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HISTORY OF THE UNITED NETHERLANDS
From the Death of William the Silent to the Twelve Year's Truce—1609

By John Lothrop Motley

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History of the United Netherlands, 1598-1599

CHAPTER XXXVI.

Commercial prospects of Holland—Travels of John Huygen van Linschoten Their effect on the trade and prosperity of the Netherlands—Progress of nautical and geographical science—Maritime exploration—Fantastic notions respecting the polar regions—State of nautical science—First arctic expedition—Success of the voyagers—Failure of the second expedition—Third attempt to discover the north-east passage—Discovery of Spitzbergen—Scientific results of the voyage—Adventures in the frozen regions— Death of William Barendz—Return of the voyagers to Amsterdam— Southern expedition against the Spanish power—Disasters attendant upon it—Extent of Dutch discovery.

During a great portion of Philip's reign the Netherlanders, despite their rebellion, had been permitted to trade with Spain. A spectacle had thus been presented of a vigorous traffic between two mighty belligerents, who derived from their intercourse with each other the means of more thoroughly carrying on their mutual hostilities. The war fed their commerce, and commerce fed their war. The great maritime discoveries at the close of the fifteenth century had enured quite as much to the benefit

of the Flemings and Hollanders as to that of the Spaniards and Portuguese, to whom they were originally due. Antwerp and subsequently Amsterdam had thriven on the great revolution of the Indian trade which Vasco de Gama's voyage around the Cape had effected. The nations of the Baltic and of farthest Ind now exchanged their products on a more extensive scale. and with a wider sweep across the earth than when the mistress of the Adriatic alone held the keys of Asiatic commerce. The haughty but intelligent oligarchy of shopkeepers, which had grown so rich and attained so eminent a political position from its magnificent monopoly, already saw the sources of its grandeur drying up before its eyes, now that the world's trade—for the first time in human history— had become oceanic.

In Holland, long since denuded of forests, were great markets of timber, whither shipbuilders and architects came from all parts of the world to gather the utensils for their craft. There, too, where scarcely a pebble had been deposited in the course of the geological transformations of our planet, were great artificial quarries of granite, and marble, and basalt. Wheat was almost as rare a product of the soil as cinnamon, yet the granaries of Christendom, and the Oriental magazines of spices and drugs, were found chiefly on that barren spot of earth. There was the great international mart where the Osterling, the Turk, the Hindoo, the Atlantic and the Mediterranean traders stored their wares and negotiated their exchanges; while the curious and highly-prized products of Netherland skill—broadcloths, tapestries, brocades, laces, substantial fustians, magnificent damasks, finest linens—increased the mass of visible wealth piled mountains high upon that extraordinary soil which produced nothing and teemed with everything.

After the incorporation of Portugal with Spain however many obstacles were thrown in the way of the trade from the Netherlands to Lisbon and the Spanish ports. Loud and bitter were the railings uttered, as we know, by the English sovereign and her statesmen against the nefarious traffic which the Dutch republic persisted in carrying on with the common enemy. But it is very certain that although the Spanish armadas would have found it comparatively difficult to equip themselves without the tar and the timber, the cordage, the stores, and the biscuits furnished by the Hollanders, the rebellious commonwealth, if excluded from the world's commerce, in which it had learned to play so controlling a part, must have ceased to exist. For without foreign navigation the independent republic was an inconceivable idea. Not only would it have been incapable of continuing the struggle with the greatest monarch in the world, but it might as well have buried itself once and for ever beneath the waves from which it had scarcely emerged. Commerce and Holland were simply synonymous terms. Its morsel of territory was but the wharf to which the republic was occasionally moored; its home was in every ocean and over all the world. Nowhere had there ever existed before so large a proportion of population that was essentially maritime. They were born sailors—men and women alike—and numerous were the children who had never set foot on the shore. At the period now treated of the republic had three times as many ships and sailors as any one nation in the world. Compared with modern times, and especially with the gigantic commercial strides of the two great Anglo-Saxon families, the statistics both of population and of maritime commerce in that famous and most vigorous epoch would seem sufficiently meagre. Yet there is no doubt that in the relative estimate of forces then in activity it would be difficult to exaggerate the naval power of the young commonwealth. When therefore, towards the close of Philip II.'s reign, it became necessary to renounce the carrying trade with Spain and Portugal, by which the communication with India and China was effected, or else to submit to the confiscation of Dutch ships in Spanish ports, and the confinement of Dutch sailors in the dungeons of the Inquisition, a more serious dilemma was presented to the statesmen of the Netherlands than they had ever been called upon to solve.

For the splendid fiction of the Spanish lake was still a formidable fact. Not only were the Portuguese and Spaniards almost the only direct traders to the distant East, but even had no obstacles been interposed by Government, the exclusive possession of information as to the course of trade, the pre-eminent practical knowledge acquired by long experience of that dangerous highway around the world at a time when oceanic navigation was still in its infancy, would have given a monopoly of the traffic to the descendants of the bold discoverers who first opened the great path to the world's commerce.

The Hollanders as a nation had never been engaged in the direct trade around the Cape of Good Hope. Fortunately however at this crisis in their commercial destiny there was a single Hollander who had thoroughly learned the lesson which it was so necessary that all his countrymen should now be taught. Few men of that period deserve a more kindly and more honourable remembrance by posterity for their contributions to science and the progress of civilization than John Huygen van Linschoten, son of a plain burgher of West Friesland. Having always felt a strong impulse to study foreign history and distant nations and customs; he resolved at the early age of seventeen "to absent himself from his fatherland, and from the conversation of friends and relatives," in order to gratify this inclination for self-improvement. After a residence of two years in Lisbon he departed for India in the suite of the Archbishop of Goa, and remained in the East for nearly thirteen years. Diligently examining all the strange phenomena which came under his observation and patiently recording the results of his

researches day by day and year by year, he amassed a fund of information which he modestly intended for the entertainment of his friends when he should return to his native country. It was his wish that "without stirring from their firesides or counting- houses" they might participate with him in the gratification and instruction to be derived fiom looking upon a world then so strange, and for Europeans still so new. He described the manners and customs, the laws, the religions, the social and political institutions, of the ancient races who dwelt in either peninsula of India. He studied the natural history, the botany, the geography of all the regions which he visited. Especially the products which formed the material of a great traffic; the system of culture, the means of transportation, and the course of commerce, were examined by him with minuteness, accuracy, and breadth of vision. He was neither a trader nor a sailor, but a man of letters, a scientific and professional traveller. But it was obvious when he returned, rich with the spoils of oriental study during thirteen years of life, that the results of his researches were worthy of a wider circulation than that which he had originally contemplated. His work was given to the public in the year 1596, and was studied with avidity not only by men of science but by merchants and seafarers. He also added to the record of his Indian experiences a practical manual for navigators. He described the course of the voyage from Lisbon to the East, the currents, the trade-winds and monsoons, the harbours, the islands, the shoals, the sunken rocks and dangerous quicksands, and he accompanied his work with various maps and charts, both general and special, of land and water, rarely delineated before his day, as well as by various astronomical and mathematical calculations. Already a countryman of his own, Wagenaar of Zeeland, had laid the mariners of the world under special obligation by a manual which came into such universal use that for centuries afterwards the sailors of England and of other countries called their indispensable 'vade-mecum' a Wagenaar. But in that text- book but little information was afforded to eastern voyagers, because, before the enterprise of Linschoten, little was known of the Orient except to the Portuguese and Spaniards, by whom nothing was communicated.

The work of Linschoten was a source of wealth, both from the scientific treasures which it diffused among an active and intelligent people, and the impulse which it gave to that direct trade between the Netherlands and the East which had been so long deferred, and which now came to relieve the commerce of the republic, and therefore the republic itself, from the danger of positive annihilation.

It is not necessary for my purpose to describe in detail the series of voyages by way of the Cape of Good Hope which, beginning with the adventures of the brothers Houtmann at this period, and with the circumnavigation of the world by Olivier van Noord, made the Dutch for a long time the leading Christian nation in those golden regions, and which carried the United Netherlands to the highest point of prosperity and power. The Spanish monopoly of the Indian and the Pacific Ocean was effectually disposed of, but the road was not a new road, nor did any striking discoveries at this immediate epoch illustrate the enterprise of Holland in the East. In the age just opening the homely names most dear to the young republic were to be inscribed on capes, islands, and promontories, seas, bays, and continents. There was soon to be a "Staten Island" both in the frozen circles of the northern and of the southern pole, as well as in that favoured region where now the mighty current of a worldwide commerce flows through the gates of that great metropolis of the western world, once called New Amsterdam. Those well-beloved words, Orange and Nassau, Maurice and William, intermingled with the names of many an ancient town and village, or with the simple patronymics of hardy navigators or honoured statesmen, were to make the vernacular of the new commonwealth a familiar sound in the remotest corners of the earth; while a fifth continent, discovered by the enterprise of Hollanders, was soon to be fitly baptized with the name of the fatherland. Posterity has been neither just nor grateful, and those early names which Dutch genius and enterprise wrote upon so many prominent points of the earth's surface, then seen for the first time by European eyes, are no longer known.

The impulse given to the foreign trade of the Netherlands by the publication of Linschoten's work was destined to be a lasting one. Meantime this most indefatigable and enterprising voyager—one of those men who had done nothing in his own estimation so long as aught remained to do—was deeply pondering the possibility of a shorter road to the opulent kingdoms of Cathay and of China than the one which the genius of De Gama had opened to his sovereigns. Geography as a science was manifesting the highest activity at that period, but was still in a rudimentary state. To the Hollanders especially much of the progress already made by it was owing. The maps of the world by Mercator of Leyden, published on a large scale, together with many astronomical and geographical charts, delineations of exploration, and other scientific works, at the magnificent printing establishment of William Blaeuw, in Amsterdam, the friend and pupil of Tycho Brahe, and the first in that line of typographers who made the name famous, constituted an epoch in cosmography. Another ardent student of geography lived in Amsterdam, Peter Plancius by name, a Calvinist preacher, and one of the most zealous and intolerant of his cloth. In an age and a country which had not yet thoroughly learned the lesson taught by hundreds of thousands of murders committed by an orthodox church, he was one of those who considered the substitution of a new dogma and a new hierarchy, a new orthodoxy and a new church, in place of the old ones, a satisfactory result for fifty, years of perpetual bloodshed. Nether Torquemada nor Peter

Titelmann could have more thoroughly abhorred a Jew or a Calvinist than Peter Plancius detested a Lutheran, or any other of the unclean tribe of remonstranta. That the intolerance of himself and his comrades was confined to fiery words, and was not manifested in the actual burning alive of the heterodox, was a mark of the advance made by the mass of mankind in despite of bigotry. It was at any rate a solace to those who believed in human progress; even in matters of conscience, that no other ecclesiastical establishment was ever likely to imitate the matchless machinery for the extermination of heretical vermin which the Church of Rome had found in the Spanish Inquisition. The blasts of denunciation from the pulpit of Plancius have long since mingled with empty air and been forgotten, but his services in the cause of nautical enterprise and geographical science, which formed, as it were, a relaxation to what he deemed the more serious pursuits of theology, will endear his name for ever to the lovers of civilization.

