

## BOOK THE SECOND

### THE RIPENING

#### CHAPTER IX

##### ADRIAN, FOY, AND MARTIN THE RED

Many years had gone by since Lysbeth found her love again upon the island in the Haarlemer Meer. The son that she bore there was now a grown man, as was her second son, Foy, and her own hair showed grey beneath the lappets of her cap.

Fast, fast wove the loom of God during those fateful years, and the web thereof was the story of a people's agony and its woof was dyed red with their blood. Edict had followed edict, crime had been heaped upon crime. Alva, like some inhuman and incarnate vengeance, had marched his army, quiet and harmless as is the tiger when he stalks his prey, across the fields of France. Now he was at Brussels, and already the heads of the Counts Egmont and Hoorn had fallen; already the Blood Council was established and at its work. In the Low Countries law had ceased to exist, and there anything might happen however monstrous or inhuman. Indeed, with one decree of the Holy Office, confirmed by a proclamation of Philip of Spain, all the inhabitants of the Netherlands, three millions of them, had been condemned to death. Men's minds were full

of terror, for on every side were burnings and hangings and torturings. Without were fightings, within were fears, and none knew whom they could trust, since the friend of to-day might be the informer or judge of to-morrow. All this because they chose to worship God in their own fashion unaided by images and priests.

Although so long a time had passed, as it chanced those personages with whom we have already made acquaintance in this history were still alive. Let us begin with two of them, one of whom we know and one of whom, although we have heard of him before, will require some introduction--Dirk van Goorl and his son Foy.

Scene--an upper room above a warehouse overlooking the market-place of Leyden, a room with small windows and approached by two staircases; time, a summer twilight. The faint light which penetrated into this chamber through the unshuttered windows, for to curtain them would have been to excite suspicion, showed that about twenty people were gathered there, among whom were one or two women. For the most part they were men

of the better class, middle-aged burghers of sober mien, some of whom stood about in knots, while others were seated upon stools and benches. At the end of the room addressing them was a man well on in middle life,

with grizzled hair and beard, small and somewhat mean of stature, yet one through whose poor exterior goodness seemed to flow like light through some rough casement of horn. This was Jan Arentz, the famous preacher, by trade a basket-maker, a man who showed himself steadfast to the New Religion through all afflictions, and who was gifted with a spirit which could remain unmoved amidst the horrors of perhaps the most terrible persecution that Christians have suffered since the days of the Roman Emperors. He was preaching now and these people were his congregation.

"I come not to bring peace but a sword," was his text, and certainly this night it was most appropriate and one easy of illustration. For there, on the very market-place beneath them, guarded by soldiers and surrounded with the rabble of the city, two members of his flock, men who a fortnight before had worshipped in that same room, at this moment were undergoing martyrdom by fire!

Arentz preached patience and fortitude. He went back into recent history and told his hearers how he himself had passed a hundred dangers; how he had been hunted like a wolf, how he had been tried, how he had escaped from prisons and from the swords of soldiers, even as St. Paul had done before him, and how yet he lived to minister to them this night. He told them that they must have no fear, that they must go on quite happy, quite confident, taking what it pleased God to send them, feeling that it would all be for the best; yes, that even the worst would be for the best. What was the worst? Some hours of torment and death. And what lay

beyond the death? Ah! let them think of that. The whole world was but a brief and varying shadow, what did it matter how or when they walked out of that shadow into the perfect light? The sky was very black, but behind it the sun shone. They must look forward with the eye of faith; perhaps the sufferings of the present generation were part of the scheme of things; perhaps from the earth which they watered with their blood would spring the flower of freedom, that glorious freedom in whose day all men would be able to worship their Creator responsible only to the Bible law and their own conscience, not to the dogmas or doctrines of other men.

As Arentz spoke thus, eloquently, sweetly, spoke like one inspired, the twilight deepened and the flare of those sacrificial fires flickered on the window pane, and the mixed murmurs of the crowd of witnesses broke upon his listeners' ears. The preacher paused and looked down upon the dreadful scene below, for from where he stood he could behold it all.

