithstanding any privileges or charters to the contrary*.¹⁶ In short, the inquisitors were not subject to the civil authority, but the civil authority to them. The imperial edict empowered them “to chastise, degrade, denounce, and deliver over heretics to the secular judges for punishment; to make use of gaols, and to make arrests, without ordinary warrant, but merely with notice given to a single counsellor, *who was obliged to pass sentence according to their desire*, without application to the ordinary judge.”¹⁷

These instructions to the inquisitors had been renewed and confirmed by Philip, *in the very first month of his reign*¹⁸ (28th Nov. 1555). As in the case of the edicts, it had been thought desirable by Granvelle to make use of the supposed magic of the Emperor’s name to hallow the whole machinery of persecution. The action of the system, during the greater part of the imperial period had been terrible. Suffered for a time to languish during the French war, it had lately been renewed with additional vigour. Among all the inquisitors, the name of Peter Titelmann was now pre-eminent. He executed his infamous functions through out Flanders, Douay, and Tournay, the most thriving and populous portions of the Netherlands, with a swiftness, precision, and even with a jocularity which hardly seemed human. There was a kind of grim humour about the man. Contemporary chronicles give a picture of him as of some grotesque yet terrible goblin, careering through the country by night or day, alone, on horseback, smiting the trembling peasants on the head with a great club, spreading dismay far and wide, dragging suspected persons from their fire-sides or their beds, and thrusting them into dungeons, arresting, torturing, strangling, burning, with hardly the shadow of warrant, information, or process.¹⁹

The secular sheriff, familiarly called Red-Rod, from the colour of his wand of office, meeting this inquisitor Titelmann one day upon the high road, thus wonderingly addressed him:—“How can you venture to go about alone, or at most with an attendant or two, arresting people on every aide, while I dare not

attempt to execute my office, except at the head of a strong force, armed in proof; and then only at the peril of my life?"

"Ah! Red-Rod," answered Peter, jocosely, "you deal with bad people. I have nothing to fear, for I seize only the innocent and virtuous, who make no resistance, and let themselves be taken like lambs."

"Mighty well," said the other; "but if you arrest all the good people and I all the bad, 'tis difficult to say who in the world is to escape chastisement."²⁰ The reply of the inquisitor has not been recorded, but there is no doubt that he proceeded like a strong man to run his day's course.

He was the most active of all the agents in the religious persecution at the epoch of which we are now treating, but he had been inquisitor for many years. The martyrology of the provinces reeks with his murders. He burned men for idle words or suspected thoughts; he rarely waited, according to his frank confession, for deeds. Hearing once that a certain schoolmaster, named Geleyn de Muler of Audenarde, "*was addicted to reading the Bible,*" he summoned the culprit before him and accused him of heresy. The schoolmaster claimed, if he were guilty of any crime, to be tried before the judges of his town. "You are my prisoner," said Titelmann, "and are to answer me and none other." The inquisitor proceeded accordingly to catechise him, and soon satisfied himself of the schoolmaster's heresy. He commanded him to make immediate recantation. The schoolmaster refused. "Do you not love your wife and children?" asked the demoniac Titelmann. "God knows," answered the heretic, "that if the whole world were of gold, and my own, I would give it all only to have them with me, even had I to live on bread and water and in bondage." "You have then," answered the inquisitor, "only to renounce the error of your opinions." "Neither for wife, children, nor all the world, can I renounce my God and religious truth," answered the prisoner. Thereupon Titelmann sentenced him to the stake. He was strangled, and then thrown into the flames.²¹

At about the same time, Thomas Calberg, tapestry weaver, of Tournay, within the jurisdiction of the same inquisitor, was convicted of having copied some hymns from a book printed in Geneva. He was burned alive.²² Another man, whose name has perished, was hacked to death with seven blows of a rusty sword, in presence of his wife, who was so horror stricken that she died on the spot before her husband.²³ His crime, to be sure, was Anabaptism, the most deadly offence in the calendar. In the same year, one Walter Kapell was burned at the stake for heretical opinions.²⁴ He was a man of some property, and beloved by the poor people of Dixmuyde, in Flanders, where he resided, for his many charities. A poor idiot, who had been often fed by his bounty, called out to the inquisitor's subalterns, as they bound his patron to the stake, "Ye are bloody murderers; that man has done no wrong; but has given me bread to eat." With these words, he cast himself headlong into the flames to perish with his protector, but was with difficulty rescued by the officers.²⁵ A day or two afterwards, he made his way to the stake, where the half-burnt skeleton of Walter Kapell still remained, took the body upon his shoulders, and carried it through the streets to the house of the chief burgomaster, where several other magistrates happened then to be in session. Forcing his way into their presence, he laid his burden at their feet, crying, "There, murderers! ye have eaten his flesh, now eat his bones."²⁶ It has not been recorded whether Titelmann sent him to keep company with his friend in the next world. The fate of so obscure a victim could hardly find room on the crowded pages of the Netherland martyrdom.

