

ry, Dr. Ludwig Kellar, archivist of Munster, says: "The more I examine the documents of the time at my command, the more I am astonished at the diffusion of Anabaptist views, an extent of which no other investigator has had any knowledge," and he further says: "The coast cities of the North Sea and East Sea from Flanders to Dantzic were filled with Anabaptists." In 1530 there were scarcely a village in the Netherlands where they were not found. One hundred and fifty years later, a writer on "The Religion of the Dutch" divides the population of Holland into three parts—Reformed, Roman Catholics, and Anabaptists. And the descendants of the latter people must, to a great extent, have remained the working classes of Holland, for their creed cut them off from ascending to the ruling class, if it had been easy, which it was not. "It is not lawful," they said, "for Christians to swear, to exercise any charge of civil magistracy, or to make use of the sword, not even to punish the wicked, or to oppose force with force, or to engage in a war upon any account or occasion."

The Anabaptists suffered, not only for their attitude of reproof to all who took the sword of authority, but also for the terror with which in the Peasaut Revolt, and in the fanatical outbreak at Munster, their predecessors had inspired the rulers. Their martyrology is full of touching incidents, some of which occurred in Rotterdam. In 1539 Anna Pauzen, returning from England, where she had fled, was denounced for having sung a hymn. On her way to prison she asked a baker in the crowd to take charge of her infant. The child bore the name of Jessias de Lind, and lived to become burgomaster. Its mother was drowned in company with another woman, the betrayer throwing herself into the water immediately after. About the same time several men were beheaded, and other women were drowned. One of the latter was a girl of fourteen, who, among other things said: "I will risk my body and my goods, I will deny my friends and give up all for Jesus' sake." The elevation of soul which enabled these poor people to face their dreadful fate comes out in another woman, thus murdered, who left four children, to whom she wrote a long letter, containing this prayer:—

"O holy Father, sanctify the children of Thy servant in Thy truth, and preserve them from all evil and injustice for the sake of Thy holy Name. O Almighty Father, I commit them to Thee for they are Thy creatures, take care of them for they are the work of Thy hands. Let them walk in Thy ways. Amen."

In 1558 the Rotterdam people rose in rebellion against these atrocities. The executioner doing his work very slowly, the crowd got exasperated, and, proceeding from one point to another, drove away the judge and his officers, stormed the prison, and delivered all who were to have been burnt. Thus it is clear the Rotterdam people were much affect-

ed with Anabaptist views, and that even when in religious profession they were Roman Catholics or Reformed. A proof that this sympathy was common to the townsfolk is the way the Rotterdam authorities intervened on behalf of Anabaptists badly treated in Switzerland. They addressed a long letter to the Council at Berne, entreating them to do justice to their Mennonite subjects, and assuring them that they had no cause to regret the liberty which had been accorded to Anabaptists in Holland, through the inflexible determination of William of Orange, and that notwithstanding the opposition of the most powerful of his followers. The great leader in the War of Independence seems to have understood what later represented the heart and soul of the people. They, on their part, had the true instinct of national life, recognizing in William of Orange a heaven-sent protector. When they brought him their contributions towards the struggle, he asked them if they made any demand. "None," they replied, "but the friendship of your grace, if God grants you the government of the Netherlands." This friendship, continued by Prince Maurice, secured the Mennonites toleration, and they seemed to have recovered their numbers, which had been thinned by persecution.

At the close of the seventeenth century the cities of the Netherlands were full of Mennonites, who had their public assemblies, and an absolute liberty of exercising their religion.

This alliance between the house of Orange and the people of the United Provinces was a necessity under a constitution which permitted the entire domination of the States to fall into the hands of the influential citizens of the towns.

As every city was, like every province, a State in itself, the United Provinces formed a federation of independent communities, each ruled by a few families, strong in their common interests, and their complete knowledge of the management of public affairs. In Overijssel, Groningen, and Middleburg, the inhabitants had some part in the election of their rulers, but in Utrecht and in Holland generally the rulers recruited themselves with the help of a small number of privileged electors to whom they gave a share of the official sweets.

The dislike of the Dutch people to the oligarchy displayed itself effectively during the minority of William III., afterwards king of England under the same title. The oligarchy had completed its own power by suppressing the stadtholderate altogether. In 1658 there was great popular agitation at Rotterdam, the prince's party being so strong that the regents could not prevent it making levies on the fleet. In 1672 there was a general rising in Holland; and in Rotterdam, by the complicity of the city guard, the Orange party surrounded the great church of St. Lawrence during worship, compelling the citizens as they came out to declare for the prince or the States. The result was a demand for the nomination of a

stadtholder and the hoisting of the Orange flag on St. Lawrence's, an intimation being conveyed to the members of the City Council that their houses would be destroyed if they did not sanction the resolution. With one or two exceptions they obeyed, and it was next morning conveyed to the prince.

Thus urged, the deputies of Rotterdam took the lead in proposing to the States-General the restoration of the stadtholderate, and the Prince of Orange was elected under the style and title of William III. But the people, suspicious of the influence of the party which had ruled so long, wished to purify the State of all its adherents, and the hostility between the latter and the Dutch democracy may be gathered from the words of a contemporary: "There are people who, considering that foreign domination is far less intolerable than an anarchy, and that the tyranny of the populace is the most unsupportable of all domination, would have better liked to submit themselves to France than to remain exposed to the insolence of an insurrectionary and furious rabble."

The residence of William III. in England had a serious effect on this popular attachment to the house of Orange, and under his successors that attachment grew weaker and weaker. In the later half of the eighteenth century the Republicans became the real national party. An insurrection in 1787, suppressed by the assistance of the king of Prussia, gave warning of the change that had taken place in the popular mind, and when, towards the close of 1794, the French revolutionary army, under Pichegru, menaced Holland, the stadtholder found himself deserted, and the proposal to flood the country, as on former occasions when the national independence was at stake, energetically opposed by the Dutch people. The nearer the French armies drew to the confines of the United Provinces, the bolder and more explicit was the avowal of the people at large of a determined partiality in their favor. So much, indeed, was this the case, that the stadtholder's own party was itself affected, and could not resist the general enthusiasm. A severe winter enabled Pichegru to enter Holland over the icebound rivers; the French armies entered Rotterdam on January 20, and Amsterdam on the twenty-second. Scenes of popular rejoicing occurred, recalling the great days of the French Revolution. The writer possesses two large prints of the time, representing the great square in front of the Town Hall at Amsterdam filled with thousands of people, mostly of the humbler classes. A circle of men, women, and children are dancing round a pole surmounted by the cap of Liberty, and several smaller parties are engaged in other parts of the square in the same festive manner. This change of feeling towards the house of Orange shows that its former basis had been the belief the people entertained that it was their best palladium against tyranny, that with reference to their rights it would fulfil its motto,