"Mark is dead," he said, "and our dear brother, Andreas Jansen, is dying; the executioners heap the faggots round him. You think it cruel, you think it piteous, but I say to you, No. I say that it is a holy and a glorious sight, for we witness the passing of souls to bliss. Brethren, let us pray for him who leaves us, and for ourselves who stay behind. Yes, and let us pray for those who slay him that know not what they do. We watch his sufferings, but I tell you that Christ his Lord watches also; Christ who hung upon the Cross, the victim of such men as these. He stands with him in the fire, His hand compasses him, His voice

supports him. Brethren, let us pray."

Then at his bidding every member of that little congregation knelt in prayer for the passing spirit of Andreas Jansen.

Again Arentz looked through the window.

"He dies!" he cried; "a soldier has thrust him through with a pike in mercy, his head falls forward. Oh! God, if it be Thy will, grant to us a sign."

Some strange breath passed through that upper chamber, a cold breath which blew upon the brows of the worshippers and stirred their hair, bringing with it a sense of the presence of Andreas Jansen, the martyr. Then, there upon the wall opposite to the window, at the very spot where their brother and companion, Andreas, saint and martyr, was wont to kneel, appeared the sign, or what they took to be a sign. Yes, there upon the whitewashed wall, reflected, mayhap, from the fires below, and showing clearly in the darkened room, shone the vision of a fiery cross. For a second it was seen. Then it was gone, but to every soul in this room the vision of that cross had brought its message; to each a separate message, an individual inspiration, for in the light of it they read strange lessons of life and death. The cross vanished and there was silence.

"Brethren," said the voice of Arentz, speaking in the darkness, "you

have seen. Through the fire and through the shadow, follow the Cross and fear not."

The service was over, and below in the emptied market-place the executioners collected the poor calcined fragments of the martyrs to cast them with contumely and filthy jests into the darkling waters of the river. Now, one by one and two by two, the worshippers slipped away through some hidden door opening on an alley. Let us look at three of their number as they crept through bye streets back to a house on the Bree Straat with which we are acquainted, two of them walking in front and one behind.

The pair were Dirk van Goorl and his son Foy--there was no mistaking their relationship. Save that he had grown somewhat portly and thoughtful, Dirk was the Dirk of five and twenty years ago, thickset, grey-eyed, bearded, a handsome man according to the Dutch standard, whose massive, kindly countenance betrayed the massive, kindly mind within. Very like him was his son Foy, only his eyes were blue instead of grey, and his hair was yellow. Though they seemed sad enough just now, these were merry and pleasant eyes, and the round, the somewhat childlike face was merry also, the face of a person who looked upon the bright side of things.

There was nothing remarkable or distinguished about Foy's appearance,

but from it the observer, who met him for the first time, received an impression of energy, honesty, and good-nature. In truth, such were apt to set him down as a sailor-man, who had just returned from a long journey, in the course of which he had come to the conclusion that this world was a pleasant place, and one well worth exploring. As Foy walked down the street with his quick and nautical gait, it was evident that even the solemn and dreadful scene which he had just experienced had not altogether quenched his cheery and hopeful spirit. Yet of all those who listened to the exhortation of the saint-like Arentz, none had laid its burden of faith and carelessness for the future to heart more entirely than Foy van Goorl.

But of this power of looking on the bright side of things the credit must be given to his nature and not to his piety, for Foy could not be sad for long. *Dum spiro, spero* would have been his motto had he known Latin, and he did not mean to grow sorrowful--over the prospect of being burnt, for instance--until he found himself fast to the stake. It was this quality of good spirits in a depressing and melancholy age that made of Foy so extraordinarily popular a character.

Behind these two followed a much more remarkable-looking personage, the Frisian, Martin Roos, or Red Martin, so named from his hair, which was red to the verge of flame colour, and his beard of a like hue that hung almost to his breast. There was no other such beard in Leyden; indeed the boys, taking advantage of his good nature, would call to him as he passed, asking him if it was true that the storks nested in it every

spring. This strange-looking man, who was now perhaps a person of forty years of age, for ten years or more had been the faithful servant of Dirk van Goorl, whose house he had entered under circumstances which shall be told of in their place.