Plancius and Dr. Francis Maalzoon—the enlightened pensionary of Enkhuizen—had studied long and earnestly the history and aspects of the oceanic trade, which had been unfolding itself then for a whole century, but was still comparatively new, while Barneveld, ever ready to assist in the advancement of science, and to foster that commerce which was the life of the commonwealth, was most favourably disposed towards projects of maritime exploration. For hitherto, although the Hollanders had been among the hardiest and the foremost in the art of navigation they had contributed but little to actual discovery. A Genoese had led the way to America, while one Portuguese mariner had been the first to double the southern cape of Africa, and another, at the opposite side of the world, had opened what was then supposed the only passage through the vast continent which, according to ideas then prevalent, extended from the Southern Pole to Greenland, and from Java to Patagonia. But it was easier to follow in the wake of Columbus, Gama, or Magellan, than to strike out new pathways by the aid of scientific deduction and audacious enterprise. At a not distant day many errors, disseminated by the boldest of Portuguese navigators, were to be corrected by the splendid discoveries of sailors sent forth by the Dutch republic, and a rich harvest in consequence was to be reaped both by science and commerce. It is true, too, that the Netherlanders claimed to have led the way to the great voyages of Columbus by their discovery of the Azores. Joshua van den Berg, a merchant of Bruges, it was vigorously maintained, had landed in that archipelago in the year 1445. He had found there, however, no vestiges of the human race, save that upon the principal island, in the midst of the solitude, was seen—so ran the tale—a colossal statue of a man on horseback, wrapped in a cloak, holding the reins of his steed in his left hand, and solemnly extending his right arm to the west. This gigantic and solitary apparition on a rock in the ocean was supposed to indicate the existence of a new world, and the direction in which it was to be sought, but it is probable that the shipwrecked Fleeting was quite innocent of any such magnificent visions. The original designation of the Flemish Islands, derived from their first colonization by Netherlanders, was changed to Azores by Portuguese mariners, amazed at the myriads of hawks which they found there. But if the Netherlanders had never been able to make higher claims as discoverers than the accidental and dubious landing upon an unknown shore of a tempest-tost mariner, their position in the records of geographical exploration would not be so eminent as it certainly is.

Meantime the eyes of Linschoten, Plancius, Maalzoon, Barneveld, and of many other ardent philosophers and patriots, were turned anxiously towards the regions of the North Pole. Two centuries later—and still more recently in our own day and generation—what heart has not thrilled with sympathy and with pride at the story of the magnificent exploits, the heroism, the contempt of danger and of suffering which have characterized the great navigators whose names are so familiar to the world; especially the arctic explorers of England and of our own country? The true chivalry of an advanced epoch—recognizing that there can be no sublimer vocation for men of action than to extend the boundary of human knowledge in the face of perils and obstacles more formidable and more mysterious than those encountered by the knights of old in the cause of the Lord's sepulchre or the holy grail—they have thus embodied in a form which will ever awaken enthusiasm in imaginative natures, the noble impulses of our latter civilization. To win the favour of that noblest of mistresses, Science; to take authoritative possession, in her name, of the whole domain of humanity; to open new pathways to commerce; to elevate and enlarge the human intellect, and to multiply indefinitely the sum of human enjoyments; to bring the inhabitants of the earth into closer and more friendly communication, so that, after some yet unimagined inventions and discoveries, and after the lapse of many years, which in the sight of the Omnipotent are but as one day, the human race may form one pacific family, instead of being broken up, as are the most enlightened of peoples now, into warring tribes of internecine savages, prating of the advancement of civilization while coveting each other's possessions, intriguing against each other's interests, and thoroughly in earnest when cutting each other's throats; this is truly to be the pioneers of a possible civilization, compared to which our present culture may seem but a poor barbarism. If the triumphs and joys of the battle-field have been esteemed among the noblest themes for poet, painter, or chronicler, alike in the mists of antiquity and in the full glare of later days, surely a still more encouraging spectacle for those who believe in the world's progress is the exhibition of almost infinite valour, skill, and endurance in the cause of science and humanity.

It was believed by the Dutch cosmographers that some ten thousand miles of voyaging might be saved, could the passage to what was then called the kingdoms of Cathay be effected by way of the north. It must be remembered that there were no maps of the unknown regions lying beyond the northern headlands of Sweden. Delineations of continents, islands, straits, rivers, and seas, over which every modern schoolboy pores, were not attempted even by the hand of fancy. It was perhaps easier at the end of the sixteenth century than it is now, to admit the possibility of a practical path to China and India across the pole; for delusions as to climate and geographical configuration then prevalent have long since been dispelled. While, therefore, at least as much heroism was required then as now to launch into those unknown seas, in hope to solve the dread mystery of the North; there was even a firmer hope than can ever be cherished again of deriving an immediate and tangible benefit from the enterprise. Plancius and Maalzoon, the States-General and Prince Maurice, were convinced that the true road to Cathay would be found by sailing north-east. Linschoten, the man who knew India and the beaten paths to India better than any other living Christian, was so firmly convinced of the truth of this theory, that he volunteered to take the lead in the first expedition. Many were the fantastic dreams in which even the wisest thinkers of the age indulged as to the polar regions. Four straits or channels, pierced by a magic hand, led, it was thought, from the interior of Muscovy towards the arctic seas. According to some speculators, however, those seas enclosed a polar continent where perpetual summer and unbroken daylight reigned, and whose inhabitants, having obtained a high degree of culture; lived in the practice of every virtue and in the enjoyment of every blessing. Others peopled these mysterious regions with horrible savages, having hoofs of horses and heads of dogs, and with no clothing save their own long ears coiled closely around their limbs and bodies; while it was deemed almost certain that a race of headless men, with eyes in their breasts, were the most enlightened among those distant tribes. Instead of constant sunshine, it was believed by such theorists that the wretched inhabitants of that accursed zone were immersed in almost incessant fogs or tempests, that the whole population died every winter and were only recalled to temporary existence by the advent of a tardy and evanescent spring. No doubt was felt that the voyager in those latitudes would have to encounter volcanoes of fire and mountains of ice, together with land and sea monsters more ferocious than the eye of man had ever beheld; but it was universally admitted that an opening, either by strait or sea, into the desired Indian haven would reveal itself at last.

The instruments of navigation too were but rude and defective compared to the beautiful machinery with which modern art and science now assist their votaries along the dangerous path of discovery. The small yet unwieldy, awkward, and, to the modern mind, most grotesque vessels in which such audacious deeds were performed in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries awaken perpetual astonishment. A ship of a hundred tons burden, built up like a tower, both at stem and stern, and presenting in its broad bulbous prow, its width of beam in proportion to its length, its depression amidships, and in other sins against symmetry, as much opposition to progress over the waves as could well be imagined, was the vehicle in which those indomitable Dutchmen circumnavigated the globe and confronted the arctic terrors of either pole. An astrolabe— such as Martin Beheim had invented for the Portuguese, a clumsy astronomical ring of three feet in circumference—was still the chief machine used for ascertaining the latitude, and on shipboard a most defective one. There were no logarithms, no means of determining at sea the variations of the magnetic needle, no system of dead reckoning by throwing the log and chronicling the courses traversed. The firearms with which the sailors were to do battle with the unknown enemies that might beset their path were rude and clumsy to handle. The art of compressing and condensing provisions was unknown. They had no tea nor coffee to refresh the nervous system in its terrible trials; but there was one deficiency which perhaps supplied the place of many positive luxuries. Those Hollanders drank no ardent spirits. They had beer and wine in reasonable quantities, but no mention is ever made in the journals of their famous voyages of any more potent liquor; and to this circumstance doubtless the absence of mutinous or disorderly demonstrations, under the most trying circumstances, may in a great degree be attributed.

Thus, these navigators were but slenderly provided with the appliances with which hazardous voyages have been smoothed by modern art; but they had iron hearts, faith in themselves, in their commanders, in their republic, and in the Omnipotent; perfect discipline and unbroken cheerfulness amid toil, suffering, and danger. No chapter of history utters a more beautiful homily an devotion to duty as the true guiding principle of human conduct than the artless narratives which have been preserved of many of these maritime enterprises. It is for these noble lessons that they deserve to be kept in perpetual memory.

And in no individual of that day were those excellent qualities more thoroughly embodied than in William Barendz, pilot and burgher of Amsterdam. It was partly under his charge that the first little expedition set forth on the 5th of June, 1594, towards those unknown arctic seas, which no keel from Christendom had ever ploughed, and to those fabulous regions where the foot of civilized men had never trod. Maalzoon, Plancius, and Balthaser Moucheron, merchant of Middelburg, were the chief directors of the enterprise; but there was a difference of opinion between them.

The pensionary was firm in the faith that the true path to China would be found by steering through the passage which was known to exist between the land of Nova Zembla and the northern coasts of Muscovy, inhabited by the savage tribes called Samoyedes. It was believed that, after passing those straits, the shores of the great continent would be found to trend in a south-easterly direction, and that along that coast it would accordingly be easy to make the desired voyage to the eastern ports of China. Plancius, on the contrary, indicated as the most promising passage the outside course, between the northern coast of Nova Zembla and the pole. Three ships and a fishing yacht were provided by the cities of Enkhuizen, Amsterdam, and by the province of Zeeland respectively. Linschoten was principal commissioner on board the Enkhuizen vessel, having with him an experienced mariner, Brandt Ijsbrantz by name, as skipper. Barendz, with the Amsterdam ship and the yacht, soon parted company with the others, and steered, according to the counsels of Plancius and his own convictions; for the open seas of the north. And in that memorable summer, for the first time in the world's history, the whole desolate region of Nova Zembla was visited, investigated, and thoroughly mapped out. Barendz sailed as far as latitude 77 deg. and to the extreme north-eastern point of the island. In a tremendous storm off a cape, which he ironically christened Consolationhook (Troost-hoek), his ship, drifting under bare poles amid ice and mist and tempest, was nearly dashed to pieces; but he reached at last the cluster of barren islets beyond the utmost verge of Nova Zembla, to which he hastened to affix the cherished appellation of Orange. This, however, was the limit of his voyage. His ship was ill-provisioned, and the weather had been severe beyond expectation. He turned back on the 1st of August, resolving to repeat his experiment early in the following year.

Meantime Linschoten, with the ships Swan and Mercury, had entered the passage which they called the Straits of Nassau, but which are now known to all the world as the Waigats. They were informed by the Samoyedes of the coast that, after penetrating the narrow channel, they would find themselves in a broad and open sea. Subsequent discoveries showed the correctness of the statement, but it was not permitted to the adventurers on this occasion to proceed so far. The strait was already filled with ice-drift, and their vessels were brought to a standstill, after about a hundred and fifty English miles of progress beyond the Waigats; for the whole sea of Tartary, converted into a mass of ice- mountains and islands, and lashed into violent agitation by a north easterly storm, seemed driving down upon the doomed voyagers. It was obvious that the sunny clime of Cathay was not thus to be reached, at least upon that occasion. With difficulty they succeeded in extricating themselves from the dangers surrounding them, and emerged at last from the Waigats.

On the 15th of August, in latitude 69 deg. 15', they met the ship of Barendz and returned in company to Holland, reaching Amsterdam on the 16th of September. Barendz had found the seas and coasts visited by him destitute of human inhabitants, but swarming with polar bears, with seals, with a terrible kind of monsters, then seen for the first time, as large as oxen, with almost human faces and with two long tusks protruding from each grim and grotesque visage. These mighty beasts, subsequently known as walrusses or sea-horses, were found sometimes in swarms of two hundred at a time, basking in the arctic sun, and seemed equally at home on land, in the sea, and on icebergs. When aware of the approach of their human visitors, they would slide off an iceblock into the water, holding their cubs in their arms, and ducking up and down in the sea as if in sport. Then tossing the young ones away, they would rush upon the boats, and endeavour to sink the strangers, whom they instinctively recognised as their natural enemies. Many were the severe combats recorded by the diarist of that voyage of Barendz with the walrusses and the bears.

The chief result of this first expedition was the geographical investigation made, and, with unquestionable right; these earliest arctic pilgrims bestowed the names of their choice upon the regions first visited by themselves. According to the unfailing and universal impulse on such occasions, the names dear to the fatherland were naturally selected. The straits were called Nassau, the island at its mouth became States or Staten Island; the northern coasts of Tartary received the familiar appellations of New Holland, New Friesland, New Walcheren; while the two rivers, beyond which Linschoten did not advance, were designated Swan and Mercury respectively, after his two ships. Barendz, on his part, had duly baptized every creek, bay, islet, and headland of Nova Zembla, and assuredly Christian mariner had never taken the latitude of 77 deg. before. Yet the antiquary, who compares the maps soon afterwards published by William Blaeuw with the charts now in familiar use, will observe with indignation the injustice with which the early geographical records have been defaced, and the names rightfully bestowed upon those terrible deserts by their earliest discoverers rudely torn away. The islands of Orange can still be recognized, and this is almost the only vestige left of the whole nomenclature. But where are Cape Nassau, William's Island, Admiralty Island, Cape Plancius, Black-hook, Cross- hook, Bear's-hook, Ice-hook, Consolation-hook, Cape Desire, the Straits of Nassau, Maurice Island, Staten Island, Enkhuizen Island, and many other similar appellations.

The sanguine Linschoten, on his return, gave so glowing an account of the expedition that Prince Maurice and Olden-Barneveld, and prominent members of the States-General, were infected with his

enthusiasm. He considered the north-east passage to China discovered and the problem solved. It would only be necessary to fit out another expedition on a larger scale the next year, provide it with a cargo of merchandize suitable for the China market, and initiate the direct polar-oriental trade without further delay. It seems amazing that so incomplete an attempt to overcome such formidable obstacles should have been considered a decided success. Yet there is no doubt of the genuineness of the conviction by which Linschoten was actuated. The calmer Barendz, and his friend and comrade Gerrit de Veer, were of opinion that the philosopher had made "rather a free representation" of the enterprise of 1594 and of the prospects for the future.

Nevertheless, the general Government, acting on Linschoten's suggestion, furnished a fleet of seven ships: two from Enkhuizen, two from Zeeland, two from Amsterdam; and a yacht which was to be despatched homeward with the news, so soon as the expedition should have passed through the straits of Nassau, forced its way through the frozen gulf of Tartary, doubled Cape Tabin, and turned southward on its direct course to China. The sublime credulity which accepted Linschoten's hasty solution of the polar enigma as conclusive was fairly matched by the sedateness with which the authorities made the preparations for the new voyage. So deliberately were the broadcloths, linens, tapestries, and other assorted articles for this first great speculation to Cathay, via the North Pole, stowed on board the fleet, that nearly half the summer had passed before anchor was weighed in the Meuse. The pompous expedition was thus predestined to an almost ridiculous failure. Yet it was in the hands of great men, both on shore and sea. Maurice, Barneveld, and Maalzoon had personally interested themselves in the details of its outfitting, Linschoten sailed as chief commissioner, the calm and intrepid Barendz was upper pilot of the whole fleet, and a man who was afterwards destined to achieve an immortal name in the naval history of his country, Jacob Heemskerk, was supercargo of the Amsterdam ship. In obedience to the plans of Linschoten and of Maalzoon, the passage by way of the Waigats was of course attempted. A landing was effected on the coast of Tartary. Whatever geographical information could be obtained from such a source was imparted by the wandering Samoyedes. On the 2nd of September a party went ashore on Staten Island and occupied themselves in gathering some glistening pebbles which the journalist of the expedition describes with much gravity as a "kind of diamonds, very plentiful upon the island." While two of the men were thus especially engaged in a deep hollow, one of them found himself suddenly twitched from behind. "What are you pulling at me for, mate?" he said, impatiently to his comrade as he supposed. But his companion was a large, long, lean white bear, and in another instant the head of the unfortunate diamond-gatherer was off and the bear was sucking his blood. The other man escaped to his friends, and together a party of twenty charged upon the beast. Another of the combatants was killed and half devoured by the hungry monster before a fortunate bullet struck him in the head. But even then the bear maintained his grip upon his two victims, and it was not until his brains were fairly beaten out with the butt end of a snaphance by the boldest of the party that they were enabled to secure the bodies of their comrades and give them a hurried kind of Christian burial. They flayed the bear and took away his hide with them, and this, together with an ample supply of the diamonds of Staten Island, was the only merchandize obtained upon the voyage for which such magnificent preparations had been made. For, by the middle of September, it had become obviously hopeless to attempt the passage of the frozen sea that season, and the expedition returned, having accomplished nothing. It reached Amsterdam upon the 18th of November, 1595.

The authorities, intensely disappointed at this almost ridiculous result, refused to furnish direct assistance to any farther attempts at arctic explorations. The States-General however offered a reward of twenty-five thousand florins to any navigators who might succeed in discovering the northern passage, with a proportionate sum to those whose efforts in that direction might be deemed commendable, even if not crowned with success.

Stimulated by the spirit of adventure and the love of science far more than by the hope of gaining a pecuniary prize, the undaunted Barendz, who was firm in the faith that a pathway existed by the north of Nova Zembla and across the pole to farthest Ind, determined to renew the attempt the following summer. The city of Amsterdam accordingly, early in the year 1596, fitted out two ships. Select crews of entirely unmarried men volunteered for the enterprise. John Cornelisz van der Ryp, an experienced sea-captain, was placed in charge of one of the vessels, William Barendz was upper pilot of the other, and Heemskerk, "the man who ever steered his way through ice or iron," was skipper and supercargo.

The ships sailed from the Vlie on the 18th May. The opinions of Peter Plancius prevailed in this expedition at last; the main object of both Ryp and Barendz being to avoid the fatal, narrow, ice-clogged Waigats. Although identical in this determination, their views as to the configuration of the land and sea, and as to the proper course to be steered, were conflicting. They however sailed in company mainly in a N.E. by N. direction, although Barendz would have steered much more to the east.

On the 5th June the watch on deck saw, as they supposed, immense flocks of white swans swimming towards the ships, and covering the sea as far as the eye could reach. All hands came up to look at the

amazing spectacle, but the more experienced soon perceived that the myriads of swans were simply infinite fields of ice, through which however they were able to steer their course without much impediment, getting into clear sea beyond about midnight, at which hour the sun was one degree above the horizon.

Proceeding northwards two days more they were again surrounded by ice, and, finding the "water green as grass, they believed themselves to be near Greenland." On the 9th June they discovered an island in latitude, according to their observation, 74 deg. 30', which seemed about five miles long. In this neighbourhood they remained four days, having on one occasion a "great fight which lasted four glasses" with a polar bear, and making a desperate attempt to capture him in order to bring him as a show to Holland. The effort not being successful, they were obliged to take his life to save their own; but in what manner they intended, had they secured him alive, to provide for such a passenger in the long voyage across the North Pole to China, and thence back to Amsterdam, did not appear. The attempt illustrated the calmness, however, of those hardy navigators. They left the island on the 13th June, having baptised it Bear Island in memory of their vanquished foe, a name which was subsequently exchanged for the insipid appellation of Cherry Island, in honour of a comfortable London merchant who seven years afterwards sent a ship to those arctic regions.

Six days later they saw land again, took the sun, and found their latitude 80 deg. 11'. Certainly no men had ever been within less than ten degrees of the pole before. On the longest day of the year they landed on this newly discovered country, which they at first fancied to be a part of Greenland. They found its surface covered with eternal snow, broken into mighty glaciers, jagged with precipitous ice-peaks; and to this land of almost perpetual winter, where the mercury freezes during ten months in the year, and where the sun remains four months beneath the horizon, they subsequently gave the appropriate and vernacular name of Spitzbergen. Combats with the sole denizens of these hideous abodes, the polar bears, on the floating ice, on the water, or on land, were constantly occurring, and were the only events to disturb the monotony of that perpetual icy sunshine, where no night came to relieve the almost maddening glare. They rowed up a wide inlet on the western coast, and came upon great numbers of wild-geese sitting on their eggs. They proved to be the same geese that were in the habit of visiting Holland in vast flocks every summer, and it had never before been discovered where they laid and hatched their eggs. "Therefore," says the diarist of the expedition, "some voyagers have not scrupled to state that the eggs grow on trees in Scotland, and that such of the fruits of those trees as fall into the water become goslings, while those which drop on the ground burst in pieces and come to nothing. We now see that quite the contrary is the case," continues De Veer, with perfect seriousness, "nor is it to be wondered at, for nobody has ever been until now where those birds lay their eggs. No man, so far as known, ever reached the latitude of eighty degrees before. This land was hitherto unknown."

The scientific results of this ever-memorable voyage might be deemed sufficiently meagre were the fact that the eggs of wild geese did not grow on trees its only recorded discovery. But the investigations made into the dread mysteries of the north, and the actual problems solved, were many, while the simplicity of the narrator marks the infantine character of the epoch in regard to natural history. When so illustrious a mind as Grotius was inclined to believe in a race of arctic men whose heads grew beneath their shoulders; the ingenuous mariner of Amsterdam may be forgiven for his earnestness in combating the popular theory concerning goslings.

On the 23rd June they went ashore again, and occupied themselves, as well as the constant attacks of the bears would permit, in observing the variation of the needle, which they ascertained to be sixteen degrees. On the same day, the ice closing around in almost infinite masses, they made haste to extricate themselves from the land and bore southwards again, making Bear Island once more on the 1st July. Here Cornelius Ryp parted company with Heemskerk and Barendz, having announced his intention to sail northward again beyond latitude 80 deg. in search of the coveted passage. Barendz, retaining his opinion that the true inlet to the circumpolar sea, if it existed, would be found N.E. of Nova Zembla, steered in that direction. On the 13th July they found themselves by observation in latitude 73 deg., and considered themselves in the neighbourhood of Sir Hugh Willoughby's land. Four days later they were in Lomms' Bay, a harbour of Nova Zembla, so called by them from the multitude of lomms frequenting it, a bird to which they gave the whimsical name of arctic parrots. On the 20th July the ice obstructed their voyage; covering the sea in all directions with floating mountains and valleys, so that they came to an anchor off an islet where on a former voyage the Hollanders had erected the precious emblem of Christian faith, and baptised the dreary solitude Cross Island. But these pilgrims, as they now approached the spot, found no worshippers there, while, as if in horrible mockery of their piety, two enormous white bears had reared themselves in an erect posture, in order the better to survey their visitors, directly at the foot of the cross. The party which had just landed were unarmed, and were for making off as fast as possible to their boats. But Skipper Heemskerk, feeling that this would be death to all of them, said simply, "The first man that runs shall have this boat- hook of mine in

his hide. Let us remain together and face them off." It was done. The party moved slowly towards their boats, Heemskerlk bringing up the rear, and fairly staring the polar monsters out of countenance, who remained grimly regarding them, and ramping about the cross.

The sailors got into their boat with much deliberation, and escaped to the ship, "glad enough," said De Veer, "that they were alive to tell the story, and that they had got out of the cat-dance so fortunately."

Next day they took the sun, and found their latitude 76 deg. 15', and the variation of the needle twenty-six degrees.

For seventeen days more they were tossing about in mist and raging snow- storms, and amidst tremendous icebergs, some of them rising in steeples and pinnacles to a hundred feet above the sea, some grounded and stationary, others drifting fearfully around in all directions, threatening to crush them at any moment or close in about them and imprison them for ever. They made fast by their bower anchor on the evening of 7th August to a vast iceberg which was aground, but just as they had eaten their supper there was a horrible groaning, bursting, and shrieking all around them, an indefinite succession of awful, sounds which made their hair stand on end, and then the iceberg split beneath the water into more than four hundred pieces with a crash "such as no words could describe." They escaped any serious damage, and made their way to a vast steepled and towered block like a floating cathedral, where they again came to anchor.

On the 15th August they reached the isles of Orange, on the extreme north-eastern verge of Nova Zembla. Here a party going ashore climbed to the top of a rising ground, and to their infinite delight beheld an open sea entirely free from ice, stretching to the S. E. and E.S.E. as far as eye could reach. At last the game was won, the passage to Cathay was discovered. Full of joy, they pulled back in their boat to the ship, "not knowing how to get there quick enough to tell William Barendz." Alas! they were not aware of the action of that mighty ocean river, the Gulf-stream, which was sweeping around those regions with its warm dissolving current.

Three days later they returned baffled in their sanguine efforts to sail through the open sea. The ice had returned upon them, setting southwardly in obedience to the same impulse which for a moment had driven it away, and they found themselves imprisoned again near the "Hook of Desire."

On the 25th August they had given up all the high hopes by which they had been so lately inspired, and, as the stream was again driving the ice from the land, they trusted to sail southward and westward back towards the Waigats. Having passed by Nova Zembla, and found no opening into the seas beyond, they were disposed in the rapidly waning summer to effect their retreat by the south side of the island, and so through the Straits of Nassau home. In vain. The catastrophe was upon them. As they struggled slowly past the "Ice-haven," the floating mountains and glaciers, impelled by the mighty current, once more gathered around and forced them back to that horrible harbour. During the remaining days of August the ship struggled, almost like a living creature, with the perils that, beset her; now rearing in the air, her bows propped upon mighty blocks, till she absolutely sat erect upon her stern, now lying prostrate on her side, and anon righting again as the ice-masses would for a moment float away and leave her breathing space and room to move in. A blinding snow-storm was raging the while, the ice was cracking and groaning in all directions, and the ship was shrieking, so that the medley of awful sights and sounds was beyond the power of language. "'Twas enough to make the hair stand on end," said Gerrit de Veer, "to witness the hideous spectacle."

But the agony was soon over. By the 1st September the ship was hard and fast. The ice was as immoveable as the dry land, and she would not move again that year even if she ever floated. Those pilgrims from the little republic were to spend the winter in their arctic harbour. Resigning themselves without a murmur to their inevitable fate, they set about their arrangements with perfect good humour and discipline. Most fortunately a great quantity of drift wood, masses of timber, and great trees torn away with their roots from distant shores, lay strewn along the coast, swept thither by the wandering currents. At once they resolved to build a house in which they might shelter themselves from the wild beasts, and from their still more cruel enemy, the cold. So thanking God for the providential and unexpected supply of building material and fuel, they lost no time in making sheds, in hauling timber, and in dragging supplies from the ship before the dayless winter should descend upon them.

Six weeks of steady cheerful labour succeeded. Tremendous snow-storms, accompanied by hurricanes of wind, often filled the atmosphere to suffocation, so that no human being could move a ship's length without perishing; while, did any of their number venture forth, as the tempest subsided, it was often to find himself almost in the arms of a polar bear before the dangerous snow-white form could be distinguished moving sluggishly through the white chaos.

For those hungry companions never left them so long as the sun remained above the horizon,

swarming like insects and birds in tropical lands. When the sailors put their meat-tubs for a moment out upon the ice a bear's intrusive muzzle would forthwith be inserted to inspect the contents. Maddened by hunger, and their keen scent excited by the salted provisions, and by the living flesh and blood of these intruders upon their ancient solitary domains, they would often attempt to effect their entrance into the ship.

On one such occasion, when Heemskerk and two companions were the whole garrison, the rest being at a distance sledding wood, the future hero of Gibraltar was near furnishing a meal to his Nova Zembla enemies. It was only by tossing sticks and stones and marling-spikes across the ice, which the bears would instantly turn and pursue, like dogs at play with children, that the assault could be diverted until a fortunate shot was made.

Several were thus killed in the course of the winter, and one in particular was disembowelled and set frozen upon his legs near their house, where he remained month after month with a mass of snow and ice accumulated upon him, until he had grown into a fantastic and gigantic apparition, still wearing the semblance of their mortal foe.

By the beginning of October the weather became so intensely cold that it was almost impossible to work. The carpenter died before the house was half completed. To dig a grave was impossible, but they laid him in a cleft of the ice, and he was soon covered with the snow. Meantime the sixteen that were left went on as they best might with their task, and on October 2nd they had a house-raising. The frame-work was set up, and in order to comply with the national usage in such cases, they planted, instead of the May-pole with its fluttering streamers, a gigantic icicle before their new residence. Ten days later they moved into the house and slept there for the first time, while a bear, profiting by their absence, passed the night in the deserted ship.

On the 4th November the sun rose no more, but the moon at first shone day and night, until they were once in great perplexity to know whether it were midday or midnight. It proved to be exactly noon. The bears disappeared with the sun, but white foxes swarmed in their stead, and all day and night were heard scrambling over their roof. These were caught daily in traps and furnished them food, besides furs for raiment. The cold became appalling, and they looked in each other's faces sometimes in speechless amazement. It was obvious that the extreme limit of human endurance had been reached. Their clothes were frozen stiff. Their shoes were like iron, so that they were obliged to array themselves from head to foot in the skins of the wild foxes. The clocks stopped. The beer became solid. The Spanish wine froze and had to be melted in saucepans. The smoke in the house blinded them. Fire did not warm them, and their garments were often in a blaze while their bodies were half frozen. All through the month of December an almost perpetual snow- deluge fell from the clouds. For days together they were unable to emerge, and it was then only by most vigorous labour that they could succeed in digging a passage out of their buried house. On the night of the 7th December sudden death had nearly put an end to the sufferings of the whole party. Having brought a quantity of seacoal from the ship, they had made a great fire, and after the smoke was exhausted, they had stopped up the chimney and every crevice of the house. Each man then turned into his bunk for the night, "all rejoicing much in the warmth and prattling a long time with each other." At last an unaccustomed giddiness and faintness came over them, of which they could not guess the cause, but fortunately one of the party had the instinct, before he lost consciousness, to open the chimney, while another forced open the door and fell in a swoon upon the snow. Their dread enemy thus came to their relief, and saved their lives.

As the year drew to a close, the frost and the perpetual snow-tempest became, if that were possible, still more frightful. Their Christmas was not a merry one, and for the first few days of the new year, it was impossible for them to move from the house. On the 25th January, the snow-storms having somewhat abated, they once more dug themselves as it were out of their living grave, and spent the whole day in hauling wood from the shore. As their hour-glasses informed them that night was approaching, they bethought themselves that it was Twelfth Night, or Three Kings' Eve. So they all respectfully proposed to Skipper Heemskerk, that, in the midst of their sorrow they might for once have a little diversion. A twelfth-night feast was forthwith ordained. A scanty portion of the wine yet remaining to them was produced. Two pounds weight of flour, which they had brought to make paste with for cartridges, was baked into pancakes with a little oil, and a single hard biscuit was served out to each man to be sopped in his meagre allowance of wine. "We were as happy," said Gerrit de veer, with simple pathos, "as if we were having a splendid banquet at home. We imagined ourselves in the fatherland with all our friends, so much did we enjoy our repast."

That nothing might be omitted, lots were drawn for king, and the choice fell on the gunner, who was forthwith proclaimed monarch of Nova Zembla. Certainly no men, could have exhibited more undaunted cheerfulness amid bears and foxes, icebergs and cold—such as Christians had never conceived of before—than did these early arctic pilgrims. Nor did Barendz neglect any opportunity of studying the heavens. A meridian was drawn near the house, on which the compass was placed, and

observations of various stars were constantly made, despite the cold, with extraordinary minuteness. The latitude, from concurrent measurement of the Giant, the Bull, Orion, Aldebaran, and other constellations—in the absence of the sun—was ascertained to be a little above seventy-six degrees, and the variations of the needle were accurately noted.

On the 24th January it was clear weather and comparatively mild, so that Heemskerk, with De Veer and another, walked to the strand. To their infinite delight and surprise they again saw the disk of the sun on the edge of the horizon, and they all hastened back with the glad tidings. But Barendz shook his head. Many days must elapse, he said, before the declination of the sun should be once more 14 deg., at which point in the latitude of 76 deg. they had lost sight of the luminary on the 4th November, and at which only it could again be visible. This, according to his calculations, would be on the 10th February. Two days of mirky and stormy atmosphere succeeded, and those who had wagered in support of the opinion of Barendz were inclined to triumph over those who believed in the observation of Heemskerk. On the 27th January there was, however, no mistake. The sky was bright, and the whole disk of the sun was most distinctly seen by all, although none were able to explain the phenomenon, and Barendz least of all. They had kept accurate diaries ever since their imprisonment, and although the clocks sometimes had stopped, the hour-glasses had regularly noted the lapse of time. Moreover, Barendz knew from the Ephemerides for 1589 to 1600, published by Dr. Joseph Scala in Venice, a copy of which work he had brought with him, that on the 24th January, 1597, the moon would be seen at one o'clock A.M. at Venice, in conjunction with Jupiter. He accordingly took as good an observation as could be done with the naked eye and found that conjunction at six o'clock A.M. Of the same day, the two bodies appearing in the same vertical line in the sign of Taurus. The date was thus satisfactorily established, and a calculation of the longitude of the house was deduced with an accuracy which in those circumstances was certainly commendable. Nevertheless, as the facts and the theory of refraction were not thoroughly understood, nor Tycho Brahe's tables of refraction generally known, pilot Barendz could not be expected to be wiser than his generation.

The startling discovery that in the latitude of 76 deg. the sun reappeared on the 24th January, instead of the 10th February, was destined to awaken commotion throughout the whole scientific world, and has perhaps hardly yet been completely explained.

But the daylight brought no mitigation of their sufferings. The merciless cold continued without abatement, and the sun seemed to mock their misery. The foxes disappeared, and the ice-bears in their stead swarmed around the house, and clambered at night over the roof. Again they constantly fought with them for their lives. Daily the grave question was renewed whether the men should feed on the bears or the bears on the men. On one occasion their dead enemy proved more dangerous to them than in life, for three of their number, who had fed on bear's liver, were nearly poisoned to death. Had they perished, none of the whole party would have ever left Nova Zembla. "It seemed," said the diarist, "that the beasts had smelt out that we meant to go away, and had just begin to have a taste for us."

And thus the days wore on. The hour-glass and the almanac told them that winter had given place to spring, but nature still lay in cold obstruction. One of their number, who had long been ill, died. They hollowed a grave for him in the frozen snow, performing a rude burial service, and singing a psalm; but the cold had nearly made them all corpses before the ceremony was done.

At last, on the 17th April, some of them climbing over the icebergs to the shore found much open sea. They also saw a small bird diving in the water, and looked upon it as a halcyon and harbinger of better fortunes. The open weather continuing, they began to hanker for the fatherland. So they brought the matter, "not mutinously but modestly and reasonably, before William Barendz; that he might suggest it to Heemskerk, for they were all willing to submit to his better judgment." It was determined to wait through the month of May. Should they then be obliged to abandon the ship they were to make the voyage in the two open boats, which had been carefully stowed away beneath the snow. It was soon obvious that the ship was hard and fast, and that she would never float again, except perhaps as a portion of the icebergs in which she had so long been imbedded, when they should be swept off from the shore.

As they now set to work repairing and making ready the frail skiffs which were now their only hope, and supplying them with provisions and even with merchandize from the ship, the ravages made by the terrible winter upon the strength of the men became painfully apparent. But Heemskerk encouraged them to persevere; "for," said he, "if the boats are not got soon under way we must be content to make our graves here as burghers of Nova Zembla."

On the 14th June they launched the boats, and "trusting themselves to God," embarked once more upon the arctic sea. Barendz, who was too ill to walk, together with Claas Anderson, also sick unto death, were dragged to the strand in sleds, and tenderly placed on board.

Barendz had, however, despite his illness, drawn up a triple record of their voyage; one copy being

fastened to the chimney of their deserted house, and one being placed in each of the boats. Their voyage was full of danger as they slowly retraced their way along the track by which they reached the memorable Ice Haven, once more doubling the Cape of Desire and heading for the Point of Consolation —landmarks on their desolate progress, whose nomenclature suggests the immortal apologue so familiar to Anglo-Saxon ears.

Off the Ice-hook, both boats came alongside each other, and Skipper Heemskerk called out to William Barendz to ask how it was with him.

"All right, mate," replied Barendz, cheerfully; "I hope to be on my legs again before we reach the Ward-huis." Then' he begged De Veer to lift him up, that he might look upon the Ice-hook once more. The icebergs crowded around them, drifting this way and that, impelled by mighty currents and tossing on an agitated sea. There was "a hideous groaning and bursting and driving of the ice, and it seemed every moment as if the boats were to be dashed into a hundred pieces." It was plain that their voyage would now be finished for ever, were it not possible for some one of their number to get upon the solid ice beyond and make fast a line. "But who is to bell the cat?" said Gerrit de Veer, who soon, however, volunteered himself, being the lightest of all. Leaping from one floating block to another at the imminent risk of being swept off into space, he at last reached a stationary island, and fastened his rope. Thus they warped themselves once more into the open sea.

On the 20th June William Barendz lay in the boat studying carefully the charts which they had made of the land and ocean discovered in their voyage. Tossing about in an open skiff upon a polar sea, too weak to sit upright, reduced by the unexampled sufferings of that horrible winter almost to a shadow, he still preserved his cheerfulness, and maintained that he would yet, with God's help, perform his destined task. In his next attempt he would steer north-east from the North Cape, he said, and so discover the passage.

While he was "thus prattling," the boatswain of the other boat came on board, and said that Claas Anderson would hold out but little longer.

"Then," said William Barendz, "methinks I too shall last but a little while. Gerrit, give me to drink." When he had drunk, he turned his eyes on De Veer and suddenly breathed his last.

Great was the dismay of his companions, for they had been deceived by the dauntless energy of the man, thus holding tenaciously to his great purpose, unbaffled by danger and disappointment, even to the last instant of life. He was their chief pilot and guide, "in whom next to God they trusted."

And thus the hero, who for vivid intelligence, courage, and perseverance amid every obstacle, is fit to be classed among the noblest of maritime adventurers, had ended his career. Nor was it unmeet that the man who had led those three great although unsuccessful enterprises towards the North Pole, should be laid at last to rest—like the soldier dying in a lost battle—upon the field of his glorious labours.

Nearly six weeks longer they struggled amid tempestuous seas. Hugging the shore, ever in danger of being dashed to atoms by the ice, pursued by their never-failing enemies the bears, and often sailing through enormous herds of walrusses, which at times gave chase to the boats, they at last reached the Schanshoek on the 28th July.

Here they met with some Russian fishermen, who recognised Heemskerk and De Veer, having seen them on their previous voyage. Most refreshing it was to see other human faces again, after thirteen months' separation from mankind, while the honest Muscovites expressed compassion for the forlorn and emaciated condition of their former acquaintance. Furnished by them with food and wine, the Hollanders sailed in company with the Russians as far as the Waigats.

On the 18th August they made Candenoes, at the mouth of the White Sea, and doubling that cape stood boldly across the gulf for Kildin. Landing on the coast they were informed by the Laps that there were vessels from Holland at Kola.

On the 25th August one of the party, guided by a Lap, set forth on foot for that place. Four days later the guide was seen returning without their comrade; but their natural suspicion was at once disarmed as the good-humoured savage straightway produced a letter which he handed to Heemakerk.

Breaking the seal, the skipper found that his correspondent expressed great surprise at the arrival of the voyagers, as he he had supposed them all to be long since dead. Therefore he was the more delighted with their coming, and promised to be with them soon, bringing with him plenty of food and drink.

The letter was signed—

"By me, JAN CORNELISZ RYP."

The occurrence was certainly dramatic, but, as one might think, sufficiently void of mystery. Yet, astonishing to relate, they all fell to pondering who this John Ryp might be who seemed so friendly and sympathetic. It was shrewdly suggested by some that it might perhaps be the sea-captain who had parted company with them off Bear Island fourteen months before in order to sail north by way of Spitzbergen. As his Christian name and surname were signed in full to the letter, the conception did not seem entirely unnatural, yet it was rejected on the ground that they had far more reasons to believe that he had perished than he for accepting their deaths as certain. One might imagine it to have been an every day occurrence for Hollanders to receive letters by a Lapland penny postman in those, desolate regions. At last Heemskerk bethought himself that among his papers were several letters from their old comrade, and, on comparison, the handwriting was found the same as that of the epistle just received. This deliberate avoidance of any hasty jumping at conclusions certainly inspires confidence in the general right accuracy of the adventurers, and we have the better right to believe that on the 24th January the sun's disk was really seen by them in the ice harbour—a fact long disputed by the learned world—when the careful weighing of evidence on the less important matter of Ryp's letter is taken into account.

Meantime while they were slowly admitting the identity of their friend and correspondent, honest John Cornelius Ryp himself arrived—no fantastic fly-away Hollander, but in full flesh and blood, laden with provisions, and greeting them heartily.

He had not pursued his Spitzbergen researches of the previous year, but he was now on a trading voyage in a stout vessel, and he conveyed them all by way of the Ward-huis, where he took in a cargo, back to the fatherland.

They dropped anchor in the Meuse on the 29th October, and on the 1st November arrived at Amsterdam. Here, attired in their robes and caps of white fox-skin which they had worn while citizens of Nova Zembla, they were straightway brought before the magistrates to give an account of their adventures.

They had been absent seventeen months, they had spent a whole autumn, winter, and spring—nearly ten months—under the latitude of 76 deg. in a frozen desert, where no human beings had ever dwelt before, and they had penetrated beyond 80 deg. north—a farther stride towards the pole than had ever been hazarded. They had made accurate geographical, astronomical, and meteorological observations of the regions visited. They had carefully measured latitudes and longitudes and noted the variations of the magnet. They had thoroughly mapped out, described, and designated every cape, island, hook, and inlet of those undiscovered countries, and more than all, they had given a living example of courage, endurance, patience under hardship, perfect discipline, fidelity, to duty, and trust in God, sufficient to inspire noble natures with emulation so long as history can read moral lessons to mankind.

No farther attempt was made to discover the north-eastern passage. The enthusiasm of Barendz had died with him, and it may be said that the stern negation by which this supreme attempt to solve the mystery of the pole was met was its best practical result. Certainly all visions of a circumpolar sea blessed with a gentle atmosphere and eternal tranquillity, and offering a smooth and easy passage for the world's commerce between Europe and Asia, had been for ever dispelled.

The memorable enterprise of Barendz and Heemskerk has been thought worthy of a minute description because it was a voyage of discovery, and because, however barren of immediate practical results it may, seem to superficial eyes, it forms a great landmark in the history of human progress and the advancement of science.

Contemporaneously with these voyages towards the North Pole, the enlightened magistrates of the Netherland municipalities, aided by eminent private citizens, fitted out expeditions in the opposite direction. It was determined to measure strength with the lord of the land and seas, the great potentate against whom these republicans had been so long in rebellion, in every known region of the globe. Both from the newly discovered western world, and from the ancient abodes of oriental civilization, Spanish monopoly had long been furnishing the treasure to support Spanish tyranny, and it was the dearest object of Netherland ambition to confront their enemy in both those regions, and to clip both those overshadowing wings of his commerce at once.

The intelligence, enthusiasm, and tenacity in wrestling against immense obstacles manifested by the young republic at this great expanding era of the world's history can hardly be exaggerated. It was fitting that the little commonwealth, which was foremost among the nations in its hatred of tyranny, its love of maritime adventure, and its aptitude for foreign trade, should take the lead in the great commercial movements which characterized the close of the sixteenth and the commencement of the seventeenth centuries.

While Barendz and Heemskerk were attempting to force the frozen gates which were then supposed to guard the northern highway of commerce, fleets were fitting out in Holland to storm the Southern Pole, or at least to take advantage of the pathways already opened by the genius and enterprise of the earlier navigators of the century. Linschoten had taught his countrymen the value of the technical details of the Indian trade as then understood. The voyages of the brothers Houtmann, 1595- 1600, the first Dutch expeditions to reach the East by doubling the Cape of Good Hope, were undertaken according to his precepts, and directed by the practical knowledge obtained by the Houtmanns during a residence in Portugal, but were not signalized by important discoveries. They are chiefly memorable as having laid the foundation of the vast trade out of which the republic was to derive so much material power, while at the same time they mark the slight beginnings of that mighty monopoly, the Dutch East India Company, which was to teach such tremendous lessons in commercial restriction to a still more colossal English corporation, that mercantile tyrant only in our own days overthrown.

At the same time and at the other side of the world seven ships, fitted out from Holland by private enterprise, were forcing their way to the South Sea through the terrible strait between Patagonia and Fire Land; then supposed the only path around the globe. For the tortuous mountain channel, filled with whirlpools and reefs, and the home of perpetual tempest, which had been discovered in the early part of the century by Magellan, was deemed the sole opening pierced by nature through the mighty southern circumpolar continent. A few years later a daring Hollander was to demonstrate the futility of this theory, and to give his own name to a broader pathway, while the stormy headland of South America, around which the great current of universal commerce was thenceforth to sweep, was baptized by the name of the tranquil town in West Friesland where most of his ship's company were born.

Meantime the seven ships under command of Jacob Mahu, Simon de Cordes, and Sebald de Weerdt; were contending with the dangers of the older route. The expedition sailed from Holland in June, 1598, but already the custom was forming itself of directing those navigators of almost unknown seas by explicit instructions from those who remained on shore, and who had never navigated the ocean at all. The consequence on this occasion was that the voyagers towards the Straits of Magellan spent a whole summer on the coast of Africa, amid pestiferous heats and distracting calms, and reached the straits only in April of the following year. Admiral Mahu and a large proportion of the crew had meantime perished of fevers contracted by following the course marked out for them by their employers, and thus diminished in numbers, half-stripped of provisions, and enfeebled by the exhausting atmosphere of the tropics, the survivors were ill prepared to confront the antarctic ordeal which they were approaching. Five months longer the fleet, under command of Admiral de Cordes, who had succeeded to the command, struggled in those straits, where, as if in the home of Eolus, all the winds of heaven seemed holding revel; but indifference to danger, discipline, and devotion to duty marked the conduct of the adventurers, even as those qualities had just been distinguishing their countrymen at the other pole. They gathered no gold, they conquered no kingdoms, they made few discoveries, they destroyed no fleets, yet they were the first pioneers on a path on which thereafter were to be many such achievements by the republic.

At least one heroic incident, which marked their departure from the straits, deserves to be held in perpetual remembrance. Admiral de Cordes raised on the shore, at the western mouth of the channel, a rude memorial with an inscription that the Netherlanders were the first to effect this dangerous passage with a fleet of heavy ships. On the following day, in commemoration of the event, he founded an order of knighthood. The chief officers of the squadron were the knights-commanders, and the most deserving of the crew were the knights-brethren. The members of the fraternity made solemn oath to De Cordes, as general, and to each other, that "by no danger, no necessity, nor by the fear of death, would they ever be moved to undertake anything prejudicial to their honour, to, the welfare of the fatherland, or to the success of the enterprise in which they were engaged; pledging themselves to stake their lives in order, consistently with honour, to inflict every possible damage on the hereditary enemy, and to plant the banner of Holland in all those territories whence the King of Spain gathered the treasures with which he had carried on this perpetual war against the Netherlands."

Thus was instituted on the desolate shores of Fire Land the order of Knights of the Unchained Lion, with such rude solemnities as were possible in those solitudes. The harbour where the fleet was anchored was called the Chevaliers' Bay, but it would be in vain to look on modern maps for that heroic appellation. Patagonia and Tierra del Fuego know the honest knights of the Unchained Lion no more; yet to an unsophisticated mind no stately brotherhood of sovereigns and patricians seems more thoroughly inspired with the spirit of Christian chivalry than were those weather-beaten adventurers. The reefs and whirlwinds of unknown seas, polar cold, Patagonian giants, Spanish cruisers, a thousand real or fabulous dangers environed them. Their provisions were already running near exhaustion; and they were feeding on raw seal-flesh, on snails and mussels, and on whatever the barren rocks and niggard seas would supply, to save them from absolutely perishing, but they held their resolve to

maintain their honour unsullied, to be true to each other and to the republic, and to circumnavigate the globe to seek the proud enemy of their fatherland on every sea, and to do battle with him in every corner of the earth. The world had already seen, and was still to see, how nobly Netherlanders could keep their own. Meantime disaster on disaster descended on this unfortunate expedition. One ship after another melted away and was seen no more. Of all the seven, only one, that of Sebald de Weerdt, ever returned to the shores of Holland. Another reached Japan, and although the crew fell into hostile hands, the great trade with that Oriental empire was begun. In a third—the Blyde Boodachaft, or Good News—Dirk Gerrits sailed nearer the South Pole than man had ever been before, and discovered, as he believed, a portion of the southern continent, which he called, with reason good, Gerrit's Land. The name in course of time faded from maps and charts, the existence of the country was disputed, until more than two centuries later the accuracy of the Dutch commander was recognised. The rediscovered land however no longer bears his name, but has been baptized South Shetland.

Thus before the sixteenth century had closed, the navigators of Holland had reached almost the extreme verge of human discovery at either pole.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

Military Operations in the Netherlands—Designs of the Spanish Commander—Siege of Orsoy—Advance upon Rheinberg—Murder of the Count of Broeck and his garrison—Capture of Rees and Emmerich— Outrages of the Spanish soldiers in the peaceful provinces— Inglorious attempt to avenge the hostilities—State of trade in the Provinces—Naval expedition under van der Does—Arrival of Albert and Isabella at Brussels—Military operations of Prince Maurice— Negotiation between London and Brussels—Henry's determination to enact the Council of Trent—His projected marriage—Queen Elizabeth and Envoy Caron—Peace proposals of Spain to Elizabeth—Conferences at Gertruydenberg—Uncertain state of affairs.

The military operations in the Netherlands during the whole year 1598 were on a comparatively small scale and languidly conducted. The States were exhausted by the demands made upon the treasury, and baffled by the disingenuous policy of their allies. The cardinal-archduke, on the other hand, was occupied with the great events of his marriage, of his father- in-law's death, and of his own succession in conjunction with his wife to the sovereignty of the provinces.

In the autumn, however, the Admiral of Arragon, who, as has been stated, was chief military commander during the absence of Albert, collected an army of twenty-five thousand foot and two thousand cavalry, crossed the Meuse at Roermond, and made his appearance before a small town called Orsoy, on the Rhine. It was his intention to invade the duchies of Clever, Juliers, and Berg, taking advantage of the supposed madness of the duke, and of the Spanish inclinations of his chief counsellors, who constituted a kind of regency. By obtaining possession of these important provinces—wedged as they were between the territory of the republic, the obedient Netherlands, and Germany—an excellent military position would be gained for making war upon the rebellious districts from the east, for crushing Protestantism in the duchies, for holding important passages of the Rhine, and for circumventing the designs of the Protestant sons-in-law and daughters of the old Duke of Cleves. Of course, it was the determination of Maurice and the States-General to frustrate these operations. German and Dutch Protestantism gave battle on this neutral ground to the omnipotent tyranny of the papacy and Spain.

Unfortunately, Maurice had but a very slender force that autumn at his command. Fifteen hundred horse and six thousand infantry were all his effective troops, and with these he took the field to defend the borders of the republic, and to out-manceuvre, so far as it might lie in his power, the admiral with his far-reaching and entirely unscrupulous designs.

With six thousand Spanish veterans, two thousand Italians, and many Walloon and German regiments under Bucquoy, Hachincourt, La Bourlotte, Stanley, and Frederic van den Berg, the admiral had reached the frontiers of the mad duke's territory. Orsoy was garrisoned by a small company of "cocks' feathers," or country squires, and their followers.

Presenting himself in person before the walls of the town, with a priest at his right hand and a hangman holding a bundle of halters at the other, he desired to be informed whether the governor would prefer to surrender or to hang with his whole garrison. The cock feathers surrendered. The

admiral garrisoned and fortified Orsoy as a basis and advanced upon Rheinberg, first surprising the Count of Broeck in his castle, who was at once murdered in cold blood with his little garrison.

He took Burik on the 11th October, Rheinberg on the 15th of the same month, and compounded with Wesel for a hundred and twenty thousand florins. Leaving garrisons in these and a few other captured places, he crossed the Lippe, came to Borhold, and ravaged the whole country side. His troops being clamorous for pay were only too eager to levy black-mail on this neutral territory. The submission of the authorities to this treatment brought upon them a reproach of violation of neutrality by the States-General; the Governments of Munster and of the duchies being informed that, if they aided and abetted the one belligerent, they must expect to be treated as enemies by the other.

The admiral took Rees on the 30th October, and Emmerich on the 2nd November—two principal cities of Cleves. On the 8th November he crossed into the territory of the republic and captured Deutekom, after a very short siege. Maurice, by precaution, occupied Sevenaer in Cleves. The prince—whose difficult task was to follow up and observe an enemy by whom he was outnumbered nearly four to one, to harass him by skirmishes, to make forays on his communications, to seize important points before he could reach them, to impose upon him by an appearance of far greater force than the republican army could actually boast, to protect the cities of the frontier like Zutphen, Lochem, and Doesburg, and to prevent him from attempting an invasion of the United Provinces in force, by crossing any of the rivers, either in the autumn or after the winter's ice had made them passable for the Spanish army-succeeded admirably in all his strategy. The admiral never ventured to attack him, for fear of risking a defeat of his whole army by an antagonist whom he ought to have swallowed at a mouthful, relinquished all designs upon the republic, passed into Munster, Cleves, and Berg, and during the whole horrible winter converted those peaceful provinces into a hell. No outrage which even a Spanish army could inflict was spared the miserable inhabitants. Cities and villages were sacked and burned, the whole country was placed under the law of black-mail. The places of worship, mainly Protestant, were all converted at a blow of the sword into Catholic churches. Men were hanged, butchered, tossed in sport from the tops of steeples, burned, and buried alive. Women of every rank were subjected by thousands to outrage too foul and too cruel for any but fiends or Spanish soldiers to imagine.

Such was the lot of thousands of innocent men and women at the hands of Philip's soldiers in a country at peace with Philip, at the very moment when that monarch was protesting with a seraphic smile on his expiring lips that he had never in his whole life done injury to a single human being.

In vain did the victims call aloud upon their sovereign, the Emperor Rudolph. The Spaniards laughed the feeble imperial mandates to scorn, and spurned the word neutrality. "Oh, poor Roman Empire!" cried John Fontanus, "how art thou fallen! Thy protector has become thy despoiler, and, although thy members see this and know it, they sleep through it all. One day they may have a terrible awakening from their slumbers . . . . . The Admiral of Arragon has entirely changed the character of the war, recognizes no neutrality, saying that there must be but one God, one pope, and one king, and that they who object to this arrangement must be extirpated with fire and sword, let them be where they may."

The admiral, at least, thoroughly respected the claims of the dead Philip to universal monarchy.

Maurice gained as much credit by the defensive strategy through which he saved the republic from the horrors thus aficting its neighbours, as he had ever done by his most brilliant victories. Queen Elizabeth was enchanted with the prowess of the prince, and with the sagacious administration of those republican magistrates whom she never failed to respect, even when most inclined to quarrel with them. "Never before was it written or heard of," said the queen, "that so great an extent of country could be defended with so few troops, that an invasion of so superior a hostile force could be prevented, especially as it appeared that all the streams and rivers were frozen." This, she added, was owing to the wise and far-seeing counsels of the States-General, and to the faithful diligence of their military commander, who now, as she declared, deserved the title of the first captain of all Christendom.

A period of languor and exhaustion succeeded. The armies of the States had dwindled to an effective force of scarcely four or five thousand men, while the new levies came in but slowly. The taxation, on the other hand, was very severe. The quotas for the provinces had risen to the amount of five million eight hundred thousand florins for the year 1599, against an income of four millions six hundred thousand, and this deficit went on increasing, notwithstanding a new tax of one-half per cent. on the capital of all estates above three thousand florins in value, and another of two and a half per cent. on all sales of real property. The finances of the obedient provinces were in a still worse condition, and during the absence of the cardinal-archduke an almost universal mutiny, occasioned by the inability of the exchequer to provide payment for the troops, established itself throughout Flanders and Brabant. There was much recrimination on the subject of the invasion of the Rhenish duchies, and a war of pamphlets and manifestos between the archduke's Government and the States-General succeeded to

those active military operations by which so much misery had been inflicted on the unfortunate inhabitants of that border land. There was a slight attempt on the part of the Princes of Brunswick, Hesse, and Brandenburg to counteract and to punish the hostilities of the Spanish troops committed upon German soil. An army —very slowly organized, against the wishes of the emperor, the bishops, and the Catholic party—took the field, and made a feeble demonstration upon Rheinberg and upon Rees entirely without result and then disbanded itself ingloriously.

Meantime the admiral had withdrawn from German territory, and was amusing himself with a variety of blows aimed at vital points of the republic. An excursion into the Isle of Bommel was not crowned with much success. The assault on the city was repulsed. The fortress of Crevecoeur was, however, taken, and the fort of St. Andrew constructed—in spite of the attempts of the States to frustrate the design—at a point commanding the course of both the Waal and the Meuse. Having placed a considerable garrison in each of those strongholds, the admiral discontinued his labours and went into winter-quarters.

The States-General for political reasons were urgent that Prince Maurice should undertake some important enterprise, but the stadholder, sustained by the opinion of his cousin Lewis William, resisted the pressure. The armies of the Commonwealth were still too slender in numbers and too widely scattered for active service on a large scale, and the season for active campaigning was wisely suffered to pass without making any attempt of magnitude during the year.

The trade of the provinces, moreover, was very much hampered, and their revenues sadly diminished by the severe prohibitions which had succeeded to the remarkable indulgence hitherto accorded to foreign commerce. Edicts in the name of the King of Spain and of the Archdukes Albert and Isabella, forbidding all intercourse between the rebellious provinces and the obedient Netherlands or any of the Spanish possessions, were met by countervailing decrees of the States-General. Free trade with its enemies and with all the world, by means of which the commonwealth had prospered in spite of perpetual war, was now for a season destroyed, and the immediate results were at once visible in its diminished resources. To employ a portion of the maritime energies of the Hollanders and Zeelanders, thus temporarily deprived of a sufficient field, a naval expedition of seventy-five war vessels under Admiral van der Does was fitted out, but met with very trifling success. They attacked and plundered the settlements and forts of the Canary Islands, inflicted much damage on the inhabitants, sailed thence to the Isle of St. Thomas, near the equator, where the towns and villages were sacked and burned, and where a contagious sickness broke out in the fleet, sweeping off in a very brief period a large proportion of the crew. The admiral himself fell a victim to the disease and was buried on the island. The fleet put to sea again under Admiral Storm van Wena, but the sickness pursued the adventurers on their voyage towards Brazil, one thousand of them dying at sea in fifteen days. At Brazil they accomplished nothing, and, on their homeward voyage, not only the new commander succumbed to the same contagion, but the mortality continued to so extraordinary an extent that, on the arrival of the expedition late in the winter in Holland, there were but two captains left alive, and, in many of the vessels, not more than six sound men to each. Nothing could be more wretched than this termination of a great and expensive voyage, which had occasioned such high hopes throughout the provinces; nothing more dismal than the political atmosphere which surrounded the republic during the months which immediately ensued. It was obvious to Barneveld and the other leading personages, in whose hands was the administration of affairs, that a great military success was absolutely indispensable, if the treacherous cry of peace, when peace was really impossible, should not become universal and fatal.

Meantime affairs were not much more cheerful in the obedient provinces. Archduke Albert arrived with his bride in the early days of September, 1599, at Brussels, and was received with great pomp and enthusiastic rejoicings. When are pomp and enthusiasm not to be obtained by imperial personages, at brief notice and in vast quantities, if managers understand their business? After all, it may be doubted whether the theatrical display was as splendid as that which marked the beginning of the Ernestian era. Schoolmaster Houwaerts had surpassed himself on that occasion, and was no longer capable of deifying the new sovereign as thoroughly as he had deified his brother.

Much real discontent followed close upon the fictitious enthusiasm. The obedient provinces were poor and forlorn, and men murmured loudly at the enormous extravagance of their new master's housekeeping. There were one hundred and fifty mules, and as many horses in their sovereign's stables, while the expense of feeding the cooks; lackeys, pages, and fine gentlemen who swelled the retinue of the great household, was estimated, without, wages or salaries, at two thousand florins a day. Albert had wished to be called a king, but had been unable to obtain the gratification of his wish. He had aspired to be emperor, and he was at least sufficiently imperial in his ideas of expense. The murmurers were loftily rebuked for their complaints, and reminded of the duty of obedient provinces to contribute at least as much for the defence of their masters as the rebels did in maintenance of their rebellion. The provincial estates were summoned accordingly to pay roundly for the expenses of the war as well as of the court, and to enable the new sovereigns to suppress the military mutiny, which

amid the enthusiasm greeting their arrival was the one prominent and formidable fact.

The archduke was now thirty-nine years of age, the Infanta Isabella six years younger. She was esteemed majestically beautiful by her courtiers, and Cardinal Bentivoglio, himself a man of splendid intellect, pronounced her a woman of genius, who had grown to be a prodigy of wisdom, under the tuition of her father, the most sagacious statesman of the age. In attachment to the Roman faith and ritual, in superhuman loftiness of demeanour, and in hatred of heretics, she was at least a worthy child of that sainted sovereign. In a moral point of view she was his superior. The archdukes—so Albert and Isabella were always designated—were a singularly attached couple, and their household, if extravagant and imperial, was harmonious. They loved each other—so it was believed— as sincerely as they abhorred heretics and rebels, but it does not appear that they had a very warm affection for their Flemish subjects. Every characteristic of their court was Spanish. Spanish costume, Spanish manners, the Spanish tongue, were almost exclusively predominant, and although the festivals, dances, banquets, and tourneys, were all very magnificent, the prevailing expression of the Brabantine capital resembled that of a Spanish convent, so severely correct, so stately, and so grim, was the demeanour of the court.

The earliest military operations of the stadholder in the first year of the new century were successful. Partly by menace; but more effectually by judicious negotiation. Maurice recovered Crevecoeur, and obtained the surrender of St. Andrew, the fort which the admiral had built the preceding year in honour of Albert's uncle. That ecclesiastic, with whom Mendoza had wrangled most bitterly during the whole interval of Albert's absence, had already taken his departure for Rome, where he soon afterwards died. The garrisons of the forts, being mostly Walloon soldiers, forsook the Spanish service for that of the States, and were banded together in a legion some twelve hundred strong, which became known as the "New Beggars," and were placed under the nominal command of Frederick Henry of Nassau, youngest child of William the Silent. The next military event of the year was a mad combat, undertaken by formal cartel, between Breaute, a young Norman noble in the service of the republic, and twenty comrades, with an equal number of Flemish warriors from the obedient provinces, under Grobbendonck. About one half of the whole number were killed, including the leaders, but the encounter, although exciting much interest at the time, had of course no permanent importance.

There was much negotiation, informal and secret, between Brussels and London during this and a portion of the following year. Elizabeth, naturally enough, was weary of the war, but she felt, after all, as did the Government of France, that a peace between the United Netherlands and Spain would have for its result the restoration of the authority of his most Catholic Majesty over all the provinces. The statesmen of France and England, like most of the politicians of Europe, had but slender belief in the possibility of a popular government, and doubted therefore the continued existence of the newly-organized republic. Therefore they really deprecated the idea of a peace which should include the States, notwithstanding that from time to time the queen or some of her counsellors had so vehemently reproached the Netherlanders with their unwillingness to negotiate. "At the first recognition that these people should make of the mere shadow of a prince," said Buzanval, the keenly observing and experienced French envoy at the Hague, "they lose the form they have. All the blood of the body would flow to the head, and the game would be who should best play the valet. . . . . The house of Nassau would lose its credit within a month in case of peace." As such statesmen could not imagine a republic, they ever dreaded the restoration in the United Provinces of the subverted authority of Spain.

France and England were jealous of each other, and both were jealous of Spain. Therefore even if the republican element, the strength and endurance of which was so little suspected, had been as trifling a factor in the problem, as was supposed, still it would have been difficult for any one of these powers to absorb the United Netherlands. As for France, she hardly coveted their possession. "We ought not to flatter ourselves," said Buzanval, "that these maritime peoples will cast themselves one day into our nets, nor do I know that it would be advisable to pull in the net if they should throw themselves in."

Henry was full of political schemes and dreams at this moment—as much as his passion for Mademoiselle d'Entraigues, who had so soon supplanted the image of the dead Gabrielle in his heart, would permit. He was very well disposed to obtain possession of the Spanish Netherlands, whenever he should see his way to such an acquisition, and was even indulging in visions of the imperial crown.

He was therefore already, and for the time at least, the most intense of papists. He was determined to sacrifice the Huguenot chiefs, and introduce the Council of Trent, in order, as he told Du Plessis, that all might be Christians. If he still retained any remembrance of the ancient friendship between himself and the heretic republic, it was not likely to exhibit itself, notwithstanding his promises and his pecuniary liabilities to her, in anything more solid than words. "I repeat it," said the Dutch envoy at Paris; "this court cares nothing for us, for all its cabals tend to close union with Rome, whence we can expect nothing but foul weather. The king alone has any memory of our past services." But imperturbable and self-confident as ever, Henry troubled himself little with fears in regard to the papal supremacy, even when his Parliament professed great anxiety in regard to the consequences of the

Council of Trent, if not under him yet under his successors. "I will so bridle the popes," said he, cheerfully, "that they will never pass my restrictions. My children will be still more virtuous and valiant than I. If I have none, then the devil take the hindmost. Nevertheless I choose that the council shall be enacted. I desire it more ardently than I pressed the edict for the Protestants." Such being the royal humour at the moment, it may well be believed that Duplessis Mornay would find but little sunshine from on high on the occasion of his famous but forgotten conferences with Du Perron, now archbishop of Evreux, before the king and all the court at Fontainebleau. It was natural enough that to please the king the king's old Huguenot friend should be convicted of false citations from the fathers; but it would seem strange, were the motives unknown, that Henry should have been so intensely interested in this most arid and dismal of theological controversies. Yet those who had known and observed the king closely for thirty years, declared that he had never manifested so much passion, neither on the eve of battles nor of amorous assignations, as he then did for the demolition of Duplessis and his deductions. He had promised the Nuncius that the Huguenot should be utterly confounded, and with him the whole fraternity, "for," said the king, "he has wickedly and impudently written against the pope, to whom I owe as much as I do to God."

These were not times in which the Hollanders, battling as stoutly against Spain and the pope as they had done during the years when the republic stood shoulder to shoulder with Henry the Huguenot, could hope for aid and comfort from their ancient ally.

It is very characteristic of that age of dissimulation and of reckless political gambling, that at the very moment when Henry's marriage with Marie de Medicis was already arranged, and when that princess was soon expected in Lyons, a cabal at the king's court was busy with absurd projects to marry their sovereign to the Infanta of Spain. It is true that the Infanta was already the wife of the cardinal-archduke, but it was thought possible—for reasons divulged through the indiscretions or inventions of the father confessor—to obtain the pope's dispensation on the ground of the nullity of the marriage. Thus there were politicians at the French court seriously occupied in an attempt to deprive the archduke of his wife, of his Netherland provinces, and of the crown of, the holy Roman empire, which he still hoped to inherit. Yet the ink was scarcely dry with which Henry had signed the treaty of amity with Madrid and Brussels.

The Queen of England, on the other hand—although often listenting to secret agents from Brussels and Madrid who offered peace, and although perfectly aware that the great abject of Spain in securing peace with England was to be able to swoop down at once upon the republic, thus deprived of any allies was beside herself with rage, whenever she suspected, with or without reason, that Brussels or Madrid had been sending peace emissaries to the republic.

"Before I could get into the room," said Caron, on one such occasion, "she called out, 'Have you not always told me that the States never could, would, or should treat for peace with the enemy? Yet now it is plain enough that they have proceeded only too far in negotiations.' And she then swore a big oath that if the States were to deceive her she meant to take such vengeance that men should talk of it for ever and ever." It was a long time before the envoy could induce her to listen to a single word, although the, perfect sincerity of the States in their attitude to the queen and to Spain was unquestionable, and her ill-humour on the subject continued long after it had been demonstrated how much she had been deceived.

Yet it was impossible in the nature of things for the States to play her false, even if no reliance were to be placed on their sagacity and their honour. Even the recent naval expedition of the republic against the distant possessions of Spain—which in its result had caused so much disappointment to the States, and cost them so many lives, including that of the noble admiral whom every sailor in the Netherlands adored had been of immense advantage to England. The queen acknowledged that the Dutch Navy had averted the storm which threatened to descend upon her kingdom out of Spain, the Spanish ships destined for the coast of Ireland having been dispersed and drawn to the other aide of the world by these demonstrations of her ally. For this she vowed that she would be eternally grateful, and she said as much in "letters full of sugar and honey"—according to the French envoy—which she sent to the States by Sir Francis Vere. She protested, in short, that she had been better and more promptly served in her necessities by the Netherlands than by her own subjects.

All this sugar and honey however did not make the mission of Envoy Edmonds less bitter to the States. They heard that he was going about through half the cities of the obedient Netherlands in a sort of triumphal procession, and it was the general opinion of the politicians and financiers of the continent that peace between Spain and England was as good as made. Naturally therefore, notwithstanding the exuberant expressions of gratitude on the part of Elizabeth, the republican Government were anxious to know what all this parleying meant. They could not believe that people would make a raree-show of the English envoy except for sufficient reason. Caron accordingly presented himself before the queen, with respectful inquiries on the subject. He found her in appearance very angry, not with him, but with

Edmonds, from whom she had received no advices. "I don't know what they are doing with him," said her Majesty, "I hear from others that they are ringing the church bells wherever he goes, and that they have carried him through a great many more places than was necessary. I suppose that they think him a monster, and they are carrying him about to exhibit him. All this is done," she continued, "to throw dust in the eyes of the poor people, and to put it into their heads that the Queen of England is suing for peace, which is very wide of the mark."

She further observed that, as the agents of the Spanish Government had been perpetually sending to her, she had been inclined once for all to learn what they had to say. Thus she should make manifest to all the world that she was not averse to a treaty such as might prove a secure peace for herself and for Christendom; otherwise not.

It subsequently appeared that what they had to say was that if the queen would give up to the Spanish Government the cautionary towns which she held as a pledge for her advances to the republic, forbid all traffic and intercourse between her subjects and the Netherlanders, and thenceforth never allow an Englishman to serve in or with the armies of the States, a peace might be made.

Surely it needed no great magnanimity on the queen's part to spurn such insulting proposals, the offer of which showed her capable, in the opinion of Verreycken, the man who made them, of sinking into the very depths of dishonour. And she did spurn them. Surely, for the ally, the protrectress, the grateful friend of the republic, to give its chief seaports to its arch-enemy, to shut the narrow seas against its ships, so that they never more could sail westward, and to abandon its whole population to their fate, would be a deed of treachery such as history, full of human baseness as it is, has rarely been obliged to record.

Before these propositions had been made by Verreycken Elizabeth protested that, should he offer them, she would send him home with such an answer that people should talk of it for some time to come. "Before I consent to a single one of those points," said the queen, "I wish myself taken from this world. Until now I have been a princess of my word, who would rather die than so falsely deceive such good people as the States." And she made those protestations with such expression and attitude that the Dutch envoy believed her incapable at that moment of dissimulation.

Nevertheless her indignation did not carry her so far as to induce her to break off the negotiations. The answer of which mankind was to talk in time to come was simply that she would not send her commissioners to treat for peace unless the Spanish Government should recede from the three points thus offered by Verreycken. This certainly was not a very blasting reply, and the Spanish agents were so far from losing heart in consequence that the informal conferences continued for a long time, much to the discomfort of the Netherlanders.

For more than an hour and a half on one occasion of an uncommonly hot afternoon in April did Noel de Caron argue with her Majesty against these ill-boding negotiations, and ever and anon, oppressed by the heat of the weather and the argument, did the queen wander from one room of the palace to the other in search of cool air, still bidding the envoy follow her footsteps. "We are travelling about like pilgrims," said Elizabeth, "but what is life but a pilgrimage?"

Yet, notwithstanding this long promenade and these moral reflections, Caron could really not make out at the end of the interview whether or no she intended to send her commissioners. At last he asked her the question bluntly.

"Hallo! Hallo!" she replied. "I have only spoken to my servant once, and I must obtain more information and think over the matter before I decide. Be assured however that I shall always keep you informed of the progress of the negotiations, and do you inform the States that they may build upon me as upon a rock."

After the envoy had taken his leave, the queen said to him in Latin, "Modicae fidei quare dubitasti?" Caron had however so nearly got out of the door that he did not hear this admonition.

This the queen perceived, and calling him by name repeated, "O Caron! modicae fidei quare dubitasti?" adding the injunction that he should remember this dictum, for he well knew what she meant by it.

Thus terminated the interview, while the negotiations with Spain, not for lack of good-will on her part, and despite the positive assertions to the contrary of Buzanval and other foreign agents, were destined to come to nothing.

At a little later period, at the time of certain informal and secret conferences at Gertruydenberg, the queen threatened the envoy with her severest displeasure, should the States dare to treat with Spain without her permission. "Her Majesty called out to me," said Caron, "as soon as I entered the room,

that I had always assured her that the States neither would nor could make peace with the enemy. Yet it was now looking very differently, she continued, swearing with a mighty oath that if the States should cheat her in that way she meant to revenge herself in such a fashion that men would talk of it through all eternity."

The French Government was in a similar state of alarm in consequence of the Gertruydenberg conferences.

The envoy of the archdukes, Marquis d'Havre, reported on the other hand that all attempts to negotiate had proved fruitless, that Olden- Barneveld, who spoke for all his colleagues, was swollen with pride, and made it but too manifest that the States had no intention to submit to any foreign jurisdiction, but were resolved to maintain themselves in the form of a republic.

ETEXT EDITOR'S BOOKMARKS:

Children who had never set foot on the shore
Done nothing so long as aught remained to do
Fed on bear's liver, were nearly poisoned to death
Inhabited by the savage tribes called Samoyedes

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