Title: History of the United Netherlands, 1590-99 — Complete

Author: John Lothrop Motley

Release date: November 8, 2004 [EBook #4872]
Most recently updated: December 28, 2020

Language: English

Credits: Produced by David Widger

HISTORY OF THE UNITED NETHERLANDS

From the Death of William the Silent to the Twelve Year's Truce—1609

Volume III.

By John Lothrop Motley

Volume II.

IMAGES and QUOTES

CONTENTS

CHAPTER XXI.

Effect of the Assassination of Henry III.—Concentration of forces for the invasion of France—The Netherlands determine on striking a blow for freedom—Organization of a Dutch army—Stratagem to surprise the castle of Breda—Intrepidity and success of the enterprise.

The dagger of Jacques Clement had done much, and was likely to do more, to change the face of Europe. Another proof was afforded that assassination had become a regular and recognised factor in the political problems of the sixteenth century. Another illustration was exhibited of the importance of the individual—even although that individual was in himself utterly despicable—to the working out of great historical results. It seemed that the murder of Henry III.—that forlorn caricature of kingship and of manhood—was likely to prove eminently beneficial to the cause of the Netherland commonwealth. Five years earlier, the murder of William the Silent had seemed to threaten its very existence.

For Philip the Prudent, now that France was deprived of a head, conceived that the time had arrived when he might himself assume the sovereignty of that kingdom. While a thing of straw, under the name of Charles X. and shape of a Cardinal Bourbon, was set up to do battle with that living sovereign and soldier, the heretic Bearnese, the Duke of Parma was privately ordered to bend all his energies towards the conquest of the realm in dispute, under pretence of assisting the Holy League.

Accordingly, early in the year 1590, Alexander concentrated a considerable force on the French frontier in Artois and Hainault, apparently threatening Bergen-op-Zoom and other cities in South Holland, but in reality preparing to invade France. The Duke of Mayenne, who had assumed the title of lieutenant-general of that kingdom, had already visited him at Brussels in order to arrange the plan of the campaign.

While these measures were in preparation, an opportunity was likely to be afforded to the Netherlanders of striking a blow or two for liberty and independence; now that all the force that possibly could be spared was to be withdrawn by their oppressors and to be used for the subjugation of their neighbours. The question was whether there would be a statesman and a soldier ready to make use of this golden opportunity.

There was a statesman ripe and able who, since the death of the Taciturn, had been growing steadily in the estimation of his countrymen and who already was paramount in the councils of the States-General. There was a soldier, still very young, who was possessed of the strongest hereditary claims to the confidence and affection of the United Provinces and who had been passing a studious youth in making himself worthy of his father and his country. Fortunately, too, the statesman and the soldier were working most harmoniously together. John of Olden-Barneveld, with his great experience and vast and steady intellect, stood side by side with young Maurice of Nassau at this important crisis in the history of the new commonwealth.

At length the twig was becoming the tree—'tandem fit surculus arbor'—according to the device assumed by the son of William the Silent after his father's death.

The Netherlands had sore need of a practical soldier to contend with the scientific and professional tyrants against whom they had so long been struggling, and Maurice, although so young, was pre-eminently a practical man. He was no enthusiast; he was no poet. He was at that period certainly no politician. Not often at the age of twenty has a man devoted himself for years to pure mathematics for the purpose of saving his

country. Yet this was Maurice's scheme. Four years long and more, when most other youths in his position and at that epoch would have been alternating between frivolous pleasures and brilliant exploits in the field, the young prince had spent laborious days and nights with the learned Simon Stevinus of Bruges. The scientific work which they composed in common, the credit of which the master assigned to the pupil, might have been more justly attributed perhaps to the professor than to the prince, but it is certain that Maurice was an apt scholar.

In that country, ever held in existence by main human force against the elements, the arts of engineering, hydrostatics and kindred branches were of necessity much cultivated. It was reserved for the young mathematician to make them as potent against a human foe.

Moreover, there were symptoms that the military discipline, learning and practical skill, which had almost made Spain the mistress of the world, were sinking into decay. Farnese, although still in the prime of life, was broken in health, and there seemed no one fit to take the place of himself and his lieutenants when they should be removed from the scene where they had played their parts so consummately. The army of the Netherlands was still to be created. Thus far the contest had been mainly carried on by domestic militia and foreign volunteers or hirelings. The train-bands of the cities were aided in their struggles against Spanish pikemen and artillerists, Italian and Albanian cavalry by the German riders, whom every little potentate was anxious to sell to either combatant according to the highest bid, and by English mercenaries, whom the love of adventure or the hope of plunder sent forth under such well-seasoned captains as Williams and Morgan, Vere and the Norrises, Baskerville and Willoughby.

But a Dutch army there was none and Maurice had determined that at last a national force should be created. In this enterprise he was aided and guided by his cousin Lewis William, Stadtholder of Friesland—the quaint, rugged little hero, young in years but almost a veteran in the wars of freedom, who was as genial and intellectual in council as he was reckless and impulsive in the field.

Lewis William had felt that the old military art was dying out and that—there was nothing to take its place. He was a diligent student of antiquity. He had revived in the swamps of Friesland the old manoeuvres, the quickness of wheeling, the strengthening, without breaking ranks or columns, by which the ancient Romans had performed so much excellent work in their day, and which seemed to have passed entirely into oblivion. Old colonels and rittmasters, who had never heard of Leo the Thracian nor the Macedonian phalanx, smiled and shrugged their shoulders, as they listened to the questions of the young count, or gazed with profound astonishment at the eccentric evolutions to which he was accustoming his troops. From the heights of superior wisdom they looked down with pity upon these innovations on the good old battle order. They were accustomed to great solid squares of troops wheeling in one way, steadily, deliberately, all together, by one impulse and as one man. It was true that in narrow fields, and when the enemy was pressing, such stately evolutions often became impossible or ensured defeat; but when the little Stadtholder drilled his soldiers in small bodies of various shapes, teaching them to turn, advance; retreat; wheel in a variety of ways, sometimes in considerable masses, sometimes man by man, sending the foremost suddenly to the rear, or bringing the hindmost ranks to the front, and began to attempt all this in narrow fields as well as in wide ones, and when the enemy was in sight, men stood aghast at his want of reverence, or laughed at him as a pedant. But there came a day when they did not laugh, neither friends nor enemies. Meantime the two cousins, who directed all the military operations in the provinces, understood each other thoroughly and proceeded to perfect their new system, to be adopted at a later period by all civilized nations.

The regular army of the Netherlands was small in number at that moment—not more than twenty thousand foot with two thousand horse—but it was well disciplined, well equipped, and, what was of great importance, regularly paid. Old campaigners complained that in the halcyon days of paper enrolments, a captain could earn more out of his company than a colonel now received for his whole regiment. The days when a thousand men were paid for, with a couple of hundred in the field, were passing away for the United Provinces and existed only for Italians and Spaniards. While, therefore, mutiny on an organised and extensive scale seemed almost the normal condition of the unpaid legions of Philip, the little army of Maurice was becoming the model for Europe to imitate.

The United Provinces were as yet very far from being masters of their own territory. Many of their most important cities still held for the king. In Brabant, such towns as Breda with its many dependencies and Gertruydenberg; on the Waal, the strong and wealthy Nymegen which Martin Schenk had perished in attempting to surprise; on the Yssel, the thriving city of Zutphen, whose fort had been surrendered by the traitor York, and the stately Deventer, which had been placed in Philip's possession by the treachery of Sir William Stanley; on the borders of Drenthe, the almost impregnable Koevorden, key to the whole Zwollian country; and in the very heart of ancient Netherland, Groningen, capital of the province of the same name, which the treason of Renneberg had sold to the Spanish tyrant; all these flourishing cities and indispensable strongholds were garrisoned by foreign troops, making the idea of Dutch independence a delusion.

While Alexander of Parma, sorely against his will and in obedience to what, he deemed the insane suggestions of his master, was turning his back on the Netherlands in order to relieve Paris, now hard pressed by the Bearnese, an opportunity offered itself of making at least a beginning in the great enterprise of recovering these most valuable possessions.

The fair and pleasant city of Breda lies on the Merk, a slender stream, navigable for small vessels, which finds its way to the sea through the great canal of the Dintel. It had been the property of the Princes of Orange, Barons of Breda, and had passed with the other possessions of the family to the house of Chalons-Nassau. Henry of Nassau had, half a century before, adorned and strengthened it by a splendid palace-fortress which, surrounded by a deep and double moat, thoroughly commanded the town. A garrison of five companies of Italian infantry and one of cavalry lay in this castle, which was under the command of Edward Lanzavecchia, governor both of Breda and of the neighbouring Gertruydenberg.

Breda was an important strategical position. It was moreover the feudal superior of a large number of adjacent villages as well as of the cities Osterhout, Steenberg and Rosendaal. It was obviously not more desirable for Maurice of Nassau to recover his patrimonial city than it was for the States-General to drive the Spaniards from so important a position!

In the month of February, 1590, Maurice, being then at the castle of Voorn in Zeeland, received a secret visit from a boatman, Adrian van der Berg by name, who lived at the village of Leur, eight or ten miles from Breda, and who had long been in the habit of supplying the castle with turf. In the absence of woods and coal mines, the habitual fuel of the country was furnished by those vast relics of the antediluvian forests which abounded in the still partially submerged soil. The skipper represented that his vessel had passed so often into and out of the castle as to be hardly liable to search by the guard on its entrance. He suggested a stratagem by which it might be possible to surprise the stronghold.

The prince approved of the scheme and immediately consulted with Barneveld. That statesman at once proposed, as a suitable man to carry out the daring venture, Captain Charles de Heraugiere, a nobleman of Cambray, who had been long in the service of the States, had distinguished himself at Sluys and on other occasions, but who had been implicated in Leicester's nefarious plot to gain possession of the city of Leyden a few years before. The Advocate expressed confidence that he would be grateful for so signal an opportunity of retrieving a somewhat damaged reputation. Heraugiere, who was with his company in Voorn at the moment, eagerly signified his desire to attempt the enterprise as soon as the matter was communicated to him; avowing the deepest devotion to the house of William the Silent and perfect willingness to sacrifice his life, if necessary, in its cause and that of the country. Philip Nassau, cousin of Prince Maurice and brother of Lewis William, governor of Gorcum, Dorcum, and Lowenstein Castle and colonel of a regiment of cavalry, was also taken into the secret, as well as Count Hohenlo, President Van der Myle and a few others; but a mystery was carefully spread and maintained over the undertaking.

Heraugiere selected sixty-eight men, on whose personal daring and patience he knew that he could rely, from the regiments of Philip Nassau and of Famars, governor of the neighbouring city of Heusden, and from his own company. Besides himself, the officers to command the party were captains Logier and Fervet, and lieutenant Matthew Held. The names of such devoted soldiers deserve to be commemorated and are still freshly remembered by their countrymen.

On the 25th of February, Maurice and his staff went to Willemstad on the Isle of Klundert, it having been given out on his departure from the Hague that his destination was Dort. On the same night at about eleven o'clock, by the feeble light of a waning moon, Heraugiere and his band came to the Swertsenburg ferry, as agreed upon, to meet the boatman. They found neither him nor his vessel, and they wandered about half the night, very cold, very indignant, much perplexed. At last, on their way back, they came upon the skipper at the village of Terheyde, who made the extraordinary excuse that he had overslept himself and that he feared the plot had been discovered. It being too late to make any attempt that night, a meeting was arranged for the following evening. No suspicion of treachery occurred to any of the party, although it became obvious that the skipper had grown faint-hearted. He did not come on the next night to the appointed place but he sent two nephews, boatmen like himself, whom he described as dare-devils.

On Monday night, the 26th of February, the seventy went on board the vessel, which was apparently filled with blocks of turf, and packed themselves closely in the hold. They moved slowly during a little time on their perilous voyage; for the winter wind, thick with fog and sleet, blew directly down the river, bringing along with it huge blocks of ice and scooping the water out of the dangerous shallows, so as to render the vessel at any moment liable to be stranded. At last the navigation became impossible and they came to a standstill. From Monday night till Thursday morning those seventy Hollanders lay packed like herrings in the hold of their little vessel, suffering from hunger, thirst, and deadly cold; yet not one of them attempted to escape or murmured a wish to abandon the enterprise. Even when the third morning dawned there was no better prospect of proceeding; for the remorseless east wind still blew a gale against them, and the shoals which beset their path had become more dangerous than ever. It was, however, absolutely necessary to recruit exhausted nature, unless the adventurers were to drop powerless on the threshold when they should at last arrive at their destination. In all secrecy they went ashore at a lonely castle called Nordam, where they remained to refresh themselves until about eleven at night, when one of the boatmen came to them with the intelligence that the wind had changed and was now blowing freshly in from the sea. Yet the voyage of a few leagues, on which they were embarked, lasted nearly two whole days longer. On Saturday afternoon they passed through the last sluice, and at about three o'clock the last boom was shut behind them. There was no retreat possible for them now. The seventy were to take the strong castle and city of Breda or to lay down their lives, every man of them. No quarter and short shrift—such was their certain destiny, should that half-crippled, half-frozen little band not succeed in their task before another sunrise.

They were now in the outer harbour and not far from the Watergate which led into the inner castle-haven. Presently an officer of the guard put off in a skiff and came on board the vessel. He held a little conversation with the two boatmen, observed that the castle was—much in want of full, took a survey of the turf with which the ship was apparently laden, and then lounged into the little cabin. Here he was only separated by a sliding trap-door from the interior of the vessel. Those inside could hear and see his every movement. Had there been a single cough or sneeze from within, the true character of the cargo, then making its way into the castle, would have been discovered and every man would within ten minutes have been butchered. But the officer, unsuspecting, soon took his departure, saying that he would send some men to warp the vessel into the castle dock.

Meantime, as the adventurers were making their way slowly towards the Watergate, they struck upon a hidden obstruction in the river and the deeply laden vessel sprang a leak. In a few minutes those inside were sitting up to their knees in water—a circumstance which scarcely improved their already sufficiently dismal condition. The boatmen vigorously plied the pumps to save the vessel from sinking outright; a party of Italian soldiers soon arrived on the shore, and in the course of a couple of hours they had laboriously dragged the concealed Hollanders into the inner harbour and made their vessel fast, close to the guard-house of the castle.

And now a crowd of all sorts came on board. The winter nights had been long and fearfully cold, and there was almost a dearth of fuel both in town and fortress. A gang of labourers set to work discharging the turf from the vessel with such rapidity that the departing daylight began to shine in upon the prisoners much sooner than they wished. Moreover, the thorough wetting, to which after all their other inconveniences they

had just been exposed in their narrow escape from foundering, had set the whole party sneezing and coughing. Never was a catarrh so sudden, so universal, or so ill-timed. Lieutenant Held, unable to control the violence of his cough, drew his dagger and eagerly implored his next neighbour to stab him to the heart, lest his infirmity should lead to the discovery of the whole party. But the calm and wary skipper who stood on the deck instantly commanded his companion to work at the pump with as much clatter as possible, assuring the persons present that the hold was nearly full of water. By this means the noise of the coughing was effectually drowned. Most thoroughly did the bold boatman deserve the title of dare-devil, bestowed by his more fainthearted uncle. Calmly looking death in the face, he stood there quite at his ease, exchanging jokes with his old acquaintances, chaffering with the eager purchasers of peat shouting most noisy and superfluous orders to the one man who composed his crew, doing his utmost, in short, to get rid of his customers and to keep enough of the turf on board to conceal the conspirators.

At last, when the case seemed almost desperate, he loudly declared that sufficient had been unladen for that evening and that it was too dark and he too tired for further work. So, giving a handful of stivers among the workmen, he bade them go ashore at once and have some beer and come next morning for the rest of the cargo. Fortunately, they accepted his hospitable proposition and took their departure. Only the servant of the captain of the guard lingered behind, complaining that the turf was not as good as usual and that his master would never be satisfied with it.

"Ah!" returned the cool skipper, "the best part of the cargo is underneath. This is expressly reserved for the captain. He is sure to get enough of it to-morrow."

Thus admonished, the servant departed and the boatman was left to himself. His companion had gone on shore with secret orders to make the best of his way to Prince Maurice, to inform him of the arrival of the ship within the fortress, and of the important fact which they had just learned, that Governor Lanzavecchia, who had heard rumours of some projected enterprise and who suspected that the object aimed at was Gertruydenberg, had suddenly taken his departure for that city, leaving as his lieutenant his nephew Paolo, a raw lad quite incompetent to provide for the safety of Breda.

A little before midnight, Captain Heraugiere made a brief address to his comrades in the vessel, telling them that the hour for carrying out their undertaking had at length arrived. Retreat was impossible, defeat was certain death, only in complete victory lay their own safety and a great advantage for the commonwealth. It was an honor to them to be selected for such an enterprise. To show cowardice now would be an eternal shame for them, and he would be the man to strike dead with his own hand any traitor or poltroon. But if, as he doubted not, every one was prepared to do his duty, their success was assured, and he was himself ready to take the lead in confronting every danger.

He then divided the little band into two companies, one under himself to attack the main guard-house, the other under Fervet to seize the arsenal of the fortress.

Noiselessly they stole out of the ship where they had so long been confined, and stood at last on the ground within the precincts of the castle. Heraugiere marched straight to the guard-house.

"Who goes there?" cried a sentinel, hearing some movement in the darkness.

"A friend," replied the captain, seizing him, by the throat, and commanding him, if he valued his life, to keep silence except when addressed and then to speak in a whisper.

"How many are there in the garrison?" muttered Heraugiere.

"Three hundred and fifty," whispered the sentinel.

"How many?" eagerly demanded the nearest followers, not hearing the reply.

"He says there are but fifty of them," said Heraugiere, prudently suppressing the three hundred, in order to encourage his comrades.

Quietly as they had made their approach, there was nevertheless a stir in the guard-house. The captain of the watch sprang into the courtyard.

"Who goes there?" he demanded in his turn.

"A friend," again replied Heraugiere, striking him dead with a single blow as he spoke.

Others emerged with torches. Heraugiere was slightly wounded, but succeeded, after a brief struggle, in killing a second assailant. His followers set upon the watch who retreated into the guard-house. Heraugiere commanded his men to fire through the doors and windows, and in a few minutes every one of the enemy lay dead.

It was not a moment for making prisoners or speaking of quarter. Meantime Fervet and his band had not been idle. The magazine-house of the castle was seized, its defenders slain. Young Lanzavecchia made a sally from the palace, was wounded and driven back together with a few of his adherents.

The rest of the garrison fled helter-skelter into the town. Never had the musketeers of Italy—for they all belonged to Spinola's famous Sicilian Legion—behaved so badly. They did not even take the precaution to destroy the bridge between the castle and the town as they fled panic-stricken before seventy Hollanders. Instead of encouraging the burghers to their support they spread dismay, as they ran, through every street.

