

# THE PRESBYTERIAN AND REFORMED REVIEW

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I.

## CALVINISM AND CONFSSIONAL REVISION.\*

OUR brethren in America cannot sufficiently realize to what an extent they have excited the interest of the Dutch Calvinists by their efforts to reach a revision of their ecclesiastical symbols. There are three causes to which this interest is due. First of all, the remembrance of the ever-memorable fact that the first Reformed Christians to set foot on American soil embarked for the New World from the Netherlands. On this account Dutch Calvinists still feel a most intimate bond of sympathy with the Reformed in America, and thank God for each token of brotherly affection by which the latter country has so repeatedly strengthened this deep-rooted attachment. In the second place, the Dutch Calvinists have hailed with great enthusiasm the development of American Church-life as called forth by the principle of a *Free Church*, and emulate their brethren in America in their strenuous efforts to make this only true principle victorious in the Old World as well. To which must be thirdly added that the Dutch Calvinists fully share the conviction of their American brethren, that the symbols of the sixteenth century were the product of a battle of spirits somewhat different from that in which the Church is engaged at present, and cannot consequently inspire us with the same enthusiasm with which they stirred the race of our fathers. For such reasons we feel ourselves closely allied with our American brethren as fellow-members of the one great international Reformed Church, and when tidings of revision are being wafted across the sea, we cannot help reflecting prayer-

\* [Our readers are indebted to Prof. Geerhardus Vos, Ph.D., of Grand Rapids, Mich., for the translation of Dr. Kuyper's paper.—EDITORS.]

## II.

### THE "CHAMBRE ARDENTE" AND FRENCH PROTESTANTISM UNDER HENRY II.

THE researches among the judicial archives of his country, of which M. Weiss gives us the fruits in the handsome volume before us,\* have been crowned with signal and, we may say, unexpected success. They have brought to light documents of great value that had been long sought for in vain, and were supposed to have perished; and they have thus shed a welcome light upon a somewhat obscure portion of the history of the reformatory movement in France, including the three years immediately following the accession of Henry II.

The reign of his father, the brilliant Francis I, was a period of strange vicissitudes and rare contradictions. The founder of a new royal line, assuming the sceptre in the very crisis of the intellectual renovation of Western Europe, that enthusiastic monarch felt himself called not only to conquests that should broaden the territory and augment the resources of a kingdom already the most prosperous in Christendom, but to the patronage of a crusade that should emancipate the mind of man from the shackles of ignorance as well as of pedantry. As the teachers of science were to a great extent the adherents of the tenets known as the "new doctrines," it was not unnatural to anticipate that Francis would of necessity throw the weight of his immense influence in favor of the religious reformation, which a few years after the appearance of Luther in Germany began to be preached in the neighborhood of Paris, and in the very shadow of the venerable University. This sanguine expectation was doomed to disappointment. Despite early promise and well-defined tendencies in the direction of tolerance; despite, too, the mild and genial influence of a favorite sister, whose sympathies were decidedly on the side of evangelical truth, Francis became a persecutor, and of the thirty-two years of his reign, the

\* *La Chambre Ardente. Etude sur la liberté de conscience en France sous François I et Henri II (1540-1550) suivie d'environ 500 arrêts inédits, rendus par le Parlement de Paris de mai 1547 à mars 1550.* Par N. Weiss, Pasteur, bibliothécaire et rédacteur du Bulletin de la Société de l'Histoire du Protestantisme français. Paris, 1889. clii and 432 pages. 12mo.

last thirteen in particular are marked with sanguinary exhibitions of proscriptive violence. The causes of this are not difficult to find. It would be a superficial view that should place in the first rank any injudicious actions of the reformers themselves. The "placards" of 1534, with their violent and ill-timed denunciation of the "papal mass," did indeed serve the purpose of the priests admirably well when they endeavored to prove to the king that the innovators had little respect for the most sacred mysteries of the Christian religion; and the posting of a copy of the obnoxious broadside upon the very door of the monarch's bed-chamber could easily be misrepresented as an intentional insult of the gravest character, perpetrated against the majesty of the most Christian prince. But, after all, these and other similar incidents, the results of an inconsiderate zeal on the part of a certain number of the Protestants, were of little importance in comparison with the alliance which policy, in fact a supposed necessity, had instituted between the French crown and the court of Rome. While Francis might seek the friendship and support of the Protestant princes of Germany as highly desirable in his struggle against the house of Austria, he regarded a cordial understanding with the prelates of the Roman Catholic Church as indispensable to his comfort at home and to the prosecution of his ambitious designs abroad. The concordat which he had entered into with Pope Leo X conferred upon him the vast and lucrative patronage of the ecclesiastical establishment, placing at his disposal numerous benefices to be used as a reward of faithful service on the part of his nobles, and affording him abundant means for the maintenance of a luxurious court. Except from interest, however, Francis I was averse to persecution, and if the last years of his reign were stained by the bloody massacres perpetrated in the king's name and ostensibly by his authority upon the poor French Vaudois of Mérimondol and Cabrières, the charitable supposition that the monarch was to a great extent ignorant of the true state of the case, seems to be amply borne out by history. Certain it is that among the last desires which he expressed was that his successor should investigate the treatment to which the Protestants of Provence had been subjected, with the view of making what atonement might be possible for the commission of a great wrong.

It was far otherwise with his son. Henry II was as narrow-minded as his father had been liberal; as prone to follow slavishly the suggestions of others as his father had been vain of his independence of thought; as conspicuously a tool of the hierarchy of a Church, the enemy of all progress, as his father had been the patron of that galaxy of bold thinkers and brilliant writers that constituted one of the glories of his court. If Francis I was a

persecutor rather through the force of circumstance than of set purpose, rather because his interest lay in supporting the claims of the established Church than because he preferred the exercise of violence to the peaceable methods of persuasion, Henry II was a persecutor by nature and by personal choice. What his father had done, it must be believed, with some unwillingness and with occasional shame and regret, the son practiced not only without compunctions of conscience, but with a manifest belief that by his rigorous dealing with heretics he was purchasing the favor of Heaven. No other man so much as a weak king stands in need of good advisers. Henry II, intellectually and morally one of the most meagrely equipped of rulers, was particularly unfortunate in his selection of counselors. The constable of Montmorency, the marshal of Saint André, the Guises and the royal mistress Diana of Poitiers, duchess of Valentinois, were guides whose selfish and unprincipled suggestions would have imperiled the success of any unfortunate prince that gave heed to their mischievous advice; in the case of a monarch who deferred so implicitly to the promptings of his favorites as did Henry II, they were sure to involve both him and his subjects in shame and disaster. The humiliation suffered by France at the hands of Philip II, and the disgraceful treaty of Cateau Cambrésis, in which by a single stroke of the pen the gains of thirty years of war were thoughtlessly sacrificed, do not specially concern us here. We have only to do with the unenviable distinction which the reign of Henry II has gained, as a period in which the rights of conscience were violated in the most flagrant manner, and the attempt was made by the most savage punishments which the mind of man has ever invented to defraud human beings of the divinely conferred prerogative of worshiping their Maker according to their own convictions. It was an additional aggravation of the guilt of the monarch's counselors that they were for the most part actuated, not by a sincere religious zeal, but by purely sordid motives. Proscription is odious under all circumstances; it is tenfold more odious when it aims solely at the profit it may make by the ruin of its victims. In the court of Henry few blushed to promote persecution for the sake of the confiscated property which would be at the king's disposal as its consequence; fewer yet showed any reluctance to beg from his majesty the gold and the estates that were the price of blood. Only one was found now and then who, like Marshal Vieilleville, absolutely refused to touch the accursed gain, and who, when a document was presented to him, duly signed by the king and attested by the sign manual of the secretaries of state, conferring upon him and certain associates all the confiscated property of "Lutherans" and "usurers"

throughout five or six broad provinces, drove his dagger through the paper at the place where his name occurred, and declared that thus to draw down upon himself the maledictions of a host of innocents reduced to beggary would be to sell his soul's eternal welfare altogether too cheap.

Henry II succeeded his father upon the throne on the 31st of March, 1547. It has been the current impression that if the persecution of the Protestants was not actually intermitted, its virulence was much abated during the first two years of the new reign, and that it was not until 1549 that the systematic inquest for heretics that characterized the ten remaining years was put into operation. This impression has been the result, for the most part, rather of the silence of historians than of their direct statements. Yet even so accurate a writer as Professor Solden, in his admirable *Geschichte des Protestantismus in Frankreich bis zum Tode Karls IX.* (Vol. i, p. 221), has this strange remark: "The Parliaments, receiving no express command from above [*i. e.*, from the king], only seldom pronounced sentences of death during the first two years; although in view of the continued feeling of general insecurity the emigration continued." And M. Bourciez is quoted by Weiss as observing in his book published four years ago—*Les mœurs polies et la littérature de cour sous Henri II.*—"These heretics of whom men make martyrs have not yet been counted. How many were there of them at Paris? Twenty or thirty, usually people of little consideration."

It is the object of M. Weiss in his *Chambre Ardente* to correct a misapprehension which has been fostered, as he asserts, by the reticence of such general historians of high repute as Sismondi, Michelet, Henri Martin, Ranke and Bordier, and even by such historians as have treated of French Protestantism in particular as Merle d'Aubigné, the brothers Haag, Lutherott, Soldan and Polenz.\*

So far from giving the unhappy Protestant even the brief reprieve in question, the truth is that, as the authors I have named might have learned by turning to the pages of Theodore Beza's *Histoire Ecclésiastique des Églises Réformées*, "from the very beginning of his reign Henry had nothing more at heart than to follow out beyond measure the persecution and destruction of the churches commenced by the late king, his father." Nor was he content simply to make use of the means hitherto employed. He must refine upon them to make them more effective. His first step was the institution of the court whose designation furnishes the title of

\* It may be proper to note that M. Weiss makes an exception in favor of the *History of the Rise of the Huguenots of France*, by the present writer, as being "much more complete and exact than the preceding."

M. Weiss's book. Nearly two years before the death of Francis, when the search for "heretics" in the province of Normandy had been rewarded with so goodly a number of arrests that the prisons could scarcely hold their prisoners, the crown had authorized the erection in the Parliament of Rouen of a special chamber, consisting of ten or twelve of the most learned and zealous judges, to take cognizance of the crime of heresy to the exclusion of all other employments. The experiment would seem to have proved successful, for within a few months after his accession Henry tried it upon a larger scale in the highest judicial court of the realm, the Parliament of Paris. Here, too, the members of the new commission were selected from among the parliamentary counselors who were the farthest removed from the suspicion of a taint of heresy, and known to be active in the prosecution of offenses against "mother holy Church." It was a formidable instrument in the work of punishing the attempt to think for one's self in religious matters, and richly deserved the unofficial designation which soon came to be applied to it—"the fiery chamber," "*la chambre ardente*"—for, to recur again to Theodore Beza's description, it had the reputation of "sending to the flames as many as fell into its hands."

Until now, however, this was about all that was known of the dread tribunal. Only one or two of the judges that constituted it were recorded by name. The numbers of its victims were not even approximately ascertained. The very date of its institution was unknown. The royal letters patent establishing it had disappeared, and the only official reference to them was to be found in the preamble to an edict published in 1549, in which Henry referred to the fact that "at the very beginning of his reign, being desirous of imitating the example of his father in purging his kingdom of the plague of heresy, he had, for the sake of securing greater expedition in the trial of the guilty, established a particular chamber in his Parliament of Paris to give its time and attention exclusively to such matters."

If we are now able to form a better idea of this extraordinary tribunal, and to judge of its efficiency in the terrible work which it was instituted to accomplish, this is due altogether to the patient and persistent researches of M. Weiss. His first fortunate discovery was that of a portion of a register which had until now baffled the search of historical investigators, namely, the manuscript book in which were recorded the sentences rendered in the case of the "heretics" brought before the "Chambre Ardente." This was found misplaced and bound up at the end of another series of sentences with which it had no connection. The title it bore was *Registre des arrestz des Luthériens*. It contained one hundred and

seventy-six sentences, written out in full, and occupying in M. Weiss's volume just three hundred solid pages. Unfortunately, it did not cover by any means the entire existence of the court, since it began May 3, 1548, and terminated with October 31 of the same year. Making use of this as his starting point, however, our author has, by further researches, collected a large number of decisions rendered by the Parliament of Paris, both before the institution of the special chamber, and subsequently to the close of the register just referred to. So that, if in the series of documents which he has laid before us there are two very considerable gaps, comprising, together, the space of an entire year, and, in fact, the very period of the chamber's greatest activity, we are yet enabled to obtain a vivid and sufficiently complete view of the working of this powerful instrument of persecution.

It is one of the curiosities of historical investigation that the objects of earnest and conscientious inquiry, after having long eluded discovery where, judging from analogy, they should certainly have been found, not infrequently turn up unexpectedly in the most unlikely places. It was so in the present instance. M. Weiss's volume was already in print, and ready for publication, when the very most important document of all, *the text of the original edict of Henry II, establishing the "Chambre Ardente,"* came to light.\* It was contained in a register, with other important papers referring to the conduct of the court, which, by the inadvertence of some former guardian of the national archives, had been placed in a part of the collections with which it had nothing to do. Under the circumstances, M. Weiss was compelled to insert it in the Appendix at the end of his volume. I shall take the liberty of saying a few words about it before speaking of some of the results of an inspection of the sentences given by the court. It appears that the "Chambre Ardente" was created fully two months earlier than had hitherto been supposed. The letters patent are dated at Fontainebleau, October 8, 1547, and therefore were signed at the same famous palace where, in the same month, but one hundred and thirty-eight years later, Louis XIV affixed his name to the still more disastrous Revocation of the Edict of Nantes. In the peculiar nomenclature of the old judicial system, that portion of the corps of judges of the Parliament of Paris which devoted itself to the trial of criminal cases was known as the *Tournelle*. The new criminal court for the trial of heresy was therefore officially denominated the *Second*

\* In his *Historical Study on Liberty of Conscience During the Last Seven Years of the Reign of Francis I and the First Three of that of Henry II* (1540-1550), an important part of the volume before us, M. Weiss remarks with regret (p. lxxii): "I have sought in vain in the registers of the Parliament and in other collections for the royal letters that instituted this chamber."

*Tournelle*. It sat customarily in the "council chamber," and was constituted by the designation by name of two presidents and fourteen counselors or judges taken from the parliamentary body to serve in a special capacity until such time as there should, by reason of the extinction of heresy, be no further need of their services. The two presidents, Pierre Lizet and François de Saint André, are well known to the student of French ecclesiastical history as truculent enemies of the Reformation. So also are some of the other judges, among whom figures Pierre Hotman, father of the great jurist François Hotman, as noted for his zealous adherence to royalty and to Roman Catholicism as was his son soon to become for his advocacy of Protestantism and the rights of the people. Thus constituted, the court was to have exclusive jurisdiction "in all trials for heresy and errors against our holy Catholic faith," and its members were stimulated to activity by a salary and by fees to be derived from fines imposed by Parliament "other than those that shall be imposed by them." It was significant of the priestly influence under which this measure was adopted, that among the reasons alleged in the preamble of the document was the belief that the greatness and glory of France as a very Christian kingdom had their origin in and derived their increase from the integrity of the holy Catholic faith, which had always been maintained therein. This, it was asserted, had made her a light to illuminate all other kingdoms. This had insured prosperous reigns and many great victories to her monarchs, so long as they were careful to enforce its observance.

Nor was the king content with displaying his zeal for the established Church by the formation of this special judicial chamber, and by providing a liberal compensation for its members. He watched eagerly to see that they should do their work with thoroughness. A few months later he issued his command that they should sit continuously, even during the customary vacations of the Parliament of Paris. For this purpose he ordered (January 18, 1549) that their compensation should be doubled for the days upon which their colleagues in the other chambers were enjoying a respite from toil. Meanwhile, in his determination that no uncertainty should arise as to the source whence the funds necessary for their support should be derived, he had, some months earlier (May 6, 1548), pledged even the royal tax upon salt for this purpose. It is worthy of remark, however, that in little more than a year the religious ardor that had induced the monarch to pay the judges from his own funds gave place to a more economical frame of mind. Another of the royal documents that has recently been brought to light, in designating a different source of supply, unconsciously makes a sorry revelation of the corruption and petty meanness of



the royal court, and fully vindicates the truth of the historical statements that have come down to us respecting both the greed of the courtiers and the impotence of the monarch. "Henceforth," says Henry II (July 17, 1549), "we shall make no gift of the fines and confiscations that may be adjudged to us as against the afore-said heretics in favor of any persons and for any cause whatsoever, *except for the half thereof alone*. And in case hereafter, through inadvertence, importunity of petitioners or otherwise, we should happen to assign *the whole* of such fines and confiscations, *we forbid our trusty and beloved, the members of our audit office, to verify the said gifts save for the said half*, whatever express derogation may be inserted in the said letters and gifts, *and whatever commands we may hereafter send them to the contrary*." As to the other half, the king enjoins that it be applied to the costs of the prosecution of the heretics.

The king has thus given us over his own signature the confirmation of the statement of the contemporary historians who allege that Henry II was too weak to deny to his favorites, the Duchess of Valentinois and her unworthy associates, whatever they asked. And we are warranted in giving full credence to the assertion of the *Memoirs of Marshal Vieilleville*, that in his conscious pusillanimity the monarch would occasionally condescend to vulgar falsehood, and being pressed to confer a gift which he wished to reserve, would put the applicant off with the asseveration that he had already promised it to another. As to the victims, respecting whom the chief thought of their persecutors centred in the question to whom their spoils should be given, M. Weiss significantly exclaims: "Unfortunate heretics! until then they enriched the informers, their enemies, or those that envied them; now they were obliged to furnish a part of the support of their executioners!"

Thanks to his latest discoveries, M. Weiss is able to state positively that the "Chambre Ardente" subsisted as a separate tribunal until January 11, 1550. About this time a new attempt was made to solve the perplexing problem of the best method for the suppression of Protestantism. The secular judges with all their severity having failed to accomplish the desired result, Henry II relieved them of the duty, having already, by his edict of November 19, 1549, commanded his bailiffs and seneschals henceforth to send those brought before their bar, not to the parliaments, but to the bishops and Church courts for trial. Finally, M. Weiss has brought out a fact hitherto unknown that, after a suppression of somewhat more than three years, the "Chambre Ardente" was *reëstablished by the king* by his edict of Saint Germain en Laye, March 1, 1553. It does not yet appear how long this revived tribunal continued in existence, nor have any of its decisions as yet come to light.

There can be no doubt that, did we possess the complete records of the *Chambre Ardente*, we should be able to add a very important chapter to the history of persecution in the name of religion. As it is, the mere decisions of the court are far from uninteresting. They demonstrate, in particular, the wide spread of the reformatory movement through the provinces which constituted the jurisdiction of the highest judicial body in France. The leaven of Protestantism had evidently begun to work at a hundred different points in the kingdom. The prospect was that if left undisturbed it would soon permeate the entire realm. All classes in society were affected by it. So far from being chiefly an aristocratical tendency, the middle and lower classes at this period furnished the greatest number of adherents and suspects. One striking feature of the religious condition of the times is the great number of members of the clergy, both secular and monastic, whose teachings laid them open to the charge of favoring the "new doctrines." A cursory glance through this collection of decisions shows the names of priests, of priors, and of monks of the Augustinian, Dominican or Jacobite, Benedictine and Carmelite orders. Great alarm was felt by the judges at the prevalence of "unsound"—that is, more or less distinctly Protestant—teaching from the pulpits of parish churches. Proof of this may be found in an order which they issued March 20, 1549. Apparently unable otherwise to secure the very churches from the introduction of "Lutheran" doctrine, they made the "marguilliers," or church wardens, responsible for the character of the preachers whom they permitted to officiate at the sacred desk. It was not enough for the candidate that presented himself that he be in holy orders. He must be provided with a certificate of orthodoxy, stating that he was "of a good life, and free of all suspicion of heretical blasphemy contrary or derogatory to the holy Catholic doctrine." The certificate of a monk must bear the signatures of the guardian or prior of his convent and of two of the oldest and most discreet of his brethren. That of a doctor of theology or a "secular bachelor" must be similarly attested by the dean and two of the oldest members of the theological faculty. The church wardens were enjoined to preserve these certificates and to produce them whenever called for by competent authorities. The penalty for disobedience or neglect was to be a fine at the discretion of the court. Moreover, the negligent warden rendered himself liable to prosecution "as a despiser and transgressor of the ordinances of the court."\*

There are no traces of judicial proceedings for heresy against any ecclesiastics above the order of the priesthood; but the "*Chambre*

\* *La Chambre Ardente*, pp. 343-346.

Ardente" does not hesitate to assail the zeal and fidelity of the bishops and archbishops. A Carmelite monk condemned for heresy to imprisonment for life, having made good his escape from the dungeons of the Archbishop of Bordeaux, that prelate was directed by the court to pay over the sum of two hundred livres to defray the expense of the prosecution of six persons arrested on the suspicion of having favored his flight. In advocating this action, the king's attorney took occasion to complain that "at present heresies are spreading rapidly through the negligence of the prelates or of their vicars, who fail to do their duty in inquiring into the life of their subjects and the members of their dioceses, and in furnishing the necessary means for the prosecution of those who are found to be unsound in the Catholic faith."\*

The jealousy of the clergy for its peculiar privileges did not allow either the lower secular judges or the "Chambre Ardente" to investigate the charge of simple heresy brought against members of that order. The ecclesiastical courts alone could take cognizance of that offense. Had a priest, however, publicly made known his heretical views, by preaching or otherwise, and thus created a scandal, he became amenable also to the civil power. A sentence given by the "Chambre Ardente" on the 20th of October, 1548, shows how ingeniously a conflict of jurisdiction was avoided. Jehan Regnault, a priest and a monk of the Carmelite order, having apostatized, was convicted, after trial before the "lieutenant criminal" of Fontenay le Comte, of having, in the course of a sermon, uttered blasphemous and heretical words "against the honor and reverence due to the holy sacrament of the altar, the blessed and very glorious Virgin Mary, mother of God, and the saints of Paradise, disturbing the tranquillity and unity in the faith of the good and loyal, faithful, Catholic and Christian subjects of the king, and turning them aside from their former and accustomed manner of living in the holy Church, and despising the ordinances and edicts of the king." Thereupon the "Chambre Ardente" sentenced him to do penance after the fashion known as the *amende honorable*, first in front of the Church of Notre Dame at Paris, and then in front of the church at Nyeul in Anis, where he had preached. After the infliction of this penalty for the scandal, the "Chambre Ardente" handed him over to the Bishop of Paris, to have him tried as a priest for his heretical opinions, and to inflict canonical punishment, if need be, as far as degradation from his holy office. But the "Chambre Ardente" strictly forbade the ecclesiastical judges from proceeding to the actual liberation of the prisoner until they should have communicated their decision and received an answer thereupon.

\* Arrêt du 3 décembre, *apud* Weiss, p. 324.

All the expenses were to be borne by the Bishop of Saintes, within whose diocese Regnault had preached.

Of the documents for the space of about a year, from May 5, 1548, to April 29, 1549, numbering a little less than three hundred, more than one-half are of a general character or refer to the earlier stages of trial. An analysis of the remainder leads to some interesting results. Sanguinary as was the tribunal, meriting only too well, as its records abundantly prove, the terrible designation of "La Chambre Ardente," it by no means sent all the prisoners brought before it to the flames. A comparatively small number, thirty or more, were able to clear themselves wholly, and were liberated with an injunction that they live for the future "as good Christians in the holy Catholic faith." In much the largest number of cases—about eighty sentences affecting a little over one hundred persons—the chief penalty prescribed was the *amende honorable* already referred to. The sentence of Benoist Chassigne, pronounced on the 9th of May, 1548, may serve as an example of the mildest form of this punishment. He was condemned to be present at a sermon to be delivered in the Church of Saint Amable at Riom in Auvergne, "by some good and notable personage, who shall do his duty in addressing necessary exhortations to the people respecting the extirpation of the Lutheran heresy and sect." After which he was to be brought before the great portal of the church, and there, with head and feet bare, and clothed only in a shirt, holding in his hand a lighted waxen taper of the weight of two pounds, he was to declare in a loud voice that "foolishly and indiscreetly he had uttered those scandalous and erroneous expressions against the honor of God and of mother holy Church and her constitutions and commandments; of which he repents and begs pardon and mercy of God, of the king, and of justice." This was an instance of rare gentleness on the part of the judges. Pierre Bricquet, of Moulins, had on the preceding Thursday been sentenced to witness, after his *amende honorable*, the burning of the Lutheran books that had been found in his possession. He was next to be stripped and openly beaten with rods upon the public places of that city for three successive days. He was then to be banished forever from the district, and to be warned never again to repeat his scandalous speeches upon pain of being burned at the stake. In a number of cases the court confined itself in the sentence, as announced to the prisoner, to ordering that he be examined by torture to ascertain from his own mouth the truth of the charge of having uttered "sacramentarian and heretical" sentiments. But this open sentence was accompanied by a secret proviso or *retentum*. As, for instance, the order relating to Pierre Martin reads: "And it is retained in the court's mind (*in mente*

*curiæ*) that if the said Pierre Martin confesses the facts when on the rack, he shall not be permitted to retract his confession and shall be burned. And should he confess nothing to his disadvantage, nevertheless by reason of the acts committed by him, verified by the trial, he shall be punished but not capitally (*citra mortem*)."

In twenty-five documents sentence of death is pronounced against thirty-five prisoners, men and women. And it is death for the most part in the most excruciating mode perhaps ever devised by human or diabolic ingenuity—by suspension upon a gallows around which "a great fire" was kindled, the unfortunate victim being alternately lowered into the flames and drawn out again, in order to prolong his agony to the utmost. The *estrapade* was too well known as an instrument of execution to need any extended description. The prisoner was brought to the spot on a tumbrel. His property was declared confiscated to the State. Here again there was frequently a *retentum* for the private direction of the executioner, and running about as follows: "And it is retained in the mind of the court that if after the sentence against him is pronounced he persists in the aforesaid blasphemies and errors, his tongue shall be cut out the moment he shall begin to blaspheme. And if he does not persist, but manifests a true conversion to the holy Catholic faith, he shall, after having been given a touch of the fire (*après avoir un peu senty le feu*), be strangled."

We have dwelt upon but a few of the points of interest in M. Weiss's important volume. There are many others equally deserving of attention, because of their bearing upon the history of Protestantism in France. We heartily congratulate the author upon his rare good fortune in discovering so great a number of valuable documents which had escaped all previous investigation. And we specially commend to the notice of all readers that take an interest in the story of the successive steps by means of which the rights of the human conscience have tardily gained recognition, the very clear and exhaustive monograph which he has prefixed to his volume. His work, as a whole, is of high scholarly value. It certainly deserves a place among the most meritorious of the publications called forth by the first centenary of the proclamation of complete religious liberty in France.

HENRY M. BAIRD.