Any one glancing at Martin casually would not have said that he was a giant, and yet his height was considerable; to be accurate, when he stood upright, something over six feet three inches. The reason why he did not appear to be tall was that in truth his great bulk shortened him to the eye, and also because he carried himself ill, more from a desire to conceal his size than for any other reason. It was in girth of chest and limb that Martin was really remarkable, so much so that a short-armed man standing before him could not make his fingers touch behind his back. His face was fair as a girl's, and almost as flat as a full moon, for of nose he had little. Nature, indeed, had furnished him with one of ordinary, if not excessive size, but certain incidents in Martin's early career, which in our day would be designated as that of a prize-fighter, had caused it to spread about his countenance in an interesting and curious fashion. His eyebrows, however, remained prominent. Beneath them appeared a pair of very large, round, and rather mild blue eyes, covered with thick white lids absolutely devoid of lashes, which eyes had a most unholy trick of occasionally taking fire when their owner was irritated. Then they could burn and blaze like lamps tied to a barge on a dark night, with an effect that was all the more alarming because the rest of his countenance remained absolutely impassive.



Suddenly while this little company went homewards a sound arose in the quiet street as of people running. Instantly all three of them pressed themselves into the doorway of a house and crouched down. Martin lifted his ear and listened.

"Three people," he whispered; "a woman who flies and two men who follow."

At that moment a casement was thrown open forty paces or so away, and a hand, bearing a torch, thrust out of it. By its light they saw the pale face of a lady speeding towards them, and after her two Spanish soldiers.

"The Vrouw Andreas Jansen," whispered Martin again, "flying from two of the guard who burned her husband."

The torch was withdrawn and the casement shut with a snap. In those days quiet burghers could not afford to be mixed up in street troubles, especially if soldiers had to do with them. Once more the place was empty and quiet, except for the sound of running feet.

Opposite to the doorway the lady was overtaken. "Oh! let me go," she sobbed, "oh! let me go. Is it not enough that you have killed my husband? Why must I be hunted from my house thus?"

"Because you are so pretty, my dear," answered one of the brutes, "also you are rich. Catch hold of her, friend. Lord! how she kicks!"

Foy made a motion as though to start out of the doorway, but Martin pressed him back with the flat of his hand, without apparent effort, and yet so strongly that the young man could not move.

"My business, masters," he muttered; "you would make a noise," and they heard his breath come thick.

Now, moving with curious stealthiness for one of so great a bulk, Martin was out of the porch. By the summer starlight the watchers could see that, before they had caught sight of, or even heard, him, he gripped the two soldiers, small men, like most Spaniards, by the napes of their necks, one in either hand, and was grinding their faces together. This, indeed, was evident, for his great shoulders worked visibly and their breastplates clicked as they touched. But the men themselves made no sound at all. Then Martin seemed to catch them round the middle, and behold! in another second the pair of them had gone headlong into the canal, which ran down the centre of the street.

"My God! he has killed them," muttered Dirk.

"And a good job, too, father," said Foy, "only I wish that I had shared in it."

Martin's great form loomed in the doorway. "The Vrouw Jansen has fled away," he said, "and the street is quite quiet now, so I think that we had better be moving before any see us, my masters."

Some days later the bodies of these Spanish soldiers were found with their faces smashed flat. It was suggested in explanation of this plight, that they had got drunk and while fighting together had fallen from the bridge on to the stonework of a pier. This version of their end found a ready acceptance, as it conformed well with the reputations of the men. So there was no search or inquiry.

"I had to finish the dogs," Martin explained apologetically--"may the Lord Jesus forgive me--because I was afraid that they might know me again by my beard."

"Alas! alas!" groaned Dirk, "what times are these. Say nothing of this dreadful matter to your mother, son, or to Adrian either." But Foy nudged Martin in the ribs and muttered, "Well done, old fellow, well done!"

After this experience, which the reader must remember was nothing extraordinary in those dark and dreadful days when neither the lives of men nor the safety of women--especially Protestant men and women--were things of much account, the three of them reached home without further incident, and quite unobserved. Arriving at the house, they entered it near the Watergate by a back door that led into the stableyard. It was

opened by a woman whom they followed into a little room where a light burned. Here she turned and kissed two of them, Dirk first and then Foy.

"Thank God that I see you safe," she said. "Whenever you go to the Meeting-place I tremble until I hear your footsteps at the door."

"What's the use of that, mother?" said Foy. "Your fretting yourself won't make things better or worse."

"Ah! dear, how can I help it?" she replied softly; "we cannot all be young and cheerful, you know."

"True, wife, true," broke in Dirk, "though I wish we could; we should be lighter-hearted so," and he looked at her and sighed.

Lysbeth van Goorl could no longer boast the beauty which was hers when first we met her, but she was still a sweet and graceful woman, her figure remaining almost as slim as it had been in girlhood. The grey eyes also retained their depth and fire, only the face was worn, though more by care and the burden of memories than with years. The lot of the loving wife and mother was hard indeed when Philip the King ruled in Spain and Alva was his prophet in the Netherlands.

"Is it done?" she asked.

"Yes, wife, our brethren are now saints in Paradise, therefore rejoice."

"It is very wrong," she answered with a sob, "but I cannot. Oh!" she added with a sudden blaze of indignation, "if He is just and good, why does God suffer His servants to be killed thus?"

"Perhaps our grandchildren will be able to answer that question," replied Dirk.

"That poor Vrouw Jansen," broke in Lysbeth, "just married, and so young and pretty. I wonder what will become of her."

Dirk and Foy looked at each other, and Martin, who was hovering about near the door, slunk back guiltily into the passage as though he had attempted to injure the Vrouw Jansen.

"To-morrow we will look to it, wife. And now let us eat, for we are faint with hunger."

Ten minutes later they were seated at their meal. The reader may remember the room; it was that wherein Montalvo, ex-count and captain, made the speech which charmed all hearers on the night when he had lost the race at the ice-carnival. The same chandelier hung above them, some portion of the same plate, even, repurchased by Dirk, was on the table, but how different were the company and the feast! Aunt Clara, the fatuous, was long dead, and with her many of the companions of that occasion, some naturally, some by the hand of the executioner, while

others had fled the land. Pieter van de Werff still lived, however, and though regarded with suspicion by the authorities, was a man of weight and honour in the town, but to-night he was not present there. The food, too, if ample was plain, not on account of the poverty of the household, for Dirk had prospered in his worldly affairs, being hard-working and skilful, and the head of the brass foundry to which in those early days he was apprenticed, but because in such times people thought little of the refinements of eating. When life itself is so doubtful, its pleasures and amusements become of small importance. The ample waiting service of the maid Greta, who long ago had vanished none knew where, and her fellow domestics was now carried on by the man, Martin, and one old woman, since, as every menial might be a spy, even the richest employed few of them. In short all the lighter and more cheerful parts of life were in abeyance.

"Where is Adrian?" asked Dirk.

"I do not know," answered Lysbeth. "I thought that perhaps----"

"No," replied her husband hastily; "he did not accompany us; he rarely does."

"Brother Adrian likes to look underneath the spoon before he licks it," said Foy with his mouth full.

The remark was enigmatic, but his parents seemed to understand what

Foy meant; at least it was followed by an uncomfortable and acquiescent silence. Just then Adrian came in, and as we have not seen him since, some four and twenty years ago, he made his entry into the world on the secret island in the Haarlemer Meer, here it may be as well to describe his appearance.

He was a handsome young man, but of quite a different stamp from his half-brother, Foy, being tall, slight, and very graceful in figure; advantages which he had inherited from his mother Lysbeth. In countenance, however, he differed from her so much that none would have guessed him to be her son. Indeed, Adrian's face was pure Spanish, there was nothing of a Netherlander about his dark beauty. Spanish were the eyes of velvet black, set rather close together, Spanish also the finely chiselled features and the thin, spreading nostrils, Spanish the cold, yet somewhat sensual mouth, more apt to sneer than smile; the straight, black hair, the clear, olive skin, and that indifferent, half-wearied mien which became its wearer well enough, but in a man of his years of Northern blood would have seemed unnatural or affected.

He took his seat without speaking, nor did the others speak to him till his stepfather Dirk said:

"You were not at the works to-day, Adrian, although we should have been glad of your help in founding the culverin."

"No, father"--he called him father--answered the young man in a measured

and rather melodious voice. "You see we don't quite know who is going to pay for that piece. Or at any rate I don't quite know, as nobody seems to take me into confidence, and if it should chance to be the losing side, well, it might be enough to hang me."

Dirk flushed up, but made no answer, only Foy remarked:

"That's right, Adrian, look after your own skin."

"Just now I find it more interesting," went on Adrian loftily and disregarding of his brother, "to study those whom the cannon may shoot than to make the cannon which is to shoot them."

"Hope you won't be one of them," interrupted Foy again.

"Where have you been this evening, son?" asked Lysbeth hastily, fearing a quarrel.

"I have been mixing with the people, mother, at the scene on the market-place yonder."

"Not the martyrdom of our good friend, Jansen, surely?"

"Yes, mother, why not? It is terrible, it is a crime, no doubt, but the observer of life should study these things. There is nothing more fascinating to the philosopher than the play of human passions. The



emotions of the brutal crowd, the stolid indifference of the guard, the grief of the sympathisers, the stoical endurance of the victims animated by religious exaltation----"

"And the beautiful logic of the philosopher, with his nose in the air, while he watches his friend and brother in the Faith being slowly burnt to death," broke out Foy with passion.

"Hush! hush!" said Dirk, striking his fist upon the table with a blow that caused the glasses to ring, "this is no subject for word-chopping. Adrian, you would have been better with us than down below at that butchery, even though you were less safe," he added, with meaning. "But I wish to run none into danger, and you are of an age to judge for yourself. I beg you, however, to spare us your light talk about scenes that we think dreadful, however interesting you may have found them."

Adrian shrugged his shoulders and called to Martin to bring him some more meat. As the great man approached him he spread out his fine-drawn nostrils and sniffed.

"You smell, Martin," he said, "and no wonder. Look, there is blood upon your jerkin. Have you been killing pigs and forgotten to change it?"

Martin's round blue eyes flashed, then went pale and dead again.

"Yes, master," he answered, in his thick voice, "I have been killing

pigs. But your dress also smells of blood and fire; perhaps you went too near the stake." At that moment, to put an end to the conversation, Dirk rose and said grace. Then he went out of the room accompanied by his wife and Foy, leaving Adrian to finish his meal alone, which he did reflectively and at leisure.

When he left the eating chamber Foy followed Martin across the courtyard to the walled-in stables, and up a ladder to the room where the serving man slept. It was a queer place, and filled with an extraordinary collection of odds and ends; the skins of birds, otters, and wolves; weapons of different makes, notably a very large two-handed sword, plain and old-fashioned, but of excellent steel; bits of harness and other things.

There was no bed in this room for the reason that Martin disdained a bed, a few skins upon the floor being all that he needed to lie on. Nor did he ask for much covering, since so hardy was he by nature, that except in the very bitterest weather his woollen vest was enough for him. Indeed, he had been known to sleep out in it when the frost was so sharp that he rose with his hair and beard covered with icicles.

Martin shut the door and lit three lanterns, which he hung to hooks upon the wall.

"Are you ready for a turn, master?" he asked.

Foy nodded as he answered, "I want to get the taste of it all out of my mouth, so don't spare me. Lay on till I get angry, it will make me forget," and taking a leathern jerkin off a peg he pulled it over his head.

"Forget what, master?"

"Oh! the prayings and the burnings and Vrouw Jansen, and Adrian's sea-lawyer sort of talk."

"Ah, yes, that's the worst of them all for us," and the big man leapt forward and whispered. "Keep an eye on him, Master Foy."

"What do you mean?" asked Foy sharply and flushing.

"What I say."

"You forget; you are talking of my brother, my own mother's son. I will hear no harm of Adrian; his ways are different to ours, but he is good-hearted at bottom. Do you understand me, Martin?"

"But not your father's son, master. It's the sire sets the strain; I have bred horses, and I know."

Foy looked at him and hesitated.

"No," said Martin, answering the question in his eyes. "I have nothing against him, but he always sees the other side, and that's bad. Also he is Spanish----"

"And you don't like Spaniards," broke in Foy. "Martin, you are a pig-headed, prejudiced, unjust jackass."

Martin smiled. "No, master, I don't like Spaniards, nor will you before you have done with them. But then it is only fair as they don't like me."

"I say, Martin," said Foy, following a new line of thought, "how did you manage that business so quietly, and why didn't you let me do my share?"

"Because you'd have made a noise, master, and we didn't want the watch on us; also, being full armed, they might have bettered you."

"Good reasons, Martin. How did you do it? I couldn't see much."

"It is a trick I learned up there in Friesland. Some of the Northmen sailors taught it me. There is a place in a man's neck, here at the back, and if he is squeezed there he loses his senses in a second. Thus, master--" and putting out his great hand he gripped Foy's neck in a fashion that caused him the intensest agony.

"Drop it," said Foy, kicking at his shins.

"I didn't squeeze; I was only showing you," answered Martin, opening his eyes. "Well, when their wits were gone of course it was easy to knock their heads together, so that they mightn't find them again. You see," he added, "if I had left them alive--well, they are dead anyway, and getting a hot supper by now, I expect. Which shall it be, master? Dutch stick or Spanish point?"

"Stick first, then point," answered Foy.

"Good. We need 'em both nowadays," and Martin reached down a pair of ash plants fitted into old sword hilts to protect the hands of the players.

They stood up to each other on guard, and then against the light of the lanterns it could be seen how huge a man was Martin. Foy, although well-built and sturdy, and like all his race of a stout habit, looked but a child beside the bulk of this great fellow. As for their stick game, which was in fact sword exercise, it is unnecessary to follow its details, for the end of it was what might almost have been expected. Foy sprang to and fro slashing and cutting, while Martin the solid scarcely moved his weapon. Then suddenly there would be a parry and a reach, and the stick would fall with a thud all down the length of Foy's back, causing the dust to start from his leathern jerkin.

"It's no good," said Foy at last, rubbing himself ruefully. "What's the use of guarding against you, you great brute, when you simply crash

through my guard and hit me all the same? That isn't science."

"No, master," answered Martin, "but it is business. If we had been using swords you would have been in pieces by now. No blame to you and no credit to me; my reach is longer and my arm heavier, that is all."

"At any rate I am beaten," said Foy; "now take the rapiers and give me a chance."

Then they went at it with the thrusting-swords, rendered harmless by a disc of lead upon their points, and at this game the luck turned. Foy was active as a cat in the eye of a hawk, and twice he managed to get in under Martin's guard.

"You're dead, old fellow," he said at the second thrust.

"Yes, young master," answered Martin, "but remember that I killed you long ago, so that you are only a ghost and of no account. Although I have tried to learn its use to please you, I don't mean to fight with a toasting fork. This is my weapon," and, seizing the great sword which stood in the corner, he made it hiss through the air.

Foy took it from his hand and looked at it. It was a long straight blade with a plain iron guard, or cage, for the hands, and on it, in old letters, was engraved one Latin word, *Silentium*, "Silence."

"Why is it called 'Silence,' Martin?"

"Because it makes people silent, I suppose, master."

"What is its history, and how did you come by it?" asked Foy in a malicious voice. He knew that the subject was a sore one with the huge Frisian.

Martin turned red as his own beard and looked uncomfortable. "I believe," he answered, staring upwards, "that it was the ancient Sword of Justice of a little place up in Friesland. As to how I came by it, well, I forget."

"And you call yourself a good Christian," said Foy reproachfully. "Now I have heard that your head was going to be chopped off with this sword, but that somehow you managed to steal it first and got away."

"There was something of the sort," mumbled Martin, "but it is so long ago that it slips my mind. I was so often in broils and drunk in those days--may the dear Lord forgive me--that I can't quite remember things. And now, by your leave, I want to go to sleep."

"You old liar," said Foy shaking his head at him, "you killed that poor executioner and made off with his sword. You know you did, and now you are ashamed to own the truth."

"May be, may be," answered Martin vacuously; "so many things happen in the world that a fool man cannot remember them all. I want to go to sleep."

"Martin," said Foy, sitting down upon a stool and dragging off his leather jerkin, "what used you to do before you turned holy? You have never told me all the story. Come now, speak up. I won't tell Adrian."

"Nothing worth mentioning, Master Foy."

"Out with it, Martin."

"Well, if you wish to know, I am the son of a Friesland boor."

"--And an Englishwoman from Yarmouth: I know all that."

"Yes," repeated Martin, "an Englishwoman from Yarmouth. She was very strong, my mother; she could hold up a cart on her shoulders while my father greased the wheels, that is for a bet; otherwise she used to make my father hold the cart up while she greased the wheels. Folk would come to see her do the trick. When I grew up I held the cart and they both greased the wheels. But at last they died of the plague, the pair of them, God rest their souls! So I inherited the farm----"

"And--" said Foy, fixing him with his eye.



"And," jerked out Martin in an unwilling fashion, "fell into bad habits."

"Drink?" suggested the merciless Foy.

Martin sighed and hung his great head. He had a tender conscience.

"Then you took to prize-fighting," went on his tormentor; "you can't deny it; look at your nose."

"I did, master, for the Lord hadn't touched my heart in those days, and," he added, brisking up, "it wasn't such a bad trade, for nobody ever beat me except a Brussels man once when I was drunk. He broke my nose, but afterwards, when I was sober--" and he stopped.

"You killed the Spanish boxer here in Leyden," said Foy sternly.

"Yes," echoed Martin, "I killed him sure enough, but--oh! it was a pretty fight, and he brought it on himself. He was a fine man, that Spaniard, but the devil wouldn't play fair, so I just had to kill him. I hope that they bear in mind up above that I had to kill him."

"Tell me about it, Martin, for I was at The Hague at the time, and can't remember. Of course I don't approve of such things"--and the young rascal clasped his hands and looked pious--"but as it is all done with, one may as well hear the story of the fight. To spin it won't make you

more wicked than you are."

Then suddenly Martin the unreminiscent developed a marvellous memory, and with much wealth of detail set out the exact circumstances of that historic encounter.

"And after he had kicked me in the stomach," he ended, "which, master, you will know he had no right to do, I lost my temper and hit out with all my strength, having first fainted and knocked up his guard with my left arm----"

"And then," said Foy, growing excited, for Martin really told the story very well, "what happened?"

"Oh, his head went back between his shoulders, and when they picked him up, his neck was broken. I was sorry, but I couldn't help it, the Lord knows I couldn't help it; he shouldn't have called me 'a dirty Frisian ox' and kicked me in the stomach."

"No, that was very wrong of him. But they arrested you, didn't they, Martin?"

"Yes, for the second time they condemned me to death as a brawler and a manslayer. You see, the other Friesland business came up against me, and the magistrates here had money on the Spaniard. Then your dear father saved me. He was burgomaster of that year, and he paid the death fine

for me--a large sum--afterwards, too, he taught me to be sober and think of my soul. So you know why Red Martin will serve him and his while there is a drop of blood left in his worthless carcass. And now, Master Foy, I'm going to sleep, and God grant that those dirty Spanish dogs mayn't haunt me."

"Don't you fear for that, Martin," said Foy as he took his departure, "absolvo te for those Spaniards. Through your strength God smote them who were not ashamed to rob and insult a poor new widowed woman after helping to murder her husband. Yes, Martin, you may enter that on the right side of the ledger--for a change--for they won't haunt you at night. I'm more afraid lest the business should be traced home to us, but I don't think it likely since the street was quite empty."

"Quite empty," echoed Martin nodding his head. "Nobody saw me except the two soldiers and Vrouw Jansen. They can't tell, and I'm sure that she won't. Good-night, my young master."