Young Lanzavecchia, penned into a corner of the castle; began to parley; hoping for a rally before a surrender should be necessary. In the midst of the negotiation and a couple of hours before dawn, Hohenlo; duly apprised by the boatman, arrived with the vanguard of Maurice's troops before the field-gate of the fort. A vain attempt was made to force this portal open, but the winter's ice had fixed it fast. Hohenlo was obliged to batter down the palisade near the water-gate and enter by the same road through which the fatal turf-boat had passed.

Soon after he had marched into the town at the head of a strong detachment, Prince Maurice himself arrived in great haste, attended by Philip Nassau, the Admiral Justinus Nassau, Count Solms, Peter van der Does, and Sir Francis Vere, and followed by another body of picked troops; the musicians playing merrily that national air, then as now so dear to Netherlanders—

"Wilhelmus van Nassouwen

Ben ick van Duytaem bloed."

The fight was over. Some forty of the garrison had been killed, but not a man of the attacking party. The burgomaster sent a trumpet to the prince asking permission to come to the castle to arrange a capitulation; and before sunrise, the city and fortress of Breda had surrendered to the authority of the States-General and of his Excellency.

The terms were moderate. The plundering was commuted for the payment of two months' wages to every soldier engaged in the affair. Burghers who might prefer to leave the city were allowed to do so with protection to life, and property. Those who were willing to remain loyal citizens were not to be molested, in their consciences or their households, in regard to religion. The public exercise of Catholic rites was however suspended until the States-General should make some universal provision on this subject.

Subsequently, it must be allowed, the bargain of commutation proved a bad one for the burghers. Seventy men had in reality done the whole work, but so many soldiers, belonging to the detachments who marched in after the fortress had been taken, came forward to claim their months' wages as to bring the whole amount required above one hundred thousand florins. The Spaniards accordingly reproached Prince Maurice with having fined his own patrimonial city more heavily than Alexander Farnese had mulcted Antwerp, which had been made to pay but four hundred thousand florins, a far less sum in proportion to the wealth and importance of the place.

Already the Prince of Parma, in the taking of Breda, saw verified his predictions of the disasters about to fall on the Spanish interests in the Netherlands, by reason of Philip's obstinate determination to concentrate all his energies on the invasion of France. Alexander had been unable, in the midst of preparations for his French campaign, to arrest this sudden capture, but his Italian blood was on fire at the ignominy which had come upon the soldiership of his countrymen. Five companies of foot and one of horse-picked troops of Spain and Italy—had surrendered a wealthy, populous town and a well-fortified castle to a mud-scow, and had fled shrieking in dismay from the onset of seventy frost-bitten Hollanders.

It was too late to save the town, but he could punish, as it deserved, the pusillanimity of the garrison.

Three captains—one of them rejoicing in the martial name of Cesar Guerra—were publicly beheaded in Brussels. A fourth, Ventimiglia, was degraded but allowed to escape with life, on account of his near relationship to the Duke of Terranova, while Governor Lanzavecchia was obliged to resign the command of Gertruydenberg. The great commander knew better than to encourage the yielding up of cities and fortresses by a mistaken lenity to their unlucky defenders.

Prince Maurice sent off letters the same night announcing his success to the States-General. Hohenlo wrote pithily to Olden-Barneveld—"The castle and town of Breda are ours, without a single man dead on our side. The garrison made no resistance but ran distracted out of the town."

The church bells rang and bonfires blazed and cannon thundered in every city in the United Provinces to commemorate this auspicious event. Olden-Barneveld, too, whose part in arranging the scheme was known to have been so valuable, received from the States-General a magnificent gilded vase with sculptured representations of the various scenes in the drama, and it is probable that not more unmingled satisfaction had been caused by any one event of the war than by this surprise of Breda.

The capture of a single town, not of first-rate importance either, would hardly seem too merit so minute a description as has been given in the preceding pages. But the event, with all its details, has been preserved with singular vividness in Netherland story. As an example of daring, patience, and complete success, it has served to encourage the bold spirits of every generation and will always inspire emulation in patriotic hearts of every age and clime, while, as the first of a series of audacious enterprises by which Dutch victories were to take the place of a long procession of Spanish triumphs on the blood-stained soil of the provinces, it merits, from its chronological position, a more than ordinary attention.

In the course of the summer Prince Maurice, carrying out into practice the lessons which he had so steadily been pondering, reduced the towns and strong places of Heyl, Flemert, Elshout, Crevecoeur, Hayden, Steenberg, Rosendaal, and Osterhout. But his time, during the remainder of the year 1590, was occupied with preparations for a campaign on an extended scale and with certain foreign negotiations to which it will soon be necessary to direct the reader's attention.

CHAPTER XXII.

Struggle of the United Provinces against Philip of Spain—Progress of the Republic—Influence of Geographical position on the fate of the Netherlands—Contrast offered by America—Miserable state of the so-called "obedient" provinces—Prosperity of the Commonwealth—Its internal government—Tendency to provincialism—Quibbles of the English Members of the Council, Wilkes and Bodley—Exclusion of Olden-Barneveld from the State Council—Proposals of Philip for mediation with the United Provinces—The Provinces resolutely decline all proffers of intervention.

The United Provinces had now been engaged in unbroken civil war for a quarter of a century. It is, however, inaccurate to designate this great struggle with tyranny as a civil war. It was a war for independence, maintained by almost the whole population of the United Provinces against a foreigner, a despot, alien to their blood, ignorant of their language, a hater of their race, a scorner of their religion, a trampler upon their liberties, their laws, and institutions—a man who had publicly declared that he would rather the whole nation were exterminated than permitted to escape from subjection to the Church of Rome. Liberty of speech, liberty of the press, liberty of thought on political, religious, and social questions existed

within those Dutch pastures and Frisian swamps to a far greater degree than in any other part of the world at that day; than in very many regions of Christendom in our own time. Personal slavery was unknown. In a large portion of their territory it had never existed. The free Frisians, nearest blood-relations of, in this respect, the less favoured Anglo-Saxons, had never bowed the knee to the feudal system, nor worn nor caused to be worn the collar of the serf. In the battles for human liberty no nation has stood with cleaner hands before the great tribunal, nor offered more spotless examples of patriotism to be emulated in all succeeding ages, than the Netherlanders in their gigantic struggle with Philip of Spain. It was not a class struggling for their own privileges, but trampling on their fellow-men in a lower scale of humanity. Kings and aristocrats sneered at the vulgar republic where Hans Miller, Hans Baker, and Hans Brewer enjoyed political rights end prated of a sovereignty other than that of long-descended races and of anointed heads. Yet the pikemen of Spain and the splendid cavalry and musketeers of Italy and Burgundy, who were now beginning to show their backs both behind entrenchments and in the open field to their republican foes, could not deny the valour with which the battles of liberty were fought; while Elizabeth of England, maintainer, if such ever were, of hereditary sovereignty and hater of popular freedom, acknowledged that for wisdom in council, dignity and adroitness in diplomatic debate, there were none to surpass the plain burgher statesmen of the new republic.

And at least these Netherlanders were consistent with themselves. They had come to disbelieve in the mystery of kingcraft, in the divine speciality of a few transitory mortals to direct the world's events and to dictate laws to their fellow-creatures. What they achieved was for the common good of all. They chose to live in an atmosphere of blood and fire for generation after generation rather than flinch from their struggle with despotism, for they knew that, cruel as the sea, it would swallow them all at last in one common destruction if they faltered or paused. They fought for the liberty of all. And it is for this reason that the history of this great conflict deserved to be deeply pondered by those who have the instinct of human freedom. Had the Hollanders basely sunk before the power of Spain, the proud history of England, France, and Germany would have been written in far different terms. The blood and tears which the Netherlanders caused to flow in their own stormy days have turned to blessings for remotest climes and ages. A pusillanimous peace, always possible at any period of their war, would have been hailed with rapture by contemporary statesmen, whose names have vanished from the world's memory; but would have sown with curses and misery the soil of Europe for succeeding ages. The territory of the Netherlands is narrow and meagre. It is but a slender kingdom now among the powers of the earth. The political grandeur of nations is determined by physical causes almost as much as by moral ones. Had the cataclysm which separated the fortunate British islands from the mainland happened to occur, instead, at a neighbouring point of the earth's crust; had the Belgian, Dutch, German and Danish Netherland floated off as one island into the sea, while that famous channel between two great rival nations remained dry land, there would have been a different history of the world.

But in the 16th century the history of one country was not an isolated chapter of personages and events. The history of the Netherlands is history of liberty. It was now combined with the English, now with French, with German struggles for political and religious freedom, but it is impossible to separate it from the one great complex which makes up the last half of the sixteenth and the first half of the seventeenth centuries.

At that day the Netherland republic was already becoming a power of importance in the political family of Christendom. If, in spite of her geographical disadvantages, she achieved so much, how much vaster might her power have grown, how much stronger through her example might popular institutions throughout the world have become, and how much more pacific the relations of European tribes, had nature been less niggard in her gifts to the young commonwealth. On the sea she was strong, for the ocean is the best of frontiers; but on land her natural boundaries faded vaguely away, without strong physical demarcations and with no sharply defined limits of tongue, history or race. Accident or human caprice seemed to have divided German Highland from German Netherland; Belgic Gaul from the rest of the Gallic realm. And even from the slender body, which an arbitrary destiny had set off for centuries into a separate organism, tyranny and religious bigotry had just hewn another portion away. But the commonwealth was already too highly vitalized to permit peaceful dismemberment. Only the low organisms can live in all their parts after violent separations. The trunk remained, bleeding but alive and vigorous, while the amputated portion lay for centuries in fossilized impotence.

Never more plainly than in the history of this commonwealth was the geographical law manifested by which the fate of nations is so deeply influenced. Courage, enterprise amounting almost to audacity, and a determined will confronted for a long lapse of time the inexorable, and permitted a great empire to germinate out of a few sand-banks held in defiance of the ocean, and protected from human encroachments on the interior only by the artificial barrier of custom-house and fort.

Thus foredoomed at birth, it must increase our admiration of human energy and of the sustaining influence of municipal liberty that the republic, even if transitory, should yet have girdled the earth with its possessions and held for a considerable period so vast a portion of the world in fee.

What a lesson to our transatlantic commonwealth, whom bountiful nature had blessed at her birth beyond all the nations of history and seemed to speed upon an unlimited career of freedom and peaceful prosperity, should she be capable at the first alarm on her track to throw away her inestimable advantages! If all history is not a mockery and a fable, she may be sure that the nation which deliberately carves itself in pieces and, substitutes artificial boundaries for the natural and historic ones, condemns itself either to extinction or to the lower life of political insignificance and petty warfare, with the certain loss of liberty and national independence at last. Better a terrible struggle, better the sacrifice of prosperity and happiness for years, than the eternal setting of that great popular hope, the United American Republic.

I speak in this digression only of the relations of physical nature to liberty and nationality, making no allusion to the equally stringent moral laws which no people can violate and yet remain in health and vigour.

Despite a quarter of a century of what is commonly termed civil war, the United Netherlands were prosperous and full of life. It was in the provinces which had seceded from the union of Utrecht that there was silence as of the grave, destitution, slavery, abject submission to a foreign foe. The leaders in the movement which had brought about the scission of 1579—commonly called the 'Reconciliation'—enjoyed

military and civil posts under a foreign tyrant, but were poorly rewarded for subserviency in fighting against their own brethren by contumely on the part of their masters. As for the mass of the people it would be difficult to find a desolation more complete than that recorded of the "obedient" provinces. Even as six years before, wolves littered their whelps in deserted farmhouses, cane-brake and thicket usurped the place of cornfield and, orchard, robbers swarmed on the highways once thronged by a most thriving population, nobles begged their bread in the streets of cities whose merchants once entertained emperors and whose wealth and traffic were the wonder of the world, while the Spanish viceroy formally permitted the land in the agricultural districts to be occupied and farmed by the first comer for his own benefit, until the vanished proprietors of the soil should make their re-appearance.

"Administered without justice or policy," said a Netherlander who was intensely loyal to the king and a most uncompromising Catholic, "eaten up and abandoned for that purpose to the arbitrary will of foreigners who suck the substance and marrow of the land without benefit to the king, gnaw the obedient cities to the bones, and plunder the open defenceless country at their pleasure, it may be imagined how much satisfaction these provinces take in their condition. Commerce and trade have ceased in a country which traffic alone has peopled, for without it no human habitation could be more miserable and poor than our land."—[Discours du Seigneur de Champagny sur les affaires des Pays Bas, 21 Dec. 1589. Bibl. de Bourgogne, MS. No. 12,962.]

Nothing could be more gloomy than the evils thus described by the Netherland statesman and soldier, except the remedy which he suggested. The obedient provinces, thus scourged and blasted for their obedience, were not advised to improve their condition by joining hands with their sister States, who had just constituted themselves by their noble resistance to royal and ecclesiastical tyranny into a free and powerful commonwealth. On the contrary, two great sources of regeneration and prosperity were indicated, but very different ones from those in which the republic had sought and found her strength. In the first place, it was suggested as indispensable that the obedient provinces should have more Jesuits and more Friars. The mendicant orders should be summoned to renewed exertions, and the king should be requested to send seminary priests to every village in numbers proportionate to the population, who should go about from house to house, counting the children, and seeing that they learned their catechism if their parents did not teach them, and, even in case they did, examining whether it was done thoroughly and without deception.

In the second place it was laid down as important that the bishops should confirm no one who had not been sufficiently catechized. "And if the mendicant orders," said Champagny, "are not numerous enough for these catechizations, the Jesuits might charge themselves therewith, not more and not less than the said mendicants, some of each being deputed to each parish. To this end it would be well if his Majesty should obtain from the Pope a command to the Jesuits to this effect, since otherwise they might not be willing to comply. It should also be ordered that all Jesuits, natives of these provinces, should return hither, instead of wandering about in other regions as if their help were not so necessary here."—[Ibid.]

It was also recommended that the mendicant friars should turn their particular attention to Antwerp, and that one of them should preach in French, another in German, another in English, every day at the opening of the Exchange.

With these appliances it was thought that Antwerp would revive out of its ruins and, despite the blockade of its river, renew its ancient commercial glories. Founded on the substantial rocks of mendicancy and jesuitism, it might again triumph over its rapidly rising rival, the heretic Amsterdam, which had no better basis for its grandeur than religious and political liberty, and uncontrolled access to the ocean.

Such were the aspirations of a distinguished and loyal Netherlander for the regeneration of his country. Such were his opinions as to the true sources of the wealth and greatness of nations. Can we wonder that the country fell to decay, or that this experienced, statesman and brave soldier should himself, after not many years, seek to hide his dishonoured head under the cowl of a monk?

The coast of the obedient provinces was thoroughly blockaded. The United Provinces commanded the sea, their cruisers, large and small, keeping diligent watch off every port and estuary of the Flemish coast, so that not a herringboat could enter without their permission. Antwerp, when it fell into the hands of the Spaniard, sank for ever from its proud position. The city which Venetians but lately had confessed with a sigh to be superior in commercial grandeur to their own magnificent capital, had ceased to be a seaport. Shut in from the ocean by Flushing—firmly held by an English garrison as one of the cautionary towns for the Queen's loan—her world-wide commerce withered before men's eyes. Her population was dwindling to not much more than half its former numbers, while Ghent, Bruges, and other cities were diminished by two-thirds.

On the other hand, the commerce and manufactures of the United Republic had enormously augmented. Its bitterest enemies bore witness to the sagacity and success by which its political affairs were administered, and to its vast superiority in this respect over the obedient provinces. "The rebels are not ignorant of our condition," said Champagny, "they are themselves governed with consummate wisdom, and they mock at those who submit themselves to the Duke of Parma. They are the more confirmed in their rebellion, when they see how many are thronging from us to them, complaining of such bad government, and that all take refuge in flight who can from the misery and famine which it has caused throughout these provinces!" The industrial population had flowed from the southern provinces into the north, in obedience to an irresistible law. The workers in iron, paper, silk, linen, lace, the makers of brocade, tapestry, and satin, as well as of all the coarser fabrics, had fled from the land of oppression to the land of liberty. Never in the history of civilisation had there been a more rapid development of human industry than in Holland during these years of bloodiest warfare. The towns were filled to overflowing. Amsterdam multiplied in wealth and population as fast as Antwerp shrank. Almost as much might be said of Middelburg, Enkhuyzen, Horn, and many other cities. It is the epoch to which the greatest expansion of municipal architecture is traced. Warehouses, palaces, docks, arsenals, fortifications, dykes, splendid streets and suburbs, were constructed on every side, and still there was not room for the constantly increasing population, large numbers of which habitually dwelt in the shipping. For even of that narrow span of earth called the province of Holland, one-third was then interior water, divided into five considerable lakes, those of Harlem, Schermer, Beemster, Waert, and Purmer. The sea was kept out by a magnificent system of dykes under the daily superintendence of a board of officers, called dyke-graves, while the rain-water, which might otherwise have drowned the soil thus painfully

reclaimed, was pumped up by windmills and drained off through sluices opening and closing with the movement of the tides.

The province of Zeeland was one vast "polder." It was encircled by an outer dyke of forty Dutch equal to one hundred and fifty English, miles in extent, and traversed by many interior barriers. The average cost of dyke-building was sixty florins the rod of twelve feet, or 84,000 florins the Dutch mile. The total cost of the Zeeland dykes was estimated at 3,360,000 florins, besides the annual repairs.

But it was on the sea that the Netherlanders were really at home, and they always felt it in their power—as their last resource against foreign tyranny—to bury their land for ever in the ocean, and to seek a new country at the ends of the earth. It has always been difficult to doom to political or personal slavery a nation accustomed to maritime pursuits. Familiarity with the boundless expanse of ocean, and the habit of victoriously contending with the elements in their stormy strength, would seem to inspire a consciousness in mankind of human dignity and worth. With the exception of Spain, the chief seafaring nations of the world were already protestant. The counter-league, which was to do battle so strenuously with the Holy Confederacy, was essentially a maritime league. "All the maritime heretics of the world, since heresy is best suited to navigators, will be banded together," said Champagny, "and then woe to the Spanish Indies, which England and Holland are already threatening."

The Netherlanders had been noted from earliest times for a free-spoken and independent personal demeanour. At this epoch they were taking the lead of the whole world in marine adventure. At least three thousand vessels of between one hundred and four hundred tons, besides innumerable doggers, busses, cromstevens, and similar craft used on the rivers and in fisheries, were to be found in the United Provinces, and one thousand, it was estimated, were annually built.

They traded to the Baltic regions for honey, wax, tallow, lumber, iron, turpentine, hemp. They brought from farthest Indies and from America all the fabrics of ancient civilisation, all the newly discovered products of a virgin soil, and dispensed them among the less industrious nations of the earth. Enterprise, led on and accompanied by science, was already planning the boldest flights into the unknown yet made by mankind, and it will soon be necessary to direct attention to those famous arctic voyages, made by Hollanders in pursuit of the north-west passage to Cathay, in which as much heroism, audacity, and scientific intelligence were displayed as in later times have made so many men belonging to both branches of the Anglo-Saxon race illustrious. A people, engaged in perennial conflict with a martial and sacerdotal despotism the most powerful in the world, could yet spare enough from its superfluous energies to confront the dangers of the polar oceans, and to bring back treasures of science to enrich the world.