This kind of work, which went on daily, did not increase the love of the people for the Inquisition or the edicts. It terrified many, but it inspired more with that noble resistance to oppression, particularly to religious oppression, which is the sublimest instinct of human nature. Men confronted the terrible inquisitors with a courage equal to their cruelty. At Tournay, one of the chief cities of Titelmann's district, and almost before his eyes, was Bertrand le Blas, a velvet manufacturer, committed what was held an almost incredible crime. Having begged his wife and children to pray for a blessing upon what he was about to undertake, he went on Christmas-day to the Cathedral of Tournay, and stationed himself near the altar. Having awaited the moment in which the priest held on high the consecrated host, Le Bas then forced his way through the crowd, snatched the wafer from the hands of the astonished ecclesiastic, and broke it into bits, crying aloud, as he did so, "Misguided men, do ye take this thing to be Jesus Christ, your Lord and Saviour?" With these words, he threw the fragments on the ground and trampled them with his feet.²⁷ The amazement and horror were so universal at such an appalling offence, that not a finger was raised to arrest the criminal. Priests and congregation were alike paralysed, so that he would have found no difficulty in making his escape. He did not stir, however; he had come to the church determined to execute what he considered a sacred duty, and to abide the consequences. After a time he was apprehended. The inquisitor demanded if he repented of what he had done. He protested, on the contrary, that he gloried in the deed, and that he would die a hundred deaths to rescue from such daily profanation the name of his Redeemer, Christ. He was then put thrice to the torture, that he might be forced to reveal his accomplices. It did not seem in human power for one man to accomplish such a deed of darkness without confederates. Bertrand had none, however, and could denounce none. A frantic sentence was then devised as a feeble punishment for so much wickedness. He was dragged on a hurdle, with his mouth closed with an iron gag, to the market place. Here his right hand and foot were burned and twisted off between two red hot irons. His tongue was then torn out by the roots, and because he still endeavoured to call upon the name of God the iron gag was again applied. With his arms and legs fastened together behind his back, he was then hooked by the middle of his body to an iron chain, and made to swing to and fro over a slow fire till he was entirely roasted, His life lasted almost to the end of these ingenious tortures, but his fortitude lasted as long as his life.²⁸

In the next year, Titelmann caused one Robert Ogier, of Ryssel, in Flanders, to be arrested, together with his wife and two sons. Their crime consisted in not going to mass, and in practising private worship at home. They confessed the offence, for they protested that they could not endure to see the profanation of their Saviour's name in the idolatrous sacraments. They were asked what rites they practised in their own house. One of the sons, a mere boy, answered, "We fall on our knees, and pray to God that He may enlighten our hearts, and forgive our sins. We pray for our sovereign, that his reign may be prosperous, and his life peaceful. We also pray for the magistrates and others in authority, that God may protect and preserve them all." The boy's simple eloquence drew tears even from the eyes of some of his judges; for the inquisitor had placed the case before the civil tribunal. The father and eldest son were, however, condemned to the flames. "O God!" prayed the youth at the stake, "Eternal Father, accept the sacrifice of our lives, in the name of Thy beloved Son." "Thou liest, scoundrel!" fiercely interrupted a monk, who was lighting the fire; "God is not

your father; ye are the devil's children." As the flames rose about them, the boy cried out once more, "Look, my father, all heaven is opening, and I see ten hundred thousand angels rejoicing over us. Let us be glad, for we are dying for the truth." "Thou liest! thou liest!" again screamed the monk; "all hell is opening, and you see ten thousand devils thrusting you into eternal fire." Eight days afterwards, the wife of Ogier and his other son were burned; so that there was an end of that family.²⁹

Such are a few isolated specimens of the manner of proceeding in a single district of the Netherlands. The inquisitor Titelmann certainly deserved his terrible reputation. Men called him Saul the Persecutor, and it was well known that he had been originally tainted with the heresy which he had, for so many years, been furiously chastising.³⁰ At the epoch which now engages our attention, he felt stimulated by the avowed policy of the government to fresh exertions, by which all his previous achievements should be cast into the shade. In one day he broke into a house in Ryssel, seized John de Swarte, his wife and four children, together with two newly-married couples, and two other persons, convicted them of reading the Bible, and of praying in their own doors, and had them all immediately burned.³¹

Are these things related merely to excite superfluous horror? Are the sufferings of these obscure Christians beneath the dignity of history? Is it not better to deal with murder and oppression in the abstract, without entering into trivial details? The answer is, that these things *are* the history of the Netherlands at this epoch; that these hideous details furnish the causes of that immense movement, out of which a great republic was born and an ancient tyranny destroyed; and that Cardinal Granvelle was ridiculous when he asserted that the people would not open their mouths if the seigniors did not make such a noise. Because the great lords "owed their very souls"³²—because convulsions might help to pay their debts, and furnish forth their masquerades and banquets—because the Prince of Orange was ambitious, and Egmont jealous of the Cardinal—therefore superficial writers found it quite natural that the country should be disturbed, although that "vile and mischievous animal, the people," might have no objection to a continuance of the system which had been at work so long. On the contrary, it was exactly because the movement was a popular and a religious movement that it will always retain its place among the most important events of history. Dignified documents, state papers, solemn treaties, are often of no more value than the lambskin on which they are engrossed. Ten thousand nameless victims, in the cause of religious and civil freedom, may build up great states and alter the aspect of a whole continents.

The nobles, no doubt, were conspicuous, and it is well for the cause of the right that, as in the early hours of English liberty, the cross and mitre were opposed by the baron's sword and shield. Had all the seigniors made common cause with Philip and Granvelle, instead of setting their breasts against the Inquisition, the cause of truth and liberty would have been still more desperate. Nevertheless they were directed and controlled, under Providence, by humbler, but more powerful agencies than their own.

Nor is it, perhaps, always better to rely upon abstract phraseology to produce a necessary impression. Upon some minds, declamation concerning liberty of conscience and religious tyranny makes but a vague impression, while an effect may be produced upon them, for example, by a dry, concrete, cynical entry in an account book, such as the following, taken at hazard from the register of mu-

nicipal expenses at Tournay, during the years with which we are now occupied:³³

“To Mr Jacques Barra, executioner, for having tortured, twice, Jean de Lannoy, ten sous.

“To the same, for having executed, by fire, said Lannoy, sixty sous. For having thrown his cinders into the river, eight sous.”³⁴

This was the treatment to which thousands had been subjected in the provinces. Men, women, and children were burned, and their “cinders” thrown away, for idle words against Rome, spoken years before,³⁵ for praying alone in their closets, for not kneeling to a wafer when they met it in the streets,³⁶ for thoughts to which they had never given utterance, but which, on inquiry, they were too honest to deny. Certainly with this work going on year after year in every city in the Netherlands, and now set into renewed and vigorous action by a man who wore a crown only that he might the better torture his fellow-creatures, it was time that the very stones in the streets should be moved to mutiny.

Thus it may be seen of how much value were the protestations of Philip and of Granvelle, on which much stress has latterly been laid, that it was not their intention to introduce the Spanish Inquisition. With the edicts and the Netherland Inquisition, such as we have described them, the step was hardly necessary.

In fact, the main difference between the two institutions consisted in the greater efficiency of the Spanish in discovering such of its victims as were disposed to deny their faith. Devised originally for more timorous and less conscientious infidels who were often disposed to skulk in obscure places, and to renounce without really abandoning their errors, it was provided with a set of venomous familiars who glided through every chamber and coiled themselves at every fireside. The secret details of each household in the realm being therefore known to the Holy Office and to the monarch, no infidel or heretic could escape discovery. This invisible machinery was less requisite for the Netherlands. There was comparatively little difficulty in ferreting out the “vermin”³⁷—to use the expression of a Walloon historian of that age so that it was only necessary to maintain in good working order the apparatus for destroying the noxious creatures when unearthed. The heretics of the provinces assembled at each other’s houses to practise those rights described in such simple language by Baldwin Ogior, and denounced under such horrible penalties by the edicts. The inquisitorial system of Spain was hardly necessary for men who had but little prudence in concealing, and no inclination to disavow their creed. “It is quite a laughable matter,” wrote Granvelle, who occasionally took a comic view of the Inquisition, “that the King should send us depositions made in Spain by which we are to hunt for heretics here, as if we did not know of thousands already. Would that I had as many doubloons of annual income,” he added, “as there are public and professed heretics in the provinces.”³⁸ No doubt the Inquisition was in such eyes a most desirable establishment. “To speak without passion,” says the Walloon, “the Inquisition well administered is a laudable institution, and not less necessary than all the other offices of spirituality and temporality belonging both to the bishops and to the commissioners of the Roman see.”³⁹ The Papal and Episcopal establishments, in co-operation with the edicts, were enough, if thoroughly exercised and completely extended. The edicts alone were sufficient. “The edicts and the Inquisition are one and the same thing,”⁴⁰ said the Prince of Orange. The circumstance, that the civil au-

thorities were not as entirely superseded by the Netherland as by the Spanish system, was rather a difference of form than of fact. We have seen that the secular officers of justice were at the command of the inquisitors. Sheriff, gaoler, judge, and hangman, were all required, under the most terrible penalties, to do their bidding. The reader knows what the edicts were. He knows also the instructions to the corps of Papal inquisitors, delivered by Charles and Philip. He knows that Philip, both in person and by letter, had done his utmost to sharpen those instructions, during the latter portion of his sojourn in the Netherlands. Fourteen new bishops, each with two special inquisitors under him, had also been appointed to carry out the great work to which the sovereign had consecrated his existence. This manner in which the hunters of heretics performed their office has been exemplified by slightly sketching the career of a single one of the sub-inquisitors, Peter Titelmann. The monarch and his ministers scarcely needed, therefore, to transplant the peninsular exotic. Why should they do so? Philip, who did not often say a great deal in a few words, once expressed the whole truth of the matter in a single sentence: "Wherefore introduce the Spanish Inquisition?" said he; "the Inquisition of *the Netherlands is much more pitiless than that of Spain.*"⁴¹

Such was the system of religious persecution commenced by Charles, and perfected by Philip. The King could not claim the merit of the invention, which justly belonged to the Emperor. At the same time, his responsibility for the unutterable woe caused by the continuance of the scheme is not a jot diminished. There was a time when the whole system had fallen into comparative desuetude. It was utterly abhorrent to the institutions and the manners of the Netherlanders. Even a great number of the Catholics in the provinces were averse to it. Many of the leading grandees, every one of whom was Catholic, were foremost in denouncing its continuance. In short, the Inquisition had been partially endured, but never accepted. Moreover, it had never been introduced into Luxemburg or Gröningen.⁴² In Gelderland it had been prohibited by the treaty⁴³ through which that province had been annexed to the Emperor's dominions, and it had been uniformly and successfully resisted in Brabant. Therefore, although Philip, taking the artful advice of Granvelle, had sheltered himself under the Emperor's name by re-enacting, word for word, his decrees, and reissuing his instructions, he cannot be allowed any such protection at the bar of history.

FOOTNOTES

¹ Llorente, i, 280.

² "Lago de los leones de Daniel que a los justos no hazen mal, ci despedaçan los obsti nados impenitentes pecadores, *remedio del cielo iAngel de la guarda del Paraiso,*" etc.—. Cabrera, v. 236.

³ Bor, iii. 113-119; who had used the works of his contemporaries, Gonsalvo Montano and Giorgio Nigrino; Hoofd, i. 30—84. Compare Llorente, Hist. Crit. de l'Inquis. particularly i chap. 8 and 9, and iv. C. 46; Van der Vynckt, i. 200- 238; Hopper, p. ii. c. 9; Grot. Ann., i. 14, 15.

⁴ Histoire des causes de la désunion, ré voltee et altérations dee Pays Bas depsis l'abdication de Charles Quint en 1555 juequ'S la more do Prince do Parme en 1592. Par Messire Ronom de

France, Chevalier, Seigneur de Noyelles, President d'Artois.-- MS. Bibl. de Bourgogns, i. chap. 5. et 7.

This important historical work, by a noble of the Walloon provinces, and a contemporary of the events he describes, has never been published. The distinguished H. Dunortier, of the Commission Royale d'Histoire," has long promised an edition which cannot fail to be as satisfactory as learning and experience can make it. The work is of considerable length, in five manuscript folio volumes. It was written mainly from the papers of Councillor d'Assonleville. The almost complete revelations of state secrets in the inestimable publications of the Simancas Correspondence, by M. Gachard, has deprived the work, however, of a large portion of its value. On the subject of national politics and the general condition of the country, the writer cannot for a moment be compared to Bor, in erudition, patience, or fulness of detail. He is a warm Catholic, but his style has not a tittle of the vividly descriptive and almost dramatic power of Pontus Payen, another contemporary Catholic historian, who well deserves publication.

⁵ Renom de France MS., ubi sup.

⁶ Ibid. Introduction to Gachard, Correspondance to Philippe II. vol. i.

⁷ By commission, 23d April, 1522. Gachard. Introduction Philippe II., cix.

⁸ Gachard. Introduction, etc., cix.

⁹ Expression of Erasmus. Brandt. Reformatie, i. 93.

¹⁰ By brief, June, 1523. Gachard. Introd. Philippe II., i. cxi.

¹¹ Gachard. Introduction Philippe II., i. cxi.

¹² Ibid., cxiv.

¹³ See the instructions in Van der Haer. i, 161—175.

¹⁴ "Summatim et de plano sine figura et stropitu iudicii et processu instructo," etc.—Van der Haer, 168.

¹⁵ In hoc præcipue laborabunt dicti inquisitores—ut omnibus persuadeant, so non quæ sua sunt, sed quæ sunt Christi quærere, hoc solum conartes. "—V. d. Haer, 173

¹⁶ Brandt, Hist. Reformatie, i. 158.

¹⁷ Meteren, ii, 37.

¹⁸ Van der Haer, 175.

¹⁹ Brandt, i. 228; 168, et passim. Kock, Vaderl, Worterbuch. art, Titelmann—Compare the brilliantly. written episode of *Professor Altmeyer: Une succursale du tribunal de sang*" (Brux., 1853), p. 37, 38.

²⁰ Brandt. Hist. der Reformatio i. 228.

²¹ Hist. des Martyrs, f. 227, clxvii. apud Brandt, i. 168,

²² Brandt, i. 169.

²³ Hist. der Doopsg. Mart., p. 229; apud Brandt, i. 167.

²⁴ Hist. der Doopsg. Mart., 229, ii. 848, apud Brandt, i. 167.

²⁵ Hist. der Doopsg. Mart., 229, ii. 849 apud Brandt, i. 167

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Histoire des Martyrs, f. 356, cxcv.; apud Brandt, i. 171, 172. It may be well supposed that this would be regarded as a crime of almost inconceivable magnitude. It was death even to refuse to kneel in the streets when the wafer was carried by. Thus, for example, a poor huckster, named Simon, at Bergen-op-Zoom, who neglected to prostrate himself before his booth at the passage of the host, was immediately burned. Instances of the same punishment for that offence might be multiplied. In this particular case, it is recorded that the sheriff who was present at the execution was so much affected by the courage and fervour of the simple minded victim, that he went home, took to his bed, became delirious, crying constantly, Ah, Simon! Simon! and died miserably, “notwithstanding all that the monks could do to console him.”—Hist. des Doopsg. Mart. ii. 849, ccxxx.; apud Brandt, i. 107

²⁸ Hist. des Martyrs, 356, cxcv. ; apud Brandt, i. 171, 172.—De Ia Barre. Recueil des actes et choses plus notables qui sont advenues es Pays-Bas.—MS, in the Brussels Archives, f. 16.

²⁹ Hist. des Martyrs, 233, 385, 387, 388; apud Brandt, i. 193—197.

³⁰ Jacobus Kok. Vaderlandsche Woordenboek, t. 27; art. Titelman.

³¹ Brandt i, 259,

³² Papiers d’Etat, vii. 51. “Deven todos el alma.”

³³ Gachard, Rapport concernant les Archives de Lille. 87.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Brandt, i. 243.

³⁶ Ibid., i. passim.

³⁷ Renom de France, i. 13. MS.

³⁸ “Si lo osasse dezir, es *cosa de risa* embiarnos deposiciones que se hazen ay delante, etc.—y *turiessa yo* tantos doblones de à 10 de renta como los hay publicos hereges,” etc.—Papiers d’Etat, vii. 105—107.

³⁹ Renom de France, i. 8. MS.

⁴⁰ Groen v. P. Archives et Correspondance, iii. 29.

⁴¹ “D’ailleurs l’Inquisition des Pays-Bas est plus impitoyable que celle d’Espagne.”—Letter to Margaret of Parma. Correspondance de Philippe II., i. 207.

⁴² Gachard. Introduction to Philippe II., i. 123, iv.

⁴³ Ibid.