Such was the spirit of freedom. Inspired by its blessed influence this vigorous and inventive little commonwealth triumphed over all human, all physical obstacles in its path. It organised armies on new principles to drive the most famous legions of history from its soil. It built navies to help rescue, at critical moments, the cause of England, of Protestantism, of civil liberty, and even of French nationality. More than all, by its trade with its arch-enemy, the republic constantly multiplied its resources for destroying his power and aggrandizing its own.

The war navy of the United Provinces was a regular force of one hundred ships—large at a period when a vessel of thirteen hundred tons was a monster—together with an indefinite number of smaller craft, which could be put into the public service on short notice? In those days of close quarters and light artillery a merchant ship was converted into a cruiser by a very simple, process. The navy was a self-supporting one, for it was paid by the produce of convoy fees and licenses to trade. It must be confessed that a portion of these revenues savoured much of black-mail to be levied on friend and foe; for the distinctions between, freebooter, privateer, pirate, and legitimate sea-robber were not very closely drawn in those early days of seafaring.

Prince Maurice of Nassau was lord high admiral, but he was obliged to listen to the counsels of various provincial boards of admiralty, which often impeded his action and interfered with his schemes.

It cannot be denied that the inherent vice of the Netherland polity was already a tendency to decentralisation and provincialism. The civil institutions of the country, in their main characteristics, have been frequently sketched in these pages. At this period they had entered almost completely into the forms which were destined to endure until the commonwealth fell in the great crash of the French Revolution. Their beneficial effects were more visible now—sustained and bound together as the nation was by the sense of a common danger, and by the consciousness of its daily developing strength—than at a later day when prosperity and luxury had blunted the fine instincts of patriotism.

The supreme power, after the deposition of Philip, and the refusal by France and by England to accept the sovereignty of the provinces, was definitely lodged in the States-General. But the States-General did not technically represent the people. Its members were not elected by the people. It was a body composed of, delegates from each provincial assembly, of which there were now five: Holland, Zeeland, Friesland, Utrecht, and Gelderland. Each provincial assembly consisted again of delegates, not from the inhabitants of the provinces, but from the magistracies of the cities. Those, magistracies, again, were not elected by the citizens. They elected themselves by renewing their own vacancies, and were, in short, immortal corporations. Thus, in final analysis, the supreme power was distributed and localised among the mayors and aldermen of a large number of cities, all independent alike of the people below and of any central power above.

It is true that the nobles, as, a class, had a voice in the provincial and, in the general assembly, both for themselves and as technical representatives of the smaller towns and of the rural population. But, as a matter of fact, the influence of this caste had of late years very rapidly diminished, through its decrease in numbers, and the far more rapid increase in wealth and power of the commercial and manufacturing classes. Individual nobles were constantly employed in the military, civil, and diplomatic service of the republic, but their body had ceased to be a power. It had been the policy of William the Silent to increase the number of cities entitled to send deputies to the States; for it was among the cities that his resistance to the tyranny of Spain, and his efforts to obtain complete independence for his country, had been mainly supported. Many of the great nobles, as has been seen in these pages, denounced the liberator and took sides with the tyrant. Lamoral

Egmont had walked to the scaffold to which Philip had condemned him, chanting a prayer for Philip's welfare. Egmont's eldest son was now foremost in the Spanish army, doing battle against his own country in behalf of the tyrant who had taken his father's life. Aremberg and Ligny, Arachot, Chimay, Croy, Caprea, Montigny, and most of the great patrician families of the Netherlands fought on the royal side.

The revolution which had saved the country from perdition and created the great Netherland republic was a burgher revolution, and burgher statesmen now controlled the State. The burgher class of Europe is not the one that has been foremost in the revolutionary movements of history, or that has distinguished itself—especially in more modern times—by a passionate love of liberty. It is always easy to sneer at Hans Miller and Hans Baker, and at the country where such plebeians are powerful. Yet the burghers played a prominent part in the great drama which forms my theme, and there has rarely been seen a more solid or powerful type of their class than the burgher statesman, John of Olden-Barneveld, who, since the death of William the Silent and the departure of Lord Leicester, had mainly guided the destinies of Holland. Certainly no soldier nor statesman who ever measured intellects with that potent personage was apt to treat his genius otherwise than with profound respect.

But it is difficult to form a logical theory of government except on the fiction of divine right as a basis, unless the fact of popular sovereignty, as expressed by a majority, be frankly accepted in spite of philosophical objections.

In the Netherlands there was no king, and strictly speaking no people. But this latter and fatal defect was not visible in the period of danger and of contest. The native magistrates of that age were singularly pure, upright, and patriotic. Of this there is no question whatever. And the people acquiesced cheerfully in their authority, not claiming a larger representation than such as they virtually possessed in the multiple power exercised over them, by men moving daily among them, often of modest fortunes and of simple lives. Two generations later, and in the wilderness of Massachusetts, the early American colonists voluntarily placed in the hands of their magistrates, few in number, unlimited control of all the functions of government, and there was hardly an instance known of an impure exercise of authority. Yet out of that simple kernel grew the least limited and most powerful democracy ever known.

In the later days of Netherland history a different result became visible, and with it came the ruin of the State. The governing class, of burgher origin, gradually separated itself from the rest of the citizens, withdrew from commercial pursuits, lived on hereditary fortunes in the exercise of functions which were likewise virtually hereditary, and so became an oligarchy. This result, together with the physical causes already indicated, made the downfall of the commonwealth probable whenever it should be attacked by an overwhelming force from without.

The States-General, however, at this epoch—although they had in a manner usurped the sovereignty, which in the absence of a feudal lord really belonged to the whole people, and had silently repossessed themselves of those executive functions which they had themselves conferred upon the state council—were at any rate without self-seeking ambition. The Hollanders, as a race, were not office seekers, but were singularly docile to constituted authority, while their regents—as the municipal magistrates were commonly called—were not very far removed above the mass by birth or habitual occupation. The republic was a social and political fact, against which there was no violent antagonism either of laws or manners, and the people, although not technically existing, in reality was all in all. In Netherland story the People is ever the true hero. It was an almost unnoticed but significant revolution—that by which the state council was now virtually deprived of its authority. During Leicester's rule it had been a most important college of administration. Since his resignation it had been entrusted by the States-General with high executive functions, especially in war matters. It was an assembly of learned counsellors appointed from the various provinces for wisdom and experience, usually about eighteen in number, and sworn in all things to be faithful to the whole republic. The allegiance of all was rendered to the nation. Each individual member was required to "forswear his native province in order to be true to the generality." They deliberated in common for the general good, and were not hampered by instructions from the provincial diets, nor compelled to refer to those diets for decision when important questions were at issue. It was an independent executive committee for the whole republic.

But Leicester had made it unpopular. His intrigues, in the name of democracy, to obtain possession of sovereign power, to inflame the lower classes against the municipal magistracies, and to excite the clergy to claim a political influence to which they were not entitled and which was most mischievous in its effects, had exposed the state council, with which he had been in the habit of consulting, to suspicion.

The Queen of England, by virtue of her treaty had the right to appoint two of her subjects to be members of the council. The governor of her auxiliary forces was also entitled to a seat there. Since the malpractices of Leicester and the danger to which the country had been, subjected in consequence had been discovered, it was impossible that there should be very kindly feeling toward England in the public mind, however necessary a sincere alliance between the two countries was known to be for the welfare of both.

The bickering of the two English councillors, Wilkes and Bodley, and of the governor of the English contingent with the Hollanders, was incessant. The Englishmen went so far as to claim the right of veto upon all measures passed by the council, but the States-General indignantly replied that the matters deliberated and decided upon by that board were their own affairs, not the state affairs of England. The two members and the military officer who together represented her Majesty were entitled to participate in the deliberations and to vote with their brother members. For them to claim the right, however, at will to annul the proceedings was an intolerable assumption, and could not be listened to for a moment. Certainly it would have been strange had two Dutchmen undertaken to veto every measure passed by the Queen's council at Richmond or Windsor, and it was difficult to say on what article of the contract this extraordinary privilege was claimed by Englishmen at the Hague.

Another cause of quarrel was the inability of the Englishmen to understand the language in which the debates of the state council were held.

According to a custom not entirely unexampled in parliamentary history the members of assembly and council made use of their native tongue in discussing the state affairs of their native land. It was however

considered a grievance by the two English members that the Dutchmen should speak Dutch, and it was demanded in the Queen's name that they should employ some other language which a foreigner could more easily understand.

The Hollanders however refused this request, not believing that in a reversed case her Majesty's Council or Houses of Parliament would be likely or competent to carry on their discussions habitually in Italian or Latin for the benefit of a couple of strangers who might not be familiar with English. The more natural remedy would have been for the foreigners to take lessons in the tongue of the country, or to seek for an interpreter among their colleagues; especially as the States, when all the Netherlands were but provinces, had steadily refused to adopt any language but their mother tongue, even at the demand of their sovereign prince.

At this moment, Sir Thomas Bodley was mainly entrusted with her Majesty's affairs at the Hague, but his overbearing demeanour, intemperate language, and passionate style of correspondence with the States and with the royal government, did much injury to both countries. The illustrious Walsingham—whose death in the spring of this year England had so much reason to deplore—had bitterly lamented, just before his death, having recommended so unquiet a spirit for so important a place. Ortel, envoy of the States to London, expressed his hopes that affairs would now be handled more to the satisfaction of the States; as Bodley would be obliged, since the death of Sir Francis, to address his letters to the Lord High Treasurer, with whom it would be impossible for him to obtain so much influence as he had enjoyed with the late Secretary of State.

Moreover it was exactly at this season that the Advocate of Holland, Olden-Barneveld, was excluded from the state council. Already the important province of Holland was dissatisfied with its influence in that body. Bearing one-half of the whole burthen of the war it was not content with one-quarter of the council vote, and very soon it became the custom for the States-General to conduct all the most important affairs of the republic. The state council complained that even in war matters it was not consulted, and that most important enterprises were undertaken by Prince Maurice without its knowledge, and on advice of the Advocate alone. Doubtless this was true, and thus, most unfortunately, the commonwealth was degraded to a confederacy instead of becoming an incorporate federal State. The members of the States-General—as it has been seen were responsible only to their constituents, the separate provinces. They avowed allegiance, each to his own province, none to the central government. Moreover they were not representatives, but envoys, appointed by petty provinces, bound by written orders, and obliged to consult at every step with their sovereigns at home. The Netherland polity was thus stamped almost at its birth with a narrow provincialism: Delay and hesitation thus necessarily engendered were overcome in the days of danger by patriotic fervour. The instinct of union for the sake of the national existence was sufficiently strong, and the robust, practical common sense of the people sufficiently enlightened to prevent this weakness from degenerating into impotence so long as the war pressure remained to mould them into a whole. But a day was to come for bitterly rueing this paralysis of the imperial instincts of the people, this indefinite decentralisation of the national strength.

For the present, the legislative and executive body was the States-General. But the States-General were in reality the States provincial, and the States provincial were the city municipalities, among which the magistracies of Holland were preponderant.

Ere long it became impossible for an individual to resist the decrees of the civic authorities. In 1591, the States-General passed a resolution by which these arrogant corporations virtually procured their exemption from any process at the suit of a private person to be placed on record. So far could the principle of sovereignty be pulverized. City council boards had become supreme.

It was naturally impossible during the long continuance of this great struggle, that neutral nations should not be injuriously affected by it in a variety of ways. And as a matter of course neutral nations were disposed to counsel peace. Peace, peace; peace was the sigh of the bystanders whose commerce was impeded, whose international relations. were complicated, and whose own security was endangered in the course of the bloody conflict. It was however not very much the fashion of that day for governments to obtrude advice upon each other; or to read to each other moral lectures. It was assumed that when the expense and sacrifice of war had been incurred, it was for cause, and the discovery had not yet been made that those not immediately interested in the fray were better acquainted with its merits than, the combatants themselves, and were moreover endued with, superhuman wisdom to see with perfect clearness that future issue which to the parties themselves was concealed.

Cheap apothegms upon the blessings of peace and upon the expediency of curbing the angry passions, uttered by the belligerents of yesterday to the belligerents of to-day, did not then pass current for profound wisdom.

Still the emperor Rudolph, abstaining for a time from his star-gazing, had again thought proper to make a feeble attempt at intervention in those sublunary matters which were supposed to be within his sphere.

It was perfectly well known that Philip was incapable of abating one jot of his pretensions, and that to propose mediation to the United Provinces was simply to request them, for the convenience of other powers, to return to the slavery out of which, by the persistent efforts of a quarter of a century, they had struggled. Nevertheless it was formally proposed to re-open those lukewarm fountains of diplomatic commonplace in which healing had been sought during the peace negotiations of Cologne in the year 1579. But the States-General resolutely kept them sealed. They simply answered his imperial Majesty by a communication of certain intercepted correspondence between—the King of Spain and his ambassador at Vienna, San Clemente, through which it was satisfactorily established that any negotiation would prove as gigantic a comedy on the part of Spain as had been the memorable conferences at Ostend, by which the invasion of England had been masked.

There never was a possibility of mediation or of compromise except by complete submission on the part of the Netherlanders to Crown and Church. Both in this, as well as in previous and subsequent attempts at negotiations, the secret instructions of Philip forbade any real concessions on his side. He was always ready to negotiate, he was especially anxious to obtain a suspension of arms from the rebels during negotiation; but his agents were instructed to use great dexterity and dissimulation in order that the proposal for such armistice, as well as for negotiation at all, should appear to proceed, not from himself as was the fact, but

from the emperor as a neutral potentate. The king uniformly proposed three points; firstly, that the rebels should reconvert themselves to the Catholic religion; secondly, that they should return to their obedience to himself; thirdly, that they should pay the expenses of the war. Number three was, however, usually inserted in order that, by conceding it subsequently, after much contestation, he might appear conciliatory. It was a vehicle of magnanimity towards men grown insolent with temporary success. Numbers one and two were immutable.

Especially upon number one was concession impossible. "The Catholic religion is the first thing," said Philip, "and although the rebels do not cease to insist that liberty of conscience should be granted them, in order that they may preserve that which they have had during these past years, this is never to be thought of in any event." The king always made free use of the terrible weapon which the Protestant princes of Germany had placed in his hands. For indeed if it were right that one man, because possessed of hereditary power over millions of his fellow creatures, should compel them all to accept the dogmas of Luther or of Calvin because agreeable to himself, it was difficult to say why another man, in a similarly elevated position, might not compel his subjects to accept the creed of Trent, or the doctrines of Mahomet or Confucius. The Netherlanders were fighting—even more than they knew-for liberty of conscience, for equality of all religions; not for Moses, nor for Melancthon; for Henry, Philip, or Pius; while Philip justly urged that no prince in Christendom permitted license. "Let them well understand," said his Majesty, "that since others who live in error, hold the opinion that vassals are to conform to the religion of their master, it is insufferable that it should be proposed to me that my vassals should have a different religion from mine—and that too being the true religion, proved by so many testimonies and miracles, while all others are deception. This must be arranged with the authority of the commissioners of the emperor, since it is well understood by them that the vassal is never to differ from the opinion of his master." Certainly it was worth an eighty years' war to drive such blasphemous madness as this out of human heads, whether crowned or shaven.

There was likewise a diet held during the summer of this year, of the circles of the empire nearest to the Netherlands—Westphalia, Cleves, Juliers, and Saxony—from which commissioners were deputed both to Brussels and to the Hague, to complain of the misfortunes suffered by neutral and neighbouring nations in consequence of the civil war.

They took nothing by their mission to the Duke of Parma. At the Hague the deputies were heard on the 22nd August, 1590. They complained to the States-General of "brandschatting" on the border, of the holding of forts beyond the lines, and of other invasions of neutral territory, of the cruising of the war-vessels of the States off the shores and on the rivers, and of their interference with lawful traders. Threats were made of forcible intervention and reprisals.

The united States replied on the 13th September. Expressing deep regret that neutral nations should suffer, they pronounced it to be impossible but that some sparks from the great fire, now desolating their land, should fly over into their neighbours' ground. The States were fighting the battle of liberty against slavery, in which the future generations of Germany, as well as of the Netherlands were interested. They were combating that horrible institution, the Holy Inquisition. They were doing their best to strike down the universal monarchy of Spain, which they described as a bloodthirsty, insatiable, insolent, absolute dominion of Saracenic, Moorish Christians. They warred with a system which placed inquisitors on the seats of judges, which made it unlawful to read the Scriptures, which violated all oaths, suppressed all civic freedom, trampled, on all laws and customs, raised inordinate taxes by arbitrary decree, and subjected high and low to indiscriminate murder. Spain had sworn the destruction of the provinces and their subjugation to her absolute dominion, in order to carry out her scheme of universal empire.

These were the deeds and designs against which the States were waging that war, concerning some inconvenient results of which their neighbours, now happily neutral, were complaining. But the cause of the States was the cause of humanity itself. This Saracenic, Moorish, universal monarchy had been seen by Germany to murder, despoil, and trample upon the Netherlands. It had murdered millions of innocent Indians and Granadians. It had kept Naples and Milan in abject slavery. It had seized Portugal. It had deliberately planned and attempted an accursed invasion of England and Ireland. It had overrun and plundered many cities of the empire. It had spread a web of secret intrigue about Scotland. At last it was sending great armies to conquer France and snatch its crown. Poor France now saw the plans of this Spanish tyranny and bewailed her misery. The subjects of her lawful king were ordered to rise against him, on account of religion and conscience. Such holy pretexts were used by these Saracenic Christians in order to gain possession of that kingdom.

For all these reasons, men should not reproach the inhabitants of the Netherlands, because seeing the aims of this accursed tyranny, they had set themselves to resist it. It was contrary to reason to consider them as disturbers of the general peace, or to hold them guilty of violating their oaths or their duty to the laws of the holy empire. The States-General were sure that they had been hitherto faithful and loyal, and they were resolved to continue in that path.

As members of the holy empire, in part—as of old they were considered to be—they had rather the right to expect, instead of reproaches, assistance against the enormous power and inhuman oppression of their enemies. They had demanded it heretofore by their ambassadors, and they still continued to claim it. They urged that, according to the laws of the empire, all foreign soldiers, Spaniards, Saracens, and the like should be driven out of the limits of the empire. Through these means the German Highland and the German Netherland might be restored once more to their old friendship and unity, and might deal with each other again in amity and commerce.

If, however, such requests could not be granted they at least begged his electoral highness and the other dukes, lords, and states to put on the deeds of Netherlanders in this laborious and heavy war the best interpretation, in order that they might, with the better courage and resolution, bear those inevitable burthens which were becoming daily heavier in this task of resistance and self-protection; in order that the provinces might not be utterly conquered, and serve, with their natural resources and advantageous situation, as 'sedes et media belli' for the destruction of neighbouring States and the building up of the contemplated universal, absolute monarchy.

The United Provinces had been compelled by overpowering necessity to take up arms. That which had resulted was and remained in 'terminis defensionis.' Their object was to protect what belonged to them, to recover that which by force or fraud had been taken from them.

In regard to excesses committed by their troops against neutral inhabitants on the border, they expressed a strong regret, together with a disposition to make all proper retribution and to cause all crimes to be punished.

They alluded to the enormous sins of this nature practised by the enemy against neutral soil. They recalled to mind that the Spaniards paid their troops ill or not at all, and that they allowed them to plunder the innocent and the neutral, while the United States had paid their troops better wages, and more punctually, than had ever been done by the greatest potentates of Europe. It was true that the States kept many cruisers off the coasts and upon the rivers, but these were to protect their own citizens and friendly traders against pirates and against the common foe. Germany derived as much benefit from this system as did the Provinces themselves.

Thus did the States-General, respectfully but resolutely, decline all proffers of intervention, which, as they were well aware, could only enure to the benefit of the enemy. Thus did they avoid being entrapped into negotiations which could only prove the most lamentable of comedies.

ETEXT EDITOR'S BOOKMARKS:

A pusillanimous peace, always possible at any period
At length the twig was becoming the tree
Being the true religion, proved by so many testimonies
Certainly it was worth an eighty years' war
Chief seafaring nations of the world were already protestant
Conceding it subsequently, after much contestation
Fled from the land of oppression to the land of liberty
German Highland and the German Netherland
Little army of Maurice was becoming the model for Europe
Luxury had blunted the fine instincts of patriotism
Maritime heretics
Portion of these revenues savoured much of black-mail
The divine speciality of a few transitory mortals
The history of the Netherlands is history of liberty
The nation which deliberately carves itself in pieces
They had come to disbelieve in the mystery of kingcraft
Worn nor caused to be worn the collar of the serf

CHAPTER XXIII. 1590

Philip's scheme of aggrandizement—Projected invasion of France—Internal condition of France—Character of Henry of Navarre—Preparation for action—Battle of Ivry—Victory of the French king over the League—Reluctance of the King to attack the French capital—Siege of Paris—The pope indisposed towards the League—Extraordinary demonstration of ecclesiastics—Influence of the priests—Extremities of the siege—Attempted negotiation—State of Philip's army—Difficult position of Farnese—March of the allies to the relief of Paris—Lagny taken and the city relieved—Desertion of the king's army—Siege of Corbeil—Death of Pope Sixtus V.—Re-capture of Lagny and Corbeil—Return of Parma to the Netherlands—Result of the expedition.

The scene of the narrative shifts to France. The history of the United Netherlands at this epoch is a world-history. Were it not so, it would have far less of moral and instruction for all time than it is really capable of affording. The battle of liberty against despotism was now fought in the hop-fields of Brabant or the polders of Friesland, now in the narrow seas which encircle England, and now on the sunny plains of Dauphiny, among the craggy inlets of Brittany, or along the high roads and rivers which lead to the gates of Paris. But everywhere a noiseless, secret, but ubiquitous negotiation was speeding with never an instant's pause to accomplish the work which lansquenettes and riders, pikemen and carabineers were contending for on a hundred battle-fields and amid a din of arms which for a quarter of a century had been the regular hum of human industry. For nearly a generation of mankind, Germans and Hollanders, Englishmen, Frenchmen, Scotchmen, Irishmen, Spaniards and Italians seemed to be born into the world mainly to fight for or against a system of universal monarchy, conceived for his own benefit by a quiet old man who passed his days at a writing desk in a remote corner of Europe. It must be confessed that Philip II. gave the world work enough. Whether—had the peoples governed themselves—their energies might not have been exerted in a different direction, and on the whole have produced more of good to the human race than came of all this blood and awoke, may be questioned.

But the divine right of kings, associating itself with the power supreme of the Church, was struggling to maintain that old mastery of mankind which awakening reason was inclined to dispute. Countries and nations being regarded as private property to be inherited or bequeathed by a few favoured individuals—provided always that those individuals were obedient to the chief-priest—it had now become right and proper for the Spanish monarch to annex Scotland, England, and France to the very considerable possessions which were already his own. Scotland he claimed by virtue of the expressed wish of Mary to the exclusion of her heretic son.

France, which had been unjustly usurped by another family in times past to his detriment, and which only a mere human invention—a "pleasantry" as Alva had happily termed it, called the "Salic law"—prevented from

passing quietly to his daughter, as heiress to her mother, daughter of Henry II., he was now fully bent upon making his own without further loss of time. England, in consequence of the mishap of the year eighty-eight, he was inclined to defer appropriating until the possession of the French coasts, together with those of the Netherlands, should enable him to risk the adventure with assured chances of success.

The Netherlands were fast slipping beyond his control, to be sure, as he engaged in these endless schemes; and ill-disposed people of the day said that the king was like Aesop's dog, lapping the river dry in order to get at the skins floating on the surface. The Duke of Parma was driven to his wits' ends for expedients, and beside himself with vexation, when commanded to withdraw his ill-paid and mutinous army from the Provinces for the purpose of invading France. Most importunate were the appeals and potent the arguments by which he attempted to turn Philip from his purpose. It was in vain. Spain was the great, aggressive, overshadowing power at that day, before whose plots and whose violence the nations alternately trembled, and it was France that now stood in danger of being conquered or dismembered by the common enemy of all. That unhappy kingdom, torn by intestine conflict, naturally invited the ambition and the greediness of foreign powers. Civil war had been its condition, with brief intervals, for a whole generation of mankind. During the last few years, the sword had been never sheathed, while "the holy Confederacy" and the Bearnese struggled together for the mastery. Religion was the mantle under which the chiefs on both sides concealed their real designs as they led on their followers year after year to the desperate conflict. And their followers, the masses, were doubtless in earnest. A great principle—the relation of man to his Maker and his condition in a future world as laid down by rival priesthoods—has in almost every stage of history had power to influence the multitude to fury and to deluge the world in blood. And so long as the superstitious element of human nature enables individuals or combinations of them to dictate to their fellow-creatures those relations, or to dogmatize concerning those conditions—to take possession of their consciences in short, and to interpose their mummeries between man and his Creator—it is, probable that such scenes as caused the nations to shudder, throughout so large a portion of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries will continue to repeat themselves at intervals in various parts of the earth. Nothing can be more sublime than the self-sacrifice, nothing more demoniac than the crimes, which human creatures have seemed always ready to exhibit under the name of religion.

It was and had been really civil war in France. In the Netherlands it had become essentially a struggle for independence against a foreign monarch; although the germ out of which both conflicts had grown to their enormous proportions was an effort of the multitude to check the growth of papacy. In France, accordingly, civil war, attended by that gaunt sisterhood, murder, pestilence, and famine, had swept from the soil almost everything that makes life valuable. It had not brought in its train that extraordinary material prosperity and intellectual development at which men wondered in the Netherlands, and to which allusion has just been made. But a fortunate conjunction of circumstances had now placed Henry of Navarre in a position of vantage. He represented the principle of nationality, of French unity. It was impossible to deny that he was in the regular line of succession, now that luckless Henry of Valois slept with his fathers, and the principle of nationality might perhaps prove as vital a force as attachment to the Roman Church. Moreover, the adroit and unscrupulous Bearnese knew well how to shift the mantle of religion from one shoulder to the other, to serve his purposes or the humours of those whom he addressed.

"The King of Spain would exclude me from the kingdom and heritage of my father because of my religion," he said to the Duke of Saxony; "but in that religion I am determined to persist so long as I shall live." The hand was the hand of Henry, but it was the voice of Duplessis Mornay.

"Were there thirty crowns to win," said he, at about the same time to the States of France, "I would not change my religion on compulsion, the dagger at my throat. Instruct me, instruct me, I am not obstinate." There spoke the wily freethinker, determined not to be juggled out of what he considered his property by fanatics or priests of either church. Had Henry been a real devotee, the fate of Christendom might have been different. The world has long known how much misery it is in the power of crowned bigots to inflict.

On the other hand, the Holy League, the sacred Confederacy, was catholic or nothing. Already it was more papist than the pope, and loudly denounced Sixtus V. as a Huguenot because he was thought to entertain a weak admiration both for Henry the heretic and for the Jezebel of England.

But the holy confederacy was bent on destroying the national government of France, and dismembering the national domain. To do this the pretext of trampling out heresy and indefinitely extending the power of Rome, was most influential with the multitude, and entitled the leaders to enjoy immense power for the time being, while maturing their schemes for acquiring permanent possession of large fragments of the national territory. Mayenne, Nemours, Aumale, Mercoeur longed to convert temporary governments into independent principalities. The Duke of Lorraine looked with longing eyes on Verdun, Sedan, and, the other fair cities within the territories contiguous—to his own domains. The reckless house of Savoy; with whom freebooting and landrobbery seemed geographical, and hereditary necessities, was busy on the southern borders, while it seemed easy enough for Philip, II., in right of his daughter, to secure at least the duchy of Brittany before entering on the sovereignty of the whole kingdom.

To the eyes of the world at large: France might well seem in a condition of hopeless disintegration; the restoration of its unity and former position among the nations, under the government of a single chief, a weak and wicked dream. Furious and incessant were the anathemas hurled on the head of the Bearnese for his persistence in drowning the land in blood in the hope of recovering a national capital which never could be his, and of wresting from the control of the confederacy that power. which, whether usurped or rightful, was considered, at least by the peaceably inclined, to have become a solid fact.

The poor puppet locked in the tower of Fontenay, and entitled Charles X.; deceived and scared no one. Such money as there was might be coined, in its name, but Madam League reigned supreme in Paris. The confederates, inspired by the eloquence of a cardinal legate, and supplied with funds by the faithful, were ready to dare a thousand deaths rather than submit to the rule of a tyrant and heretic.

What was an authority derived from the laws of the land and the history of the race compared with the dogmas of Rome and the trained veterans of Spain? It remained to be seen whether nationality or bigotry would triumph. But in the early days of 1590 the prospects of nationality were not encouraging.

Francois de Luxembourg, due de Pincey, was in Rome at that moment, deputed by such catholic nobles of France as were friendly to Henry of Navarre. Sixtus might perhaps be influenced as to the degree of respect to be accorded to the envoy's representations by the events of the campaign about to open. Meantime the legate Gaetano, young, rich, eloquent, unscrupulous, distinguished alike for the splendour of his house and the brilliancy of his intellect, had arrived in Paris.

Followed by a great train of adherents he had gone down to the House of Parliament, and was about to seat himself under the dais reserved for the king, when Brisson, first President of Parliament, plucked him back by the arm, and caused him to take a seat immediately below his own.

Deeply was the bold president to expiate this defence of king and law against the Holy League. For the moment however the legate contented himself with a long harangue, setting forth the power of Rome, while Brisson replied by an oration magnifying the grandeur of France.

Soon afterwards the cardinal addressed himself to the counteraction of Henry's projects of conversion. For, well did the subtle priest understand that in purging himself of heresy, the Bearnese was about to cut the ground from beneath his enemies' feet. In a letter to the archbishops and bishops of France, he argued the matter at length. Especially he denied the necessity or the legality of an assembly of all the prelates of France, such as Henry desired to afford him the requisite "instruction" as to the respective merits of the Roman and the reformed Church. Certainly, he urged, the Prince of Bearne could hardly require instruction as to the tenets of either, seeing that at different times he had faithfully professed both.

But while benches of bishops and doctors of the Sorbonne were burnishing all the arms in ecclesiastical and legal arsenals for the approaching fray, the sound of louder if not more potent artillery began to be heard in the vicinity of Paris. The candid Henry, while seeking ghostly instruction with eagerness from his papistical patrons, was equally persevering in applying for the assistance of heretic musketeers and riders from his protestant friends in England, Holland, Germany, and Switzerland.

Queen Elizabeth and the States-General vied with each other in generosity to the great champion of protestantism, who was combating the holy league so valiantly, and rarely has a great historical figure presented itself to the world so bizarre of aspect, and under such shifting perplexity of light and shade, as did the Bearnese in the early spring of 1590.

The hope of a considerable portion of the catholic nobility of his realm, although himself an excommunicated heretic; the mainstay of Calvinism while secretly bending all his energies to effect his reconciliation with the pope; the idol of the austere and grimly puritanical, while himself a model of profligacy; the leader of the earnest and the true, although false as water himself in every relation in which human beings can stand to each other; a standardbearer of both great branches of the Christian Church in an age when religion was the atmosphere of men's daily lives, yet finding his sincerest admirer, and one of his most faithful allies, in the Grand Turk,

> *[A portion of the magnificently protective letter of Sultan Amurath, in which he complimented Henry on his religious stedfastness, might almost have made the king's cheek tingle.]*

the representative of national liberty and human rights against regal and sacerdotal absolutism, while himself a remorseless despot by nature and education, and a believer in no rights of the people save in their privilege to be ruled by himself; it seems strange at first view that Henry of Navarre should have been for centuries so heroic and popular an image. But he was a soldier, a wit, a consummate politician; above all, he was a man, at a period when to be a king was often to be something much less or much worse.

To those accustomed to weigh and analyse popular forces it might well seem that he was now playing an utterly hopeless game. His capital garrisoned by the Pope and the King of Spain, with its grandees and its populace scoffing at his pretence of authority and loathing his name; with an exchequer consisting of what he could beg or borrow from Queen Elizabeth—most parsimonious of sovereigns reigning over the half of a small island—and from the States-General governing a half-born, half-drowned little republic, engaged in a quarter of a century's warfare with the greatest monarch in the world; with a wardrobe consisting of a dozen shirts and five pocket-handkerchiefs, most of them ragged, and with a commissariat made up of what could be brought in the saddle-bags of his Huguenot cavaliers who came to the charge with him to-day, and to-morrow were dispersed again to their mountain fastnesses; it did not seem likely on any reasonable theory of dynamics that the power of the Bearnese was capable of outweighing Pope and Spain, and the meaner but massive populace of France, and the Sorbonne, and the great chiefs of the confederacy, wealthy, long descended, allied to all the sovereigns of Christendom, potent in territorial possessions and skilful in wielding political influences.

"The Bearnese is poor but a gentleman of good family," said the cheerful Henry, and it remained to-be seen whether nationality, unity, legitimate authority, history, and law would be able to neutralise the powerful combination of opposing elements.

The king had been besieging Dreux and had made good progress in reducing the outposts of the city. As it was known that he was expecting considerable reinforcements of English ships, Netherlanders, and Germans, the chiefs of the league issued orders from Paris for an attack before he should thus be strengthened.

For Parma, unwillingly obeying the stringent commands of his master, had sent from Flanders eighteen hundred picked cavalry under Count Philip Egmont to join the army of Mayenne. This force comprised five hundred Belgian heavy dragoons under the chief nobles of the land, together with a selection, in even proportions, of Walloon, German, Spanish, and Italian troopers.

Mayenne accordingly crossed the Seine at Mantes with an army of ten thousand foot, and, including Egmont's contingent, about four thousand horse. A force under Marshal d'Aumont, which lay in Ivry at the passage of the Eure, fell back on his approach and joined the remainder of the king's army. The siege of Dreux was abandoned; and Henry withdrew to the neighbourhood of Nonancourt. It was obvious that the duke meant to offer battle, and it was rare that the king under any circumstances could be induced to decline a combat.

On the night of the 12th-13th March, Henry occupied Saint Andre, a village situated on an elevated and extensive plain four leagues from Nonancourt, in the direction of Ivry, fringed on three sides by villages and by a wood, and commanding a view of all the approaches from the country between the Seine and Eure. It would have been better had Mayenne been beforehand with him, as the sequel proved; but the duke was not famed for the rapidity of his movements. During the greater part of the night, Henry was employed in distributing his orders for that conflict which was inevitable on the following day. His army was drawn up according to a plan prepared by himself, and submitted to the most experienced of his generals for their approval. He then personally visited every portion of the encampment, speaking words of encouragement to his soldiers, and perfecting his arrangements for the coming conflict. Attended by Marshals d'Aumont and Biron he remained on horseback during a portion of the night, having ordered his officers to their tents and reconnoitred as well as he could the position of the enemy. Towards morning he retired to his headquarters at Fourainville, where he threw himself half-dressed on his truckle bed, and although the night was bitterly cold, with no covering but his cloak. He was startled from his slumber before the dawn by a movement of lights in the enemy's camp, and he sprang to his feet supposing that the duke was stealing a march upon him despite all his precautions. The alarm proved to be a false one, but Henry lost no time in ordering his battle. His cavalry he divided in seven troops or squadrons. The first, forming the left wing, was a body of three hundred under Marshal d'Aumont, supported by two regiments of French infantry. Next, separated by a short interval, was another troop of three hundred under the Duke of Montpensier, supported by two other regiments of foot, one Swiss and one German. In front of Montpensier was Baron Biron the younger, at the head of still another body of three hundred. Two troops of cuirassiers, each four hundred strong, were on Biron's left, the one commanded by the Grand Prior of France, Charles d'Angouleme, the other by Monsieur de Givry. Between the Prior and Givry were six pieces of heavy artillery, while the battalia, formed of eight hundred horse in six squadrons, was commanded by the king in person, and covered on both sides by English and Swiss infantry, amounting to some four thousand in all. The right wing was under the charge of old Marshal Biron, and comprised three troops of horse, numbering one hundred and fifty each, two companies of German riders, and four regiments of French infantry. These numbers, which are probably given with as much accuracy as can be obtained, show a force of about three thousand horse and twelve thousand foot.

The Duke of Mayenne, seeing too late the advantage of position which he might have easily secured the day before, led his army forth with the early light, and arranged it in an order not very different from that adopted by the king, and within cannon-shot of his lines. The right wing under Marshal de la Chatre consisted of three regiments of French and one of Germans, supporting three regiments of Spanish lancers, two cornets of German riders under the Bastard of Brunswick, and four hundred cuirassiers. The battalia, which was composed of six hundred splendid cavalry, all noblemen of France, guarding the white banner of the Holy League, and supported by a column of three thousand Swiss and two thousand French infantry, was commanded by Mayenne in person, assisted by his half-brother, the Duke of Nemours. In front of the infantry was a battery of six cannon and three culverines. The left wing was commanded by Marshal de Rene, with six regiments of French and Lorrainers, two thousand Germans, six hundred French cuirassiers, and the mounted troopers of Count Egmont. It is probable that Mayenne's whole force, therefore, amounted to nearly four thousand cavalry and at least thirteen thousand foot.

Very different was the respective appearance of the two armies, so far, especially, as regarded the horsemen on both sides. Gay in their gilded armour and waving plumes, with silken scarves across their shoulders, and the fluttering favours of fair ladies on their arms or in their helmets, the brilliant champions of the Holy Catholic Confederacy clustered around the chieftains of the great house of Guise, impatient for the conflict. It was like a muster for a brilliant and chivalrous tournament. The Walloon and Flemish nobles, outrivalling even the self-confidence of their companions in arms, taunted them with their slowness. The impetuous Egmont, burning to eclipse the fame of his ill-fated father at Gravelines and St. Quintin in the same holy cause, urged on the battle with unseemly haste, loudly proclaiming that if the French were faint-hearted he would himself give a good account of the Navarrese prince without any assistance from them.

A cannon-shot away, the grim puritan nobles who had come forth from their mountain fastnesses to do battle for king and law and for the rights of conscience against the Holy League—men seasoned in a hundred battle-fields, clad all in iron, with no dainty ornaments nor holiday luxury of warfare—knelt on the ground, smiting their mailed breasts with iron hands, invoking blessings on themselves and curses and confusion on their enemies in the coming conflict, and chanting a stern psalm of homage to the God of battles and of wrath. And Henry of France and Navarre, descendant of Lewis the Holy and of Hugh the Great, beloved chief of the Calvinist cavaliers, knelt among his heretic brethren, and prayed and chanted with them. But not the staunchest Huguenot of them all, not Duplessis, nor D'Aubigne, nor De la Noue with the iron arm, was more devoted on that day to crown and country than were such papist supporters of the rightful heir as had sworn to conquer the insolent foreigner on the soil of France or die.

When this brief prelude was over, Henry made an address to his soldiers, but its language has not been preserved. It is known, however, that he wore that day his famous snow-white plume, and that he ordered his soldiers, should his banner go down in the conflict, to follow wherever and as long as that plume should be seen waving on any part of the field. He had taken a position by which his troops had the sun and wind in their backs, so that the smoke rolled toward the enemy and the light shone in their eyes. The combat began with the play of artillery, which soon became so warm that Egmont, whose cavalry—suffering and galled—soon became impatient, ordered a charge. It was a most brilliant one. The heavy troopers of Flanders and Hainault, following their spirited chieftain, dashed upon old Marshal Biron, routing his cavalry, charging clean up to the Huguenot guns and sabring the cannoneers. The shock was square, solid, irresistible, and was followed up by the German riders under Eric of Brunswick, who charged upon the battalia of the royal army, where the king commanded in person.

There was a panic. The whole royal cavalry wavered, the supporting infantry recoiled, the day seemed lost before the battle was well begun. Yells of "Victory! Victory! up with the Holy League, down with the heretic Bearnese," resounded through the Catholic squadrons. The king and Marshal Biron, who were near each other, were furious with rage, but already doubtful of the result. They exerted themselves to rally the troops under their immediate command, and to reform the shattered ranks.

The German riders and French lancers under Brunswick and Bassompierre had, however, not done their work as thoroughly as Egmont had done. The ground was so miry and soft that in the brief space which separated the hostile lines they had not power to urge their horses to full speed. Throwing away their useless lances, they came on at a feeble canter, sword in hand, and were unable to make a very vigorous impression on the more heavily armed troopers opposed to them. Meeting with a firm resistance to their career, they wheeled, faltered a little and fell a short distance back. Many of the riders being of the reformed religion, refused moreover to fire upon the Huguenots, and discharged their carbines in the air.

The king, whose glance on the battle-field was like inspiration, saw the blot and charged upon them in person with his whole battalia of cavalry. The veteran Biron followed hard upon the snow-white plume. The scene was changed, victory succeeded to impending defeat, and the enemy was routed. The riders and cuirassiers, broken into a struggling heap of confusion, strewed the ground with their dead bodies, or carried dismay into the ranks of the infantry as they strove to escape. Brunswick went down in the melee, mortally wounded as it was believed. Egmont renewing the charge at the head of his victorious Belgian troopers, fell dead with a musket-ball through his heart. The shattered German and Walloon cavalry, now pricked forward by the lances of their companions, under the passionate commands of Mayenne and Aumale, now fading back before the furious charges of the Huguenots, were completely overthrown and cut to pieces.

Seven times did Henry of Navarre in person lead his troopers to the charge; but suddenly, in the midst of the din of battle and the cheers of victory, a message of despair went from lip to lip throughout the royal lines. The king had disappeared. He was killed, and the hopes of Protestantism and of France were fallen for ever with him. The white standard of his battalia had been seen floating wildly and purposelessly over the field; for his bannerman, Pot de Rhodes, a young noble of Dauphiny, wounded mortally in the head, with blood streaming over his face and blinding his sight, was utterly unable to control his horse, who galloped hither and thither at his own caprice, misleading many troopers who followed in his erratic career. A cavalier, armed in proof, and wearing the famous snow-white plume, after a hand-to-hand struggle with a veteran of Count Bossu's regiment, was seen to fall dead by the side of the bannerman: The Fleming, not used to boast, loudly asserted that he had slain the Bearnese, and the news spread rapidly over the battle-field. The defeated Confederates gained new courage, the victorious Royalists were beginning to waver, when suddenly, between the hostile lines, in the very midst of the battle, the king galloped forward, bareheaded, covered with blood and dust, but entirely unhurt. A wild shout of "Vive le Roi!" rang through the air. Cheerful as ever, he addressed a few encouraging words to his soldiers, with a smiling face, and again led a charge. It was all that was necessary to complete the victory. The enemy broke and ran away on every side in wildest confusion, followed by the royalist cavalry, who sabred them as they fled. The panic gained the foot-soldiers, who should have supported the cavalry, but had not been at all engaged in the action. The French infantry threw away their arms as they rushed from the field and sought refuge in the woods. The Walloons were so expeditious in the race, that they never stopped till they gained their own frontier. The day was hopelessly lost, and although Mayenne had conducted himself well in the early part of the day, it was certain that he was excelled by none in the celerity of his flight when the rout had fairly begun. Pausing to draw breath as he gained the wood, he was seen to deal blows with his own sword among the mob of fugitives, not that he might rally them to their flag and drive them back to another encounter, but because they encumbered his own retreat.

The Walloon carbineers, the German riders, and the French lancers, disputing as to the relative blame to be attached to each corps, began shooting and sabring each other, almost before they were out of the enemy's sight. Many were thus killed. The lansquenets were all put to the sword. The Swiss infantry were allowed to depart for their own country on pledging themselves not again to bear arms against Henry IV.

It is probable that eight hundred of the leaguers were either killed on the battle-field or drowned in the swollen river in their retreat. About one-fourth of that number fell in the army of the king. It is certain that of the contingent from the obedient Netherlands, two hundred and seventy, including their distinguished general, lost their lives. The Bastard of Brunswick, crawling from beneath a heap of slain, escaped with life. Mayenne lost all his standards and all the baggage of his army, while the army itself was for a time hopelessly dissolved.

Few cavalry actions have attained a wider celebrity in history than the fight of Ivry. Yet there have been many hard-fought battles, where the struggle was fiercer and closer, where the issue was for a longer time doubtful, where far more lives on either side were lost, where the final victory was immediately productive of very much greater results, and which, nevertheless, have sunk into hopeless oblivion. The personal details which remain concerning the part enacted by the adventurous king at this most critical period of his career, the romantic interest which must always gather about that ready-witted, ready-sworded Gascon, at the moment when, to contemporaries, the result of all his struggles seemed so hopeless or at best so doubtful; above all, the numerous royal and princely names which embellished the roll-call of that famous passage of arms, and which were supposed, in those days at least, to add such lustre to a battle-field, as humbler names, however illustrious by valour or virtue, could never bestow, have made this combat for ever famous.

Yet it is certain that the most healthy moral, in military affairs, to be derived from the event, is that the importance of a victory depends less upon itself than on the use to be made of it. Mayenne fled to Mantes, the Duke of Nemours to Chartres, other leaders of the League in various directions, Mayenne told every body he met that the Bearnese was killed, and that although his own army was defeated, he should soon have another one on foot. The same intelligence was communicated to the Duke of Parma, and by him to Philip. Mendoza and the other Spanish agents went about Paris spreading the news of Henry's death, but the fact seemed woefully to lack confirmation, while the proofs of the utter overthrow and shameful defeat of the Leaguers were visible on every side. The Parisians—many of whom the year before had in vain hired windows in the principal streets, in order to witness the promised entrance of the Bearnese, bound hand and foot, and with a gag in his mouth, to swell the triumph of Madam League—were incredulous as to the death now reported to them of this very lively heretic, by those who had fled so ignominiously from his troopers.

De la None and the other Huguenot chieftains, earnestly urged upon Henry the importance of advancing upon Paris without an instant's delay, and it seems at least extremely probable that, had he done so, the

capital would have fallen at once into his hands. It is the concurrent testimony of contemporaries that the panic, the destitution, the confusion would have made resistance impossible had a determined onslaught been made. And Henry had a couple of thousand horsemen flushed with victory, and a dozen thousand foot who had been compelled to look upon a triumph in which they had no opportunity of sharing: Success and emulation would have easily triumphed over dissension and despair.

But the king, yielding to the councils of Biron and other Catholics, declined attacking the capital, and preferred waiting the slow, and in his circumstances eminently hazardous, operations of a regular siege. Was it the fear of giving a signal triumph to the cause of Protestantism that caused the Huguenot leader—so soon to become a renegade—to pause in his career? Was it anxiety lest his victorious entrance into Paris might undo the diplomacy of his catholic envoys at Rome? or was it simply the mutinous condition of his army, especially of the Swiss mercenaries, who refused to advance a step unless their arrears of pay were at once furnished them out of the utterly empty exchequer of the king? Whatever may have been the cause of the delay, it is certain that the golden fruit of victory was not plucked, and that although the confederate army had rapidly dissolved, in consequence of their defeat, the king's own forces manifested as little cohesion.

And now began that slow and painful siege, the details of which are as terrible, but as universally known, as those of any chapters in the blood-stained history of the century. Henry seized upon the towns guarding the rivers Seine and Marne, twin nurses of Paris. By controlling the course of those streams as well as that of the Yonne and Oise—especially by taking firm possession of Lagny on the Marne, whence a bridge led from the Isle of France to the Brie country—great thoroughfare of wine and corn—and of Corbeil at the junction of the little river Essonne with the Seine-it was easy in that age to stop the vital circulation of the imperial city.

By midsummer, Paris, unquestionably the first city of Europe at that day, was in extremities, and there are few events in history in which our admiration is more excited by the power of mankind to endure almost preternatural misery, or our indignation more deeply aroused by the cruelty with which the sublimest principles of human nature may be made to serve the purposes of selfish ambition and grovelling superstition, than this famous leaguer.

Rarely have men at any epoch defended their fatherland against foreign oppression with more heroism than that which was manifested by the Parisians of 1590 in resisting religious toleration, and in obeying a foreign and priestly despotism. Men, women, and children cheerfully laid down their lives by thousands in order that the papal legate and the king of Spain might trample upon that legitimate sovereign of France who was one day to become the idol of Paris and of the whole kingdom.

A census taken at the beginning of the siege had showed a populace of two hundred thousand souls, with a sufficiency of provisions, it was thought, to last one month. But before the terrible summer was over—so completely had the city been invested—the bushel of wheat was worth three hundred and sixty crowns, rye and oats being but little cheaper. Indeed, grain might as well have cost three thousand crowns the bushel, for the prices recorded placed it beyond the reach of all but the extremely wealthy. The flesh of horses, asses, dogs, cats, rats had become rare luxuries. There was nothing cheap, said a citizen bitterly, but sermons. And the priests and monks of every order went daily about the streets, preaching fortitude in that great resistance to heresy, by which Paris was earning for itself a crown of glory, and promising the most direct passage to paradise for the souls of the wretched victims who fell daily, starved to death, upon the pavements. And the monks and priests did their work nobly, aiding the general resolution by the example of their own courage. Better fed than their fellow citizens, they did military work in trench, guard-house and rampart, as the population became rapidly unfit, from physical exhaustion, for the defence of the city.

The young Duke of Nemours, governor of the place, manifested as much resolution and conduct in bringing his countrymen to perdition as if the work in which he was engaged had been the highest and holiest that ever tasked human energies. He was sustained in his task by that proud princess, his own and Mayenne's mother, by Madame Montpensier, by the resident triumvirate of Spain, Mendoza, Commander Moreo, and John Baptist Tasais, by the cardinal legate Gaetano, and, more than all, by the sixteen chiefs of the wards, those municipal tyrants of the unhappy populace.

Pope Sixtus himself was by no means eager for the success of the League. After the battle of Ivry, he had most seriously inclined his ear to the representations of Henry's envoy, and showed much willingness to admit the victorious heretic once more into the bosom of the Church. Sixtus was not desirous of contributing to the advancement of Philip's power. He feared his designs on Italy, being himself most anxious at that time to annex Naples to the holy see. He had amassed a large treasure, but he liked best to spend it in splendid architecture, in noble fountains, in magnificent collections of art, science, and literature, and, above all, in building up fortunes for the children of his sister the washerwoman, and in allying them all to the most princely houses of Italy, while never allowing them even to mention the name of their father, so base was his degree; but he cared not to disburse from his hoarded dollars to supply the necessities of the League.

But Gaetano, although he could wring but fifty thousand crowns from his Holiness after the fatal fight of Ivry, to further the good cause, was lavish in expenditures from his own purse and from other sources, and this too at a time when thirty-three per cent. interest was paid to the usurers of Antwerp for one month's loan of ready money. He was indefatigable, too, and most successful in his exhortations and ghostly consolations to the people. Those proud priests and great nobles were playing a reckless game, and the hopes of mankind beyond the grave were the counters on their table. For themselves there were rich prizes for the winning. Should they succeed in dismembering the fair land where they were enacting their fantastic parts, there were temporal principalities, great provinces, petty sovereignties, to be carved out of the heritage which the Bearnese claimed for his own. Obviously then, their consciences could never permit this shameless heretic, by a simulated conversion at the critical moment, to block their game and restore the national unity and laws. And even should it be necessary to give the whole kingdom, instead of the mere duchy of Brittany, to Philip of Spain, still there were mighty guerdons to be bestowed on his supporters before the foreign monarch could seat himself on the throne of Henry's ancestors.

As to the people who were fighting, starving, dying by thousands in this great cause, there were eternal rewards in another world profusely promised for their heroism instead of the more substantial bread and beef, for lack of which they were laying down their lives.

It was estimated that before July twelve thousand human beings in Paris had died, for want of food, within three months. But as there were no signs of the promised relief by the army of Parma and Mayenne, and as the starving people at times appeared faint-hearted, their courage was strengthened one day by a stirring exhibition.

An astonishing procession marched through the streets of the city, led by the Bishop of Senlis and the Prior of Chartreux, each holding a halberd in one hand and a crucifix in the other, and graced by the presence of the cardinal-legate, and of many prelates from Italy. A lame monk, adroitly manipulating the staff of a drum major, went hopping and limping before them, much to the amazement of the crowd. Then came a long file of monks-Capuchins, Bernardists, Minimes, Franciscans, Jacobins, Carmelites, and other orders—each with his cowl thrown back, his long robes trussed up, a helmet on his head, a cuirass on his breast, and a halberd in his hand. The elder ones marched first, grinding their teeth, rolling their eyes, and making other ferocious demonstrations. Then came the younger friars, similarly attired, all armed with arquebusses, which they occasionally and accidentally discharged to the disadvantage of the spectators, several of whom were killed or wounded on the spot. Among others a servant of Cardinal Gaetano was thus slain, and the even caused much commotion, until the cardinal proclaimed that a man thus killed in so holy a cause had gone straight to heaven and had taken his place among the just. It was impossible, thus argued the people in their simplicity, that so wise and virtuous a man as the cardinal should not know what was best.

The procession marched to the church of our Lady of Loretto, where they solemnly promised to the blessed Virgin a lamp and ship of gold—should she be willing to use her influence in behalf of the suffering city—to be placed on her shrine as soon as the siege should be raised.

But these demonstrations, however cheering to the souls, had comparatively little effect upon the bodies of the sufferers. It was impossible to walk through the streets of Paris without stumbling over the dead bodies of the citizens. Trustworthy eye-witnesses of those dreadful days have placed the number of the dead during the summer at thirty thousand. A tumultuous assemblage of the starving and the forlorn rushed at last to the municipal palace, demanding peace or bread. The rebels were soon dispersed however by a charge, headed by the Chevalier d'Aumale, and assisted by the chiefs of the wards, and so soon as the riot was quelled, its ringleader, a leading advocate, Renaud by name, was hanged.

Still, but for the energy of the priests, it is doubtful whether the city could have been held by the Confederacy. The Duke of Nemours confessed that there were occasions when they never would have been able to sustain a determined onslaught, and they were daily expecting to see the Prince of Bearne battering triumphantly at their gates.

But the eloquence of the preachers, especially of the one-eyed father Boucher, sustained the fainting spirits of the people, and consoled the sufferers in their dying agonies by glimpses of paradise. Sublime was that devotion, superhuman that craft; but it is only by weapons from the armoury of the Unseen that human creatures can long confront such horrors in a wicked cause. Superstition, in those days at least, was a political force absolutely without limitation, and most adroitly did the agents of Spain and Rome handle its tremendous enginery against unhappy France. For the hideous details of the most dreadful sieges recorded in ancient or modern times were now reproduced in Paris. Not a revolutionary circumstance, at which the world had shuddered in the accounts of the siege of Jerusalem, was spared. Men devoured such dead vermin as could be found lying in the streets. They crowded greedily around stalls in the public squares where the skin, bones, and offal of such dogs, cats and unclean beasts as still remained for the consumption of the wealthier classes were sold to the populace. Over the doorways of these flesh markets might be read "Haec runt munera pro iis qui vitam pro Philippo profuderunt." Men stood in archways and narrow passages lying in wait for whatever stray dogs still remained at large, noosed them, strangled them, and like savage beasts of prey tore them to pieces and devoured them alive. And it sometimes happened, too, that the equally hungry dog proved the more successful in the foul encounter, and fed upon the man. A lady visiting the Duchess of Nemours—called for the high pretensions of her sons by her two marriages the queen-mother—complained bitterly that mothers in Paris had been compelled to kill their own children outright to save them from starving to death in lingering agony. "And if you are brought to that extremity," replied the duchess, "as for the sake of our holy religion to be forced to kill your own children, do you think that so great a matter after all? What are your children made of more than other people's children? What are we all but dirt and dust?" Such was the consolation administered by the mother of the man who governed Paris, and defended its gates against its lawful sovereign at the command of a foreigner; while the priests in their turn persuaded the populace that it was far more righteous to kill their own children, if they had no food to give them, than to obtain food by recognising a heretic king.

It was related too, and believed, that in some instances mothers had salted the bodies of their dead children and fed upon them, day by day, until the hideous repast would no longer support their own life. They died, and the secret was revealed by servants who had partaken of the food. The Spanish ambassador, Mendoza, advised recourse to an article of diet which had been used in some of the oriental sieges. The counsel at first was rejected as coming from the agent of Spain, who wished at all hazards to save the capital of France from falling out of the hands of his master into those of the heretic. But dire necessity prevailed, and the bones of the dead were taken in considerable quantities from the cemeteries, ground into flour, baked into bread, and consumed. It was called Madame Montpensier's cake, because the duchess earnestly proclaimed its merits to the poor Parisians. "She was never known to taste it herself, however," bitterly observed one who lived in Paris through that horrible summer. She was right to abstain, for all who ate of it died, and the Montpensier flour fell into disuse.

Lansquenets and other soldiers, mad with hunger and rage, when they could no longer find dogs to feed on, chased children through the streets, and were known in several instances to kill and devour them on the spot. To those expressing horror at the perpetration of such a crime, a leading personage, member of the Council of Nine, maintained that there was less danger to one's soul in satisfying one's hunger with a dead child, in case of necessity, than in recognizing the heretic Bearnese, and he added that all the best theologians and doctors of Paris were of his opinion.

As the summer wore on to its close, through all these horrors, and as there were still no signs of Mayenne

and Parma leading their armies to the relief of the city, it became necessary to deceive the people by a show of negotiation with the beleaguering army. Accordingly, the Spanish ambassador, the legate, and the other chiefs of the Holy League appointed a deputation, consisting of the Cardinal Gondy, the Archbishop of Lyons, and the Abbe d'Elbene, to Henry. It soon became evident to the king, however, that these commissioners were but trifling with him in order to amuse the populace. His attitude was dignified and determined throughout the interview. The place appointed was St. Anthony's Abbey, before the gates of Paris. Henry wore a cloak and the order of the Holy Ghost, and was surrounded by his council, the princes of the blood, and by more than four hundred of the chief gentlemen of his army. After passing the barricade, the deputies were received by old Marshal Biron, and conducted by him to the king's chamber of state. When they had made their salutations, the king led the way to an inner cabinet, but his progress was much impeded by the crowding of the nobles about him. Wishing to excuse this apparent rudeness, he said to the envoys: "Gentlemen, these men thrust me on as fast to the battle against the foreigner as they now do to my cabinet. Therefore bear with them." Then turning to the crowd, he said: "Room, gentlemen, for the love of me," upon which they all retired.

The deputies then stated that they had been sent by the authorities of Paris to consult as to the means of obtaining a general peace in France. They expressed the hope that the king's disposition was favourable to this end, and that he would likewise permit them to confer with the Duke of Mayenne. This manner of addressing him excited his choler. He told Cardinal Gondy, who was spokesman of the deputation, that he had long since answered such propositions. He alone could deal with his subjects. He was like the woman before Solomon; he would have all the child or none of it. Rather than dismember his kingdom he would lose the whole. He asked them what they considered him to be. They answered that they knew his rights, but that the Parisians had different opinions. If Paris would only acknowledge him to be king there could be no more question of war. He asked them if they desired the King of Spain or the Duke of Mayenne for their king, and bade them look well to themselves. The King of Spain could not help them, for he had too much business on hand; while Mayenne had neither means nor courage, having been within three leagues of them for three weeks doing nothing. Neither king nor duke should have that which belonged to him, of that they might be assured. He told them he loved Paris as his capital, as his eldest daughter. If the Parisians wished to see the end of their miseries it was to him they should appeal, not to the Spaniard nor to the Duke of Mayenne. By the grace of God and the swords of his brave gentlemen he would prevent the King of Spain from making a colony of France as he had done of Brazil. He told the commissioners that they ought to die of shame that they, born Frenchmen, should have so forgotten their love of country and of liberty as thus to bow the head to the Spaniard, and—while famine was carrying off thousands of their countrymen before their eyes—to be so cowardly as not to utter one word for the public welfare from fear of offending Cardinal. Gaetano, Mendoza, and Moreo. He said that he longed for a combat to decide the issue, and that he had charged Count de Brissac to tell Mayenne that he would give a finger of his right hand for a battle, and two for a general peace. He knew and pitied the sufferings of Paris, but the horrors now raging there were to please the King of Spain. That monarch had told the Duke of Parma to trouble himself but little about the Netherlands so long as he could preserve for him his city of Paris. But it was to lean on a broken reed to expect support from this old, decrepit king, whose object was to dismember the flourishing kingdom of France, and to divide it among as many tyrants as he had sent viceroys to the Indies. The crown was his own birthright. Were it elective he should receive the suffrages of the great mass of the electors. He hoped soon to drive those red-crossed foreigners out of his kingdom. Should he fail, they would end by expelling the Duke of Mayenne and all the rest who had called them in, and Paris would become the theatre of the bloodiest tragedy ever yet enacted. The king then ordered Sir Roger Williams to see that a collation was prepared for the deputies, and the veteran Welshman took occasion to indulge in much blunt conversation with the guests. He informed them that he, Mr. Sackville, and many other strangers were serving the king from the hatred they bore the Spaniards and Mother League, and that his royal mistress had always 8000 Englishmen ready to maintain the cause.

While the conferences were going on, the officers and soldiers of the besieging army thronged to the gate, and had much talk with the townsmen. Among others, time-honoured La None with the iron arm stood near the gate and harangued the Parisians. "We are here," said he, "five thousand gentlemen; we desire your good, not your ruin. We will make you rich: let us participate in your labour and industry. Undo not yourselves to serve the ambition of a few men." The townspeople hearing the old warrior discoursing thus earnestly, asked who he was. When informed that it was La Noue they cheered him vociferously, and applauded his speech with the greatest vehemence. Yet La Noue was the foremost Huguenot that the sun shone upon, and the Parisians were starving themselves to death out of hatred to heresy. After the collation the commissioners were permitted to go from the camp in order to consult Mayenne.

Such then was the condition of Paris during that memorable summer of tortures. What now were its hopes of deliverance out of this Gehenna? The trust of Frenchmen was in Philip of Spain, whose legions, under command of the great Italian chieftain, were daily longed for to save them from rendering obedience to their lawful prince.

For even the king of straw—the imprisoned cardinal—was now dead, and there was not even the effigy of any other sovereign than Henry of Bourbon to claim authority in France. Mayenne, in the course of long interviews with the Duke of Parma at Conde and Brussels, had expressed his desire to see Philip king of France, and had promised his best efforts to bring about such a result. In that case he stipulated for the second place in the kingdom for himself, together with a good rich province in perpetual sovereignty, and a large sum of money in hand. Should this course not run smoothly, he would be willing to take the crown himself, in which event he would cheerfully cede to Philip the sovereignty of Brittany and Burgundy, besides a selection of cities to be arranged for at a later day. Although he spoke of himself with modesty, said Alexander, it was very plain that he meant to arrive at the crown himself: Well had the Bearnese alluded to the judgment of Solomon. Were not children, thus ready to dismember their mother, as foul and unnatural as the mother who would divide her child?

And what was this dependence on a foreign tyrant really worth? As we look back upon those dark days with the light of what was then the almost immediate future turned full and glaring upon them, we find it difficult

to exaggerate the folly of the chief actors in those scenes of crime. Did not the penniless adventurer, whose keen eyesight and wise recklessness were passing for hallucination and foolhardiness in the eyes of his contemporaries, understand the game he was playing better than did that profound thinker, that mysterious but infallible politician, who sat in the Escorial and made the world tremble at every hint of his lips, every stroke of his pen?

The Netherlands—that most advanced portion of Philip's domain, without the possession of which his conquest of England and his incorporation of France were but childish visions, even if they were not monstrous chimeras at best—were to be in a manner left to themselves, while their consummate governor and general was to go forth and conquer France at the head of a force with which he had been in vain attempting to hold those provinces to their obedience. At that very moment the rising young chieftain of the Netherlands was most successfully inaugurating his career of military success. His armies well drilled, well disciplined, well paid, full of heart and of hope, were threatening their ancient enemy in every quarter, while the veteran legions of Spain and Italy, heroes of a hundred Flemish and Frisian battle-fields, were disorganised, starving, and mutinous. The famous ancient legion, the terzo viejo, had been disbanded for its obstinate and confirmed unruliness. The legion of Manrique, sixteen hundred strong, was in open mutiny at Courtray. Farnese had sent the Prince of Ascoli to negotiate with them, but his attempts were all in vain. Two years' arrearages—to be paid, not in cloth at four times what the contractors had paid for it, but in solid gold—were their not unreasonable demands after years of as hard fighting and severe suffering as the world has often seen. But Philip, instead of ducats or cloth, had only sent orders to go forth and conquer a new kingdom for him. Verdugo, too, from Friesland was howling for money, garrotting and hanging his mutinous veterans every day, and sending complaints and most dismal forebodings as often as a courier could make his way through the enemy's lines to Farnese's headquarters. And Farnese, on his part, was garrotting and hanging the veterans.

Alexander did not of course inform his master that he was a mischievous lunatic, who upon any healthy principle of human government ought long ago to have been shut up from all communion with his species. It was very plain, however, from his letters, that such was his innermost, thought, had it been safe, loyal, or courteous to express it in plain language.

He was himself stung almost to madness moreover by the presence of Commander Moreo, who hated him, who was perpetually coming over from France to visit him, who was a spy upon all his actions, and who was regularly distilling his calumnies into the ears of Secretary Idiaquez and of Philip himself. The king was informed that Farnese was working for his own ends, and was disgusted with his sovereign; that there never had been a petty prince of Italy that did not wish to become a greater one, or that was not jealous of Philip's power, and that there was not a villain in all Christendom but wished for Philip's death. Moreo followed the prince about to Antwerp, to Brussels, to Spa, whither he had gone to drink the waters for his failing health, pestered him, lectured him, pried upon him, counselled him, enraged him. Alexander told him at last that he cared not if the whole world came to an end so long as Flanders remained, which alone had been entrusted to him, and that if he was expected to conquer France it would be as well to give him the means of performing that exploit. So Moreo told the king that Alexander was wasting time and wasting money, that he was the cause of Egmont's overthrow, and that he would be the cause of the loss of Paris and of the downfall of the whole French scheme; for that he was determined to do nothing to assist Mayenne, or that did not conduce to his private advantage.

Yet Farnese had been not long before informed in sufficiently plain language, and by personages of great influence, that in case he wished to convert his vice-royalty of the Netherlands into a permanent sovereignty, he might rely on the assistance of Henry of Navarre, and perhaps of Queen Elizabeth. The scheme would not have been impracticable, but the duke never listened to it for a moment.

If he were slow in advancing to the relief of starving, agonising Paris, there were sufficient reasons for his delay. Most decidedly and bitterly, but loyally, did he denounce the madness of his master's course in all his communications to that master's private ear.

He told him that the situation in which he found himself was horrible. He had no money for his troops, he had not even garrison bread to put in their mouths. He had not a single stiver to advance them on account. From Friesland, from the Rhine country, from every quarter, cries of distress were rising to heaven, and the lamentations were just. He was in absolute penury. He could not negotiate a bill on the royal account, but had borrowed on his own private security a few thousand crowns which he had given to his soldiers. He was pledging his jewels and furniture like a bankrupt, but all was now in vain to stop the mutiny at Courtray. If that went on it would be of most pernicious example, for the whole army was disorganised, malcontent, and of portentous aspect. "These things," said he, "ought not to surprise people of common understanding, for without money, without credit, without provisions, and in an exhausted country, it is impossible to satisfy the claims, or even to support the life of the army." When he sent the Flemish cavalry to Mayenne in March, it was under the impression that with it that prince would have maintained his reputation and checked the progress of the Bearnese until greater reinforcements could be forwarded. He was now glad that no larger number had been sent, for all would have been sacrificed on the fatal field of Ivry.

The country around him was desperate, believed itself abandoned, and was expecting fresh horrors everyday. He had been obliged to remove portions of the garrisons at Deventer and Zutphen purely to save them from starving and desperation. Every day he was informed by his garrisons that they could feed no longer on fine words or hopes, for in them they found no sustenance.

But Philip told him that he must proceed forthwith to France, where he was to raise the siege of Paris, and occupy Calais and Boulogne in order to prevent the English from sending succour to the Bearnese, and in order to facilitate his own designs on England. Every effort was to be made before the Bearnese climbed into the seat. The Duke of Parma was to talk no more of difficulties, but to conquer them; a noble phrase on the battle field, but comparatively easy of utterance at the writing-desk!

At last, Philip having made some remittances, miserably inadequate for the necessities of the case, but sufficient to repress in part the mutinous demonstrations throughout the army, Farnese addressed himself with a heavy heart to the work required of him. He confessed the deepest apprehensions of the result both in

the Netherlands and in France. He intimated a profound distrust of the French, who had, ever been Philip's enemies, and dwelt on the danger of leaving the provinces, unable to protect themselves, badly garrisoned, and starving. "It grieves me to the soul, it cuts me to the heart," he said, "to see that your Majesty commands things which are impossible, for it is our Lord alone that can work miracles. Your Majesty supposes that with the little money you have sent me, I can satisfy all the soldiers serving in these provinces, settle with the Spanish and the German mutineers—because, if they are to be used in the expedition, they must at least be quieted—give money to Mayenne and the Parisians, pay retaining wages (wartgeld) to the German Riders for the protection of these provinces, and make sure of the maritime places where the same mutinous language is held as at Courtray. The poverty, the discontent, and the desperation of this unhappy country," he added, "have, been so often described to your Majesty that I have nothing to add. I am hanging and garrotting my veterans everywhere, only because they have rebelled for want of pay without committing any excess. Yet under these circumstances I am to march into France with twenty thousand troops—the least number to effect anything withal. I am confused and perplexed because the whole world is exclaiming against me, and protesting that through my desertion the country entrusted to my care will come to utter perdition. On the other hand, the French cry out upon me that I am the cause that Paris is going to destruction, and with it the Catholic cause in France. Every one is pursuing his private ends. It is impossible to collect a force strong enough for the necessary work. Paris has reached its extreme unction, and neither Mayenne nor any one of the confederates has given this invalid the slightest morsel to support her till your Majesty's forces should arrive."

He reminded his sovereign that the country around Paris was eaten bare of food and forage, and yet that it was quite out of the question for him to undertake the transportation of supplies for his army all the way—supplies from the starving Netherlands to starving France. Since the king was so peremptory, he had nothing for it but to obey, but he vehemently disclaimed all responsibility for the expedition, and, in case of his death, he called on his Majesty to vindicate his honour, which his enemies were sure to assail.

The messages from Mayenne becoming daily more pressing, Farnese hastened as much as possible those preparations which at best were so woefully inadequate, and avowed his determination not to fight the Bearnese if it were possible to avoid an action. He feared, however, that with totally insufficient forces he should be obliged to accept the chances of an engagement.

With twelve thousand foot and three thousand horse Farnese left the Netherlands in the beginning of August, and arrived on the 3rd of that month at Valenciennes. His little army, notwithstanding his bitter complaints, was of imposing appearance. The archers and halberdiers of his bodyguard were magnificent in taffety and feathers and surcoats of cramoisy velvet. Four hundred nobles served in the cavalry. Arenberg and Barlaymont and Chimay, and other grandees of the Netherlands, in company with Ascoli and the sons of Terranova and Pastrana, and many more great lords of Italy and Spain were in immediate attendance on the illustrious captain. The son of Philip's Secretary of State, Idiaquez, and the nephew of the cardinal-legate, Gaetano, were among the marshals of the camp.

Alexander's own natural authority and consummate powers of organisation had for the time triumphed over the disintegrating tendencies which, it had been seen, were everywhere so rapidly destroying the foremost military establishment of the world. Nearly half his forces, both cavalry and infantry, were Netherlanders; for—as if there were not graves enough in their own little territory—those Flemings, Walloons, and Hollanders were destined to leave their bones on both sides of every well-stricken field of that age between liberty and despotism. And thus thousands of them had now gone forth under the banner of Spain to assist their own tyrant in carrying out his designs upon the capital of France, and to struggle to the death with thousands of their own countrymen who were following the fortunes of the Bearnese. Truly in that age it was religion that drew the boundary line between nations.

The army was divided into three portions. The vanguard was under the charge of the Netherland General, Marquis of Renty. The battalia was commanded by Farnese in person, and the rearguard was entrusted to that veteran Netherlander, La Motte, now called the Count of Everbeck. Twenty pieces of artillery followed the last division. At Valenciennes Farnese remained eight days, and from this place Count Charles Mansfeld took his departure in a great rage—resigning his post as chief of artillery because La Motte had received the appointment of general-marshal of the camp—and returned to his father, old Peter Ernest Mansfeld, who was lieutenant-governor of the Netherlands in Parma's absence.

Leaving Valenciennes on the 11th, the army proceeded by way of Quesney, Guise, Soissons, Fritemilon to Meaux. At this place, which is ten leagues from Paris, Farnese made his junction, on the 22nd of August, with Mayenne, who was at the head of six thousand infantry—one half of them Germans under Cobalto, and the other half French—and of two thousand horse.

On arriving at Meaux, Alexander proceeded straightway to the cathedral, and there, in presence of all, he solemnly swore that he had not come to France in order to conquer that kingdom or any portion of it, in the interests of his master, but only to render succour to the Catholic cause and to free the friends and confederates of his Majesty from violence and heretic oppression. Time was to show the value of that oath.

Here the deputation from Paris—the Archbishop of Lyons and his colleagues, whose interview with Henry has just been narrated—were received by the two dukes. They departed, taking with them promises of immediate relief for the starving city. The allies remained five days at Meaux, and leaving that place on the 27th, arrived in the neighbourhood of Chelles, on the last day but one of the summer. They had a united force of five thousand cavalry and eighteen thousand foot.

The summer of horrors was over, and thus with the first days of autumn there had come a ray of hope for the proud city which was lying at its last gasp. When the allies, came in sight of the monastery of Chellea they found themselves in the immediate neighbourhood of the Bearnese.

The two great captains of the age had at last met face to face. They were not only the two first commanders of their time, but there was not a man in Europe at that day to be at all compared with either of them. The youth, concerning whose earliest campaign an account will be given in the following chapter, had hardly yet struck his first blow. Whether that blow was to reveal the novice or the master was soon to be seen.

Meantime in 1590 it would have been considered a foolish adulation to mention the name of Maurice of Nassau in the same breath with that of Navarre or of Farnese.

The scientific duel which was now to take place was likely to task the genius and to bring into full display the peculiar powers and defects of the two chieftains of Europe. Each might be considered to be still in the prime of life, but Alexander, who was turned of forty-five, was already broken in health, while the vigorous Henry was eight years younger, and of an iron constitution. Both had passed then lives in the field, but the king, from nature, education, and the force of circumstances, preferred pitched battles to scientific combinations, while the duke, having studied and practised his art in the great Spanish and Italian schools of warfare, was rather a profound strategist than a professional fighter, although capable of great promptness and intense personal energy when his judgment dictated a battle. Both were born with that invaluable gift which no human being can acquire, authority, and both were adored and willingly obeyed by their soldiers, so long as those soldiers were paid and fed.

The prize now to be contended for was a high one. Alexander's complete success would tear from Henry's grasp the first city of Christendom, now sinking exhausted into his hands, and would place France in the power of the Holy League and at the feet of Philip. Another Ivry would shatter the confederacy, and carry the king in triumph to his capital and his ancestral throne. On the approach of the combined armies under Parma and Mayenne, the king had found himself most reluctantly compelled to suspend the siege of Paris. His army, which consisted of sixteen thousand foot and five thousand horse, was not sufficiently numerous to confront at the same time the relieving force and to continue the operations before the city. So long, however, as he held the towns and bridges on the great rivers, and especially those keys to the Seine and Marne, Corbeil and Lagny, he still controlled the life-blood of the capital, which indeed had almost ceased to flow.

On the 31st August he advanced towards the enemy. Sir Edward Stafford, Queen Elizabeth's ambassador, arrived at St. Denis in the night of the 30th August. At a very early hour next morning he heard a shout under his window, and looking down beheld King Henry at the head of his troops, cheerfully calling out to his English friend as he passed his door. "Welcoming us after his familiar manner," said Stafford, "he desired us, in respect of the battle every hour expected, to come as his friends to see and help him, and not to treat of anything which afore, we meant, seeing the present state to require it, and the enemy so near that we might well have been interrupted in half-an-hour's talk, and necessity constrained the king to be in every corner, where for the most part we follow him."

That day Henry took up his headquarters at the monastery of Chelles, a fortified place within six leagues of Paris, on the right bank of the Marne. His army was drawn up in a wide valley somewhat encumbered with wood and water, extending through a series of beautiful pastures towards two hills of moderate elevation. Lagny, on the left bank of the river, was within less than a league of him on his right hand. On the other side of the hills, hardly out of cannon-shot, was the camp of the allies. Henry, whose natural disposition in this respect needed no prompting, was most eager for a decisive engagement. The circumstances imperatively required it of him. His infantry consisted of Frenchmen, Netherlanders, English, Germans, Scotch; but of his cavalry four thousand were French nobles, serving at their own expense, who came to a battle as to a banquet, but who were capable of riding off almost as rapidly, should the feast be denied them. They were volunteers, bringing with them rations for but a few days, and it could hardly be expected that they would remain as patiently as did Parma's veterans, who, now that their mutiny had been appeased by payment of a portion of their arrearages, had become docile again. All the great chieftains who surrounded Henry, whether Catholic or Protestant—Montpensier, Nevers, Soissons, Conti, the Birons, Lavradin, d'Aumont, Tremouille, Turenne, Chatillon, La Noue—were urgent for the conflict, concerning the expediency of which there could indeed be no doubt, while the king was in raptures at the opportunity of dealing a decisive blow at the confederacy of foreigners and rebels who had so long defied his authority and deprived him of his rights.

Stafford came up with the king, according to his cordial invitation, on the same day, and saw the army all drawn up in battle array. While Henry was "eating a morsel in an old house," Turenne joined him with six or seven hundred horsemen and between four and five thousand infantry. "They were the likeliest footmen," said Stafford, "the best countenanced, the best furnished that ever I saw in my life; the best part of them old soldiers that had served under the king for the Religion all this while."

The envoy was especially enthusiastic, however, in regard to the French cavalry. "There are near six thousand horse," said he, "whereof gentlemen above four thousand, about twelve hundred other French, and eight hundred reiters. I never saw, nor I think never any man saw, in prance such a company of gentlemen together so well horsed and so well armed."

Henry sent a herald to the camp of the allies, formally challenging them to a general engagement, and expressing a hope that all differences might now be settled by the ordeal of battle, rather than that the sufferings of the innocent people should be longer protracted.

Farnese, on arriving at Meaux, had resolved to seek the enemy and take the hazards of a stricken field. He had misgivings as to the possible result, but he expressly announced this intention in his letters to Philip, and Mayenne confirmed him in his determination. Nevertheless, finding the enemy so eager and having reflected more maturely, he saw no reason for accepting the chivalrous cartel. As commanderin-chief—for Mayenne willingly conceded the supremacy which it would have been absurd in him to dispute—he accordingly replied that it was his custom to refuse a combat when a refusal seemed advantageous to himself, and to offer battle whenever it suited his purposes to fight. When that moment should arrive the king would find him in the field. And, having sent this courteous, but unsatisfactory answer to the impatient Bearnese, he gave orders to fortify his camp, which was already sufficiently strong. Seven days long the two armies lay face to face—Henry and his chivalry chafing in vain for the longed-for engagement—and nothing occurred between those forty or fifty thousand mortal enemies, encamped within a mile or two of each other, save trifling skirmishes leading to no result.

At last Farnese gave orders for an advance. Renty, commander of the vanguard, consisting of nearly all the cavalry, was instructed to move slowly forward over the two hills, and descending on the opposite side, to deploy his forces in two great wings to the right and left. He was secretly directed in this movement to magnify as much as possible the apparent dimensions of his force. Slowly the columns moved over the hills.

Squadron after squadron, nearly all of them lancers, with their pennons flaunting gaily in the summer wind, displayed themselves deliberately and ostentatiously in the face of the Royalists. The splendid light-horse of Basti, the ponderous troopers of the Flemish bands of ordnance under Chimay and Berlaymont, and the famous Albanian and Italian cavalry, were mingled with the veteran Leaguers of France who had fought under the Balafre, and who now followed the fortunes of his brother Mayenne. It was an imposing demonstration.

Henry could hardly believe his eyes as the much-coveted opportunity, of which he had been so many days disappointed, at last presented itself, and he waited with more than his usual caution until the plan of attack should be developed by his great antagonist. Parma, on his side, pressed the hand of Mayenne as he watched the movement, saying quietly, "We have already fought our battle and gained the victory." He then issued orders for the whole battalia—which, since the junction, had been under command of Mayenne, Farnese reserving for himself the superintendence of the entire army—to countermarch rapidly towards the Marne and take up a position opposite Lagny. La Motte, with the rearguard, was directed immediately to follow. The battalia had thus become the van, the rearguard the battalia, while the whole cavalry corps by this movement had been transformed from the vanguard into the rear. Renty was instructed to protect his manoeuvres, to restrain the skirmishing as much as possible, and to keep the commander-in-chief constantly informed of every occurrence. In the night he was to entrench and fortify himself rapidly and thoroughly, without changing his position.

Under cover of this feigned attack, Farnese arrived at the river side on the 15th September, seized an open village directly opposite Lagny, which was connected with it by a stone bridge, and planted a battery of nine pieces of heavy artillery directly opposite the town. Lagny was fortified in the old-fashioned manner, with not very thick walls, and without a terreplain. Its position, however, and its command of the bridge, seemed to render an assault impossible, and De la Fin, who lay there with a garrison of twelve hundred French, had no fear for the security of the place. But Farnese, with the precision and celerity which characterized his movements on special occasions, had thrown pontoon bridges across the river three miles above, and sent a considerable force of Spanish and Walloon infantry to the other side. These troops were ordered to hold themselves ready for an assault, so soon as the batteries opposite should effect a practicable breach. The next day Henry, reconnoitering the scene, saw, with intense indignation, that he had been completely out-generalled. Lagny, the key to the Marne, by holding which he had closed the door on nearly all the food supplies for Paris, was about to be wrested from him. What should he do? Should he throw himself across the river and rescue the place before it fell? This was not to be thought of even by the audacious Bearnese. In the attempt to cross the river, under the enemy's fire, he was likely to lose a large portion of his army. Should he fling himself upon Renty's division which had so ostentatiously offered battle the day before? This at least might be attempted, although not so advantageously as would have been the case on the previous afternoon. To undertake this was the result of a rapid council of generals. It was too late. Renty held the hills so firmly entrenched and fortified that it was an idle hope to carry them by assault. He might hurl column after column against those heights, and pass the day in seeing his men mowed to the earth without result.

His soldiers, magnificent in the open field, could not be relied upon to carry so strong a position by sudden storm; and there was no time to be lost. He felt the enemy a little. There was some small skirmishing, and while it was going on, Farnese opened a tremendous fire across the river upon Lagny. The weak walls soon crumbled; a breach was effected, the signal for assault was given, and the troops posted on the other side, after a brief but sanguinary straggle, overcame all, resistance, and were masters of the town. The whole garrison, twelve hundred strong, was butchered, and the city thoroughly sacked; for Farnese had been brought up in the old-fashioned school of Alva; and Julian Romero and Com-. wander Requesens.

Thus Lagny was seized before the eyes of Henry, who was forced to look helplessly on his great antagonist's triumph. He had come forth in full panoply and abounding confidence to offer battle. He was foiled of his combat; and he had lost the prize. Never was blow more successfully parried, a counter-stroke more ingeniously planted. The bridges of Charenton and St. Maur now fell into Farnese's hands without a contest. In an incredibly short space of time provisions and munitions were poured into the starving city; two thousand boat-loads arriving in a single day. Paris was relieved. Alexander had made his demonstration, and solved the problem. He had left the Netherlands against his judgment, but he had at least accomplished his French work as none but he could have done it. The king was now in worse plight than ever. His army fell to pieces. His cavaliers, cheated of their battle; and having neither food nor forage, rode off by hundreds every day. "Our state is such," said Stafford; on the 16th September, "and so far unexpected and wonderful, that I am almost ashamed to write, because methinks everybody should think I dream. Myself seeing of it methinketh that I dream. For, my lord, to see an army such a one I think as I shall never see again—especially for horsemen and gentlemen to take a mind to disband upon the taking of such a paltry thing as Lagny, a town no better indeed than Rochester, it is a thing so strange to me that seeing of it I can scarce believe it. They make their excuses of their want, which I know indeed is great—for there were few left with one penny in their purses—but yet that extremity could not be such but that they might have tarried ten days or fifteen at the most that the king desired of them. . . . From six thousand horse that we were and above, we are come to two thousand and I do not see an end of our leave-takers, for those be hourly.

"The most I can see we can make account of to tarry are the Viscount Turenne's troops, and Monsieur de Chatillon's, and our Switzers, and Lanaquenettes, which make very near five thousand. The first that went away, though he sent word to the king an hour before he would tarry, was the Count Soissons, by whose parting on a sudden and without leave-taking we judge a discontentment."

The king's army seemed fading into air. Making virtue of necessity he withdrew to St. Denis, and decided to disband his forces, reserving to himself only a flying camp with which to harass the enemy as often as opportunity should offer.

It must be confessed that the Bearnese had been thoroughly out-generalled. "It was not God's will," said Stafford, who had been in constant attendance upon Henry through the whole business; "we deserved it not; for the king might as easily have had Paris as drunk, four or five times. And at the last, if he had not committed those faults that children would not have done, only with the desire to fight and give the battle

(which the other never meant), he had had it in the Duke of Parma's eight as he took Lagny in ours." He had been foiled of the battle on which he had set his heart, and, in which he felt confident of overthrowing the great captain of the age, and trampling the League under his feet. His capital just ready to sink exhausted into his hands had been wrested from his grasp, and was alive with new hope and new defiance. The League was triumphant, his own army scattering to the four winds. Even a man of high courage and sagacity might have been in despair. Yet never were the magnificent hopefulness, the wise audacity of Henry more signally manifested than now when he seemed most blundering and most forlorn. His hardy nature ever met disaster with so cheerful a smile as almost to perplex disaster herself.

Unwilling to relinquish his grip without a last effort, he resolved on a midnight assault upon Paris. Hoping that the joy at being relieved, the unwonted feasting which had succeeded the long fasting, and the consciousness of security from the presence of the combined armies of the victorious League, would throw garrison and citizens off their guard, he came into the neighbourhood of the Faubourgs St. Jacques, St. Germain, St. Marcel, and St. Michel on the night of 9th September. A desperate effort was made to escalade the walls between St. Jacques and St. Germain. It was foiled, not by the soldiers nor the citizens, but by the sleepless Jesuits, who, as often before during this memorable siege, had kept guard on the ramparts, and who now gave the alarm. The first assailants were hurled from their ladders, the city was roused, and the Duke of Nemours was soon on the spot, ordering burning pitch hoops, atones, and other missiles to be thrown down upon the invaders. The escalade was baffled; yet once more that night, just before dawn, the king in person renewed the attack on the Faubourg St. Germain. The faithful Stafford stood by his side in the trenches, and was witness to his cool determination, his indomitable hope. La None too was there, and was wounded in the leg—an accident the results of which were soon to cause much weeping through Christendom. Had one of those garlands of blazing tar which all night had been fluttering from the walls of Paris alighted by chance on the king's head there might have been another history of France. The ladders, too, proved several feet too short, and there were too few, of them. Had they been more numerous and longer, the tale might have been a different one. As it was, the king was forced to retire with the approaching daylight.

The characteristics of the great commander of the Huguenots and of the Leaguers' chieftain respectively were well illustrated in several incidents of this memorable campaign. Farnese had been informed by scouts and spies of this intended assault by Henry on the walls of Paris. With his habitual caution he discredited the story. Had he believed it, he might have followed the king in overwhelming force and taken him captive. The penalty of Henry's unparalleled boldness was thus remitted by Alexander's exuberant discretion.

Soon afterwards Farnese laid siege to Corbeil. This little place—owing to the extraordinary skill and determination of its commandant, Rigaut, an old Huguenot officer, who had fought with La Noue in Flanders—resisted for nearly four weeks. It was assaulted at last, Rigaut killed, the garrison of one thousand French soldiers put to the sword, and the town sacked. With the fall of Corbeil both the Seine and Marne were re-opened.

Alexander then made a visit to Paris, where he was received with great enthusiasm. The legate, whose efforts and whose money had so much contributed to the successful defence of the capital had returned to Italy to participate in the election of a new pope. For the "Huguenot pope," Sixtus V., had died at the end of August, having never bestowed on the League any of his vast accumulated treasures to help it in its utmost need. It was not surprising that Philip was indignant, and had resorted to menace of various kinds against the holy father, when he found him swaying so perceptibly in the direction of the hated Bearnese. Of course when he died his complaint was believed to be Spanish poison. In those days, none but the very obscure were thought capable of dying natural deaths, and Philip was esteemed too consummate an artist to allow so formidable an adversary as Sixtus to pass away in God's time only. Certainly his death was hailed as matter of great rejoicing by the Spanish party in Rome, and as much ignominy bestowed upon his memory as if he had been a heretic; while in Paris his decease was celebrated with bonfires and other marks of popular hilarity.

To circumvent the great Huguenot's reconciliation with the Roman Church was of course an indispensable portion of Philip's plan; for none could be so dull as not to perceive that the resistance of Paris to its heretic sovereign would cease to be very effective, so soon as the sovereign had ceased to be heretic. It was most important therefore that the successor of Sixtus should be the tool of Spain. The leading confederates were well aware of Henry's intentions to renounce the reformed faith, and to return to the communion of Rome whenever he could formally accomplish that measure. The crafty Bearnese knew full well that the road to Paris lay through the gates of Rome. Yet it is proof either of the privacy with which great public matters were then transacted, or of the extraordinary powers of deceit with which Henry was gifted, that the leaders of protestantism were still hoodwinked in regard to his attitude. Notwithstanding the embassy of Luxembourg, and the many other indications of the king's intentions, Queen Elizabeth continued to regard him as the great champion of the reformed faith. She had just sent him an emerald, which she had herself worn, accompanied by the expression of her wish that the king in wearing it might never strike a blow without demolishing an enemy, and that in his farther progress he might put all his enemies to rout and confusion. "You will remind the king, too," she added, "that the emerald has this virtue, never to break so long as faith remains entire and firm."

And the shrewd Stafford, who was in daily attendance upon him, informed his sovereign that there were no symptoms of wavering on Henry's part. "The Catholics here," said he, "cry hard upon the king to be a Catholic or else that he is lost, and they would persuade him that for all their calling in the Spaniards, both Paris and all other towns will yield to him, if he will but assure them that he will become a Catholic. For my part, I think they would laugh at him when he had done so, and so I find he believeth the same, if he had mind to it, which I find no disposition in him unto it." The not very distant future was to show what the disposition of the bold Gascon really was in this great matter, and whether he was likely to reap nothing but ridicule from his apostasy, should it indeed become a fact. Meantime it was the opinion of the wisest sovereign in Europe, and of one of the most adroit among her diplomatists, that there was really nothing in the rumours as to the king's contemplated conversion.

It was, of course, unfortunate for Henry that his staunch friend and admirer Sixtus was no more. But English diplomacy could do but little in Rome, and men were trembling with apprehension lest that arch-

enemy of Elizabeth, that devoted friend of Philip, the English Cardinal Allen, should be elected to the papal throne. "Great ado is made in Rome," said Stafford, "by the Spanish ambassador, by all corruptions and ways that may be, to make a pope that must needs depend and be altogether at the King of Spain's devotion. If the princes of Italy put not their hands unto it, no doubt they will have their wills, and I fear greatly our villainous Allen, for, in my judgment, I can comprehend no man more with reason to be tied altogether to the King of Spain's will than he. I pray God send him either to God or the Devil first. An evil-minded Englishman, tied to the King of Spain by necessity, finding almost four millions of money, is a dangerous beast for a pope in this time."

Cardinal Allen was doomed to disappointment. His candidacy was not successful, and, after the brief reign —thirteen days long—of Urban VII, Sfondrato wore the triple tiara with the title of Gregory XIV. Before the year closed, that pontiff had issued a brief urging the necessity of extirpating heresy in France, and of electing a Catholic king, and asserting his determination to send to Paris—that bulwark of the Catholic faith—not empty words alone but troops, to be paid fifteen thousand crowns of gold each month, so long as the city should need assistance. It was therefore probable that the great leader of the Huguenots, now that he had been defeated by Farnese, and that his capital was still loyal to the League, would obtain less favour—however conscientiously he might instruct himself—from Gregory XIV. than he had begun to find in the eyes of Sixtus after the triumph of Ivry.

Parma refreshed his army by a fortnight's repose, and early in November determined on his return to the Netherlands. The Leaguers were aghast at his decision, and earnestly besought him to remain. But the duke had given them back their capital, and although this had been accomplished without much bloodshed in their army or his own, sickness was now making sad ravages among his troops, and there was small supply of food or forage for such large forces as had now been accumulated, in the neighbourhood of Paris. Moreover, dissensions were breaking out between the Spaniards, Italians, and Netherlanders of the relieving army with their French allies. The soldiers and peasants hated the foreigners who came there as victors, even although to assist the Leaguers in overthrowing the laws, government, and nationality of France. The stragglers and wounded on Farnese's march were killed by the country people in considerable numbers, and it was a pure impossibility for him longer to delay his return to the provinces which so much against his will he had deserted.

He marched back by way of Champagne rather than by that of Picardy, in order to deceive the king. Scarcely had he arrived in Champagne when he heard of the retaking of Lagny and Corbeil. So soon as his back was turned, the League thus showed its impotence to retain the advantage which his genius had won. Corbeil, which had cost him a month of hard work, was recaptured in two days. Lagny fell almost as quickly. Earnestly did the confederates implore him to return to their rescue, but he declined almost contemptuously to retrace his steps. His march was conducted in the same order and with the same precision which—had marked his advance. Henry, with his flying camp, hung upon his track, harassing him now in front, now in rear, now in flank. None of the skirmishes were of much military importance. A single cavalry combat, however, in which old Marshal Biron was nearly surrounded and was in imminent danger of death or capture, until chivalrously rescued by the king in person at the head of a squadron of lancers, will always possess romantic interest. In a subsequent encounter, near Baroges on the Yesle, Henry had sent Biron forward with a few companies of horse to engage some five hundred carabineers of Farnese on their march towards the frontier, and had himself followed close upon the track with his usual eagerness to witness or participate in every battle. Suddenly Alphonse Corse, who rode at Henry's aide, pointed out to him, not more than a hundred paces off, an officer wearing a felt hat, a great ruff, and a little furred cassock, mounted on a horse without armour or caparisons, galloping up and down and brandishing his sword at the carabineers to compel them to fall back.

This was the Duke of Parma, and thus the two great champions of the Huguenots and of the Leaguers—the two foremost captains of the age—had met face to face. At that moment La Noue, riding up, informed the king that he had seen the whole of the enemy's horse and foot in battle array, and Henry, suspecting the retreat of Farnese to be a feint for the purpose of luring him on with his small force to an attack, gave orders to retire as soon as possible.

At Guise, on the frontier, the duke parted with Mayenne, leaving with him an auxiliary force of four thousand foot and five hundred horse, which he could ill spare. He then returned to Brussels, which city he reached on the 4th December, filling every hotel and hospital with his sick soldiers, and having left one-third of his numbers behind him. He had manifested his own military skill in the adroit and successful manner in which he had accomplished the relief of Paris, while the barrenness of the result from the whole expedition vindicated the political sagacity with which he had remonstrated against his sovereign's infatuation.

Paris, with the renewed pressure on its two great arteries at Lagny and Corbeil, soon fell into as great danger as before; the obedient Netherlands during the absence of Farnese had been sinking rapidly to ruin, while; on the other hand, great progress and still greater preparations in aggressive warfare had been made by the youthful general and stadtholder of the Republic.

ETEXT EDITOR'S BOOKMARKS:

Alexander's exuberant discretion
Divine right of kings
Ever met disaster with so cheerful a smile
Future world as laid down by rival priesthoods
Invaluable gift which no human being can acquire, authority
King was often to be something much less or much worse
Magnificent hopefulness
Myself seeing of it methinketh that I dream
Nothing cheap, said a citizen bitterly, but sermons
Obscure were thought capable of dying natural deaths
Philip II. gave the world work enough
Righteous to kill their own children
Road to Paris lay through the gates of Rome
Shift the mantle of religion from one shoulder to the other

Thirty-three per cent. interest was paid (per month)
Under the name of religion (so many crimes)

CHAPTER XXIV. 1590-1592

Prince Maurice—State of the Republican army—Martial science of the period—Reformation of the military system by Prince Maurice—His military genius—Campaign in the Netherlands—The fort and town of Zutphen taken by the States' forces—Attack upon Deventer—Its capitulation—Advance on Groningen, Delfzyl, Opslag, Yementil, Steenwyk, and other places—Farnese besieges Fort Knodsenburg—Prince Maurice hastens to its relief—A skirmish ensues resulting in the discomfiture of the Spanish and Italian troops—Surrender of Hulat and Nymegen—Close of military, operations of the year.

While the events revealed in the last chapter had been occupying the energies of Farnese and the resources of his sovereign, there had been ample room for Prince Maurice to mature his projects, and to make a satisfactory beginning in the field. Although Alexander had returned to the Netherlands before the end of the year 1590, and did not set forth on his second French campaign until late in the following year, yet the condition of his health, the exhaustion of his funds, and the dwindling of his army, made it impossible for him to render any effectual opposition to the projects of the youthful general.

For the first time Maurice was ready to put his theories and studies into practice on an extensive scale. Compared with modern armaments, the warlike machinery to be used for liberating the republic from its foreign oppressors would seem almost diminutive. But the science and skill of a commander are to be judged by the results he can work out with the materials within reach. His progress is to be measured by a comparison with the progress of his contemporaries—coheirs with him of what Time had thus far bequeathed.

The regular army of the republic, as reconstructed, was but ten thousand foot and two thousand horse, but it was capable of being largely expanded by the trainbands of the cities, well disciplined and enured to hardship, and by the levies of German reiters and other, foreign auxiliaries in such numbers as could be paid for by the hard-pressed exchequer of the provinces.

To the state-council, according to its original constitution, belonged the levying and disbanding of troops, the conferring of military offices, and the supervision of military operations by sea and land. It was its duty to see that all officers made oath of allegiance to the United Provinces.

The course of Leicester's administration, and especially the fatal treason of Stanley and of York, made it seem important for the true lovers of their country to wrest from the state-council, where the English had two seats, all political and military power. And this, as has been seen, was practically but illegally accomplished. The silent revolution by which at this epoch all the main attributes of government passed into the hands of the States-General-acting as a league of sovereignties—has already been indicated. The period during which the council exercised functions conferred on it by the States-General themselves was brief and evanescent. The jealousy of the separate provinces soon prevented the state-council—a supreme executive body entrusted with the general defence of the commonwealth—from causing troops to pass into or out of one province or another without a patent from his Excellency the Prince, not as chief of the whole army, but as governor and captain-general of Holland, or Gelderland, or Utrecht, as the case might be.

The highest military office in the Netherlands was that of captain-general or supreme commander. This quality was from earliest times united to that of stadholder, who stood, as his title implied, in the place of the reigning sovereign, whether count, duke, king, or emperor. After the foundation of the Republic this dynastic form, like many others, remained, and thus Prince Maurice was at first only captain-general of Holland and Zeeland, and subsequently of Gelderland, Utrecht, and Overyssel, after he had been appointed stadholder of those three provinces in 1590 on the death of Count Nieuwenaar. However much in reality he was general-in-chief of the army, he never in all his life held the appointment of captain-general of the Union.

To obtain a captain's commission in the army, it was necessary to have served four years, while three years' service was the necessary preliminary to the post of lieutenant or ensign. Three candidates were presented by the province for each office, from whom the stadholder appointed one.—The commissions, except those of the highest commanders, were made out in the name of the States-General, by advice and consent of the council of state. The oath of allegiance, exacted from soldiers as well as officers; mentioned the name of the particular province to which they belonged, as well as that of the States-Generals. It thus appears that, especially after Maurice's first and successful campaigns; the supreme authority over the army really belonged to the States-General, and that the powers of the state-council in this regard fell, in the course of four years, more and more into the back-ground, and at last disappeared almost entirely. During the active period of the war, however; the effect of this revolution was in fact rather a greater concentration of military power than its dispersion, for the States-General meant simply the province of Holland. Holland was the republic.

The organisation of the infantry was very simple. The tactical unit was the company. A temporary combination of several companies—made a regiment, commanded by a colonel or lieutenant-colonel, but for such regiments there was no regular organisation. Sometimes six or seven companies were thus combined, sometimes three times that number, but the strength of a force, however large, was always estimated by the number of companies, not of regiments.

The normal strength of an infantry company, at the beginning of Maurice's career, may be stated at one hundred and thirteen, commanded by one captain, one lieutenant, one ensign, and by the usual non-commissioned officers. Each company was composed of musketeers, harquebusseers, pikemen, halberdeers, and buckler-men. Long after, portable firearms had come into use, the greater portion of foot soldiers

continued to be armed with pikes, until the introduction of the fixed bayonet enabled the musketeer to do likewise the duty of pikeman. Maurice was among the first to appreciate the advantage of portable firearms, and he accordingly increased the proportion of soldiers armed with the musket in his companies. In a company of a hundred and thirteen, including officers, he had sixty-four armed with firelocks to thirty carrying pikes and halberds. As before his time the proportion between the arms had been nearly even; he thus more than doubled the number of firearms.

Of these weapons there were two sorts, the musket and the harquebus. The musket was a long, heavy, unmanageable instrument. When fired it was-placed upon an iron gaffle or fork, which: the soldier carried with him, and stuck before him into the ground. The bullets of the musket were twelve to the pound.

The harquebus—or hak-bus, hook-gun, so called because of the hook in the front part of the barrel to give steadiness in firing—was much lighter, was discharged from the hand; and carried bullets of twenty-four to the pound. Both weapons had matchlocks.

The pike was eighteen feet long at least, and pikemen as well as halberdsmen carried rapiers.

There were three buckler-men to each company, introduced by Maurice for the personal protection of the leader of the company. The prince was often attended by one himself, and, on at least one memorable occasion, was indebted to this shield for the preservation of his life.

The cavalry was divided into lancers and carabineers. The unit was the squadron, varying in number from sixty to one hundred and fifty, until the year 1591, when the regular complement of the squadron was fixed at one hundred and twenty.

As the use of cavalry on the battle-field at that day, or at least in the Netherlands, was not in rapidity of motion, nor in severity of shock—the attack usually taking place on a trot—Maurice gradually displaced the lance in favour of the carbine. His troopers thus became rather mounted infantry than regular cavalry.

The carbine was at least three feet long, with wheel-locks, and carried bullets of thirty to the pound.

The artillery was a peculiar Organisation. It was a guild of citizens, rather than a strictly military force like the cavalry and infantry. The arm had but just begun to develop itself, and it was cultivated as a special trade by the guild of the holy Barbara existing in all the principal cities. Thus a municipal artillery gradually organised itself, under the direction of the gun-masters (bus-meesters), who in secret laboured at the perfection of their art, and who taught it to their apprentices and journeymen; as the principles of other crafts were conveyed by master to pupil. This system furnished a powerful element of defence at a period when every city had in great measure to provide for its own safety.

In the earlier campaigns of Maurice three kinds of artillery were used; the whole cannon (kartow) of forty-eight pounds; the half-cannon, or twenty-four pounder, and the field-piece carrying a ball of twelve pounds. The two first were called battering pieces or siege-guns. All the guns were of bronze.

The length of the whole cannon was about twelve feet; its weight one hundred and fifty times that of the ball, or about seven thousand pounds. It was reckoned that the whole kartow could fire from eighty to one hundred shots in an hour. Wet hair cloths were used to cool the piece after every ten or twelve discharges. The usual charge was twenty pounds of powder.

The whole gun was drawn by thirty-one horses, the half-cannon by twenty-three.

The field-piece required eleven horses, but a regular field-artillery, as an integral part of the army, did not exist, and was introduced in much later times. In the greatest pitched battle ever fought by Maurice, that of Nieuport, he had but six field-pieces.

The prince also employed mortars in his sieges, from which were thrown grenades, hot shot, and stones; but no greater distance was reached than six hundred yards. Bomb-shells were not often used although they had been known for a century.

Before the days of Maurice a special education for engineers had never been contemplated. Persons who had privately acquired a knowledge of fortification and similar branches of the science were employed, upon occasion, but regular corps of engineers there were none. The prince established a course of instruction in this profession at the University of Leyden, according to a system drawn up by the celebrated Stevinus.

Doubtless the most important innovation of the prince, and the one which required the most energy to enforce, was the use of the spade. His soldiers were jeered at by the enemy as mere boors and day labourers who were dishonouring themselves and their profession by the use of that implement instead of the sword. Such a novelty was a shock to all the military ideas of the age, and it was only the determination and vigour of the prince and of his cousin Lewis William that ultimately triumphed over the universal prejudice.

The pay of the common soldier varied from ten to twenty florins the month, but every miner had eighteen florins, and, when actually working in the mines, thirty florins monthly. Soldiers used in digging trenches received, over and above their regular pay, a daily wage of from ten to fifteen styvers, or nearly a shilling sterling.

Another most wholesome improvement made by the prince was in the payment of his troops. The system prevailing in every European country at that day, by which Governments were defrauded and soldiers starved, was most infamous. The soldiers were paid through the captain, who received the wages of a full company, when perhaps not one-third of the names on the master-roll were living human beings. Accordingly two-thirds of all the money stuck to the officer's fingers, and it was not thought a disgrace to cheat the Government by dressing and equipping for the day a set of ragamuffins, caught up in the streets for the purpose, and made to pass muster as regular soldiers.

These parse-volants, or scarecrows, were passed freely about from one company to another, and the indecency of the fraud was never thought a disgrace to the colours of the company.

Thus, in the Armada year, the queen had demanded that a portion of her auxiliary force in the Netherlands should be sent to England. The States agreed that three thousand of these English troops, together with a few cavalry companies, should go, but stipulated that two thousand should remain in the provinces. The queen accepted the proposal, but when the two thousand had been counted out, it appeared that there was scarcely a man left for the voyage to England. Yet every one of the English captains had claimed full pay for

his company from her Majesty's exchequer.

Against this tide of peculation and corruption the strenuous Maurice set himself with heart and soul, and there is no doubt that to his reformation in this vital matter much of his military success was owing. It was impossible that roguery and venality should ever furnish a solid foundation for the martial science.

To the student of military history the campaigns and sieges of Maurice, and especially the earlier: ones, are of great importance. There is no doubt whatever, that the youth who now, after deep study and careful preparation, was measuring himself against the first captains of the age, was founding the great modern school of military science. It was in this Netherland academy, and under the tuition of its consummate professor, that the commanders of the seventeenth century not only acquired the rudiments, but perfected themselves in the higher walks of their art. Therefore the siege operations, in which all that had been invented by modern genius, or rescued from the oblivion which had gathered over ancient lore during the more vulgar and commonplace practice of the mercenary commanders of the day was brought into successful application, must always engage the special attention of the military student.

To the general reader, more interested in marking the progress of civilisation and the advance of the people in the path of development and true liberty, the spectacle of the young stadholder's triumphs has an interest of another kind. At the moment when a thorough practical soldier was most needed by the struggling little commonwealth, to enable it to preserve liberties partially secured by its unparalleled sacrifices of blood and treasure during a quarter of a century, and to expel the foreign invader from the soil which he had so long profaned, it was destined that a soldier should appear.

Spade in hand, with his head full of Roman castrametation and geometrical problems, a prince, scarce emerged from boyhood, presents himself on that stage where grizzled Mansfelds, drunken Hohenlos, and truculent Verdugos have been so long enacting, that artless military drama which consists of hard knocks and wholesale massacres. The novice is received with universal hilarity. But although the machinery of war varies so steadily from age to age that a commonplace commander of to-day, rich in the spoils of preceding time, might vanquish the Alexanders, and Caesars, and Frederics, with their antiquated enginery, yet the moral stuff out of which great captains, great armies, great victories are created, is the simple material it was in the days of Sesostris or Cyrus. The moral and physiological elements remain essentially the same as when man first began to walk up and down the earth and destroy his fellow-creatures.

To make an army a thorough mowing-machine, it then seemed necessary that it should be disciplined into complete mechanical obedience. To secure this, prompt payment of wages and inexorable punishment of delinquencies were indispensable. Long arrearages were now converting Farnese's veterans into systematic marauders; for unpaid soldiers in every age and country have usually degenerated into highwaymen, and it is an impossibility for a sovereign, with the strictest intentions, to persist in starving his soldiers and in killing them for feeding themselves. In Maurice's little army, on the contrary, there were no back-wages and no thieving. At the siege of Delfzyl Maurice hung two of his soldiers for stealing, the one a hat and the other a poniard, from the townsfolk, after the place had capitulated. At the siege of Hulst he ordered another to be shot, before the whole camp, for robbing a woman.

This seems sufficiently harsh, but war is not a pastime nor a very humane occupation. The result was, that robbery disappeared, and it is better for all that enlisted men should be soldiers rather than thieves. To secure the ends which alone can justify war—and if the Netherlanders engaged in defending national existence and human freedom against foreign tyranny were not justifiable then a just war has never been waged—a disciplined army is vastly more humane in its operations than a band of brigands. Swift and condign punishments by the law-martial, for even trifling offences, is the best means of discipline yet devised.

To bring to utmost perfection the machinery already in existence, to encourage invention, to ponder the past with a practical application to the present, to court fatigue, to scorn pleasure, to concentrate the energies on the work in hand, to cultivate quickness of eye and calmness of nerve in the midst of danger, to accelerate movements, to economise blood even at the expense of time, to strive after ubiquity and omniscience in the details of person and place, these were the characteristics of Maurice, and they have been the prominent traits of all commanders who have stamped themselves upon their age. Although his method of war-making differed as far as possible from that quality in common, of the Bearnese, yet the two had one personal insensibility to fear. But in the case of Henry, to confront danger for its own sake was in itself a pleasure, while the calmer spirit of Maurice did not so much seek the joys of the combat as refuse to desist from scientific combinations in the interests of his personal safety. Very frequently, in the course of his early campaigns, the prince was formally and urgently requested by the States-General not to expose his life so recklessly, and before he had passed his twenty-fifth year he had received wounds which, but for fortunate circumstances, would have proved mortal, because he was unwilling to leave special operations on which much was depending to other eyes than his own. The details of his campaigns are, of necessity, the less interesting to a general reader from their very completeness. Desultory or semi-civilised warfare, where the play of the human passions is distinctly visible, where individual man, whether in buff jerkin or Milan coat of proof, meets his fellow man in close mortal combat, where men starve by thousands or are massacred by town-fulls, where hamlets or villages blaze throughout whole districts or are sunk beneath the ocean—scenes of rage, hatred, vengeance, self-sacrifice, patriotism, where all the virtues and vices of which humanity is capable stride to and fro in their most violent colours and most colossal shape where man in a moment rises almost to divinity, or sinks beneath the beasts of the field—such tragical records of which the sanguinary story of mankind is full—and no portion of them more so than the Netherland chronicles appeal more vividly to the imagination than the neatest solution of mathematical problems. Yet, if it be the legitimate end of military science to accomplish its largest purposes at the least expense of human suffering; if it be progress in civilisation to acquire by scientific combination what might be otherwise attempted, and perhaps vainly attempted, by infinite carnage, then is the professor with his diagrams, standing unmoved amid danger, a more truly heroic image than Coeur-de-Lion with his battle-axe or Alva with his truncheon.

The system—then a new one—which Maurice introduced to sustain that little commonwealth from sinking of which he had become at the age of seventeen the predestined chief, was the best under the circumstances that could have been devised. Patriotism the most passionate, the most sublime, had created the republic. To

maintain its existence against perpetual menace required the exertion of perpetual skill.

Passionless as algebra, the genius of Maurice was ready for the task. Strategic points of immense value, important cities and fortresses, vital river-courses and communications—which foreign tyranny had acquired during the tragic past with a patient iniquity almost without a parallel, and which patriotism had for years vainly struggled to recover—were the earliest trophies and prizes of his art. But the details of his victories may be briefly indicated, for they have none of the picturesqueness of crime. The sieges of Naarden, Harlem, Leyden, were tragedies of maddening interest, but the recovery of Zutphen, Deventer, Nymegen, Groningen, and many other places—all important though they were—was accomplished with the calmness of a consummate player, who throws down on the table the best half dozen invincible cards which it thus becomes superfluous to play.

There were several courses open to the prince before taking the field. It was desirable to obtain control of the line of the Waal, by which that heart of the republic—Holland—would be made entirely secure. To this end, Gertruydenberg—lately surrendered to the enemy by the perfidy of the Englishman Wingfield, to whom it had been entrusted—Bois le Duc, and Nymegen were to be wrested from Spain.

It was also important to hold the Yssel, the course of which river led directly through the United Netherlands, quite to the Zuyder Zee, cutting off Friesland, Groningen, and Gelderland from their sister provinces of Holland and Zeeland. And here again the keys to this river had been lost by English treason. The fort of Zutphen and the city of Deventer had been transferred to the Spaniard by Roland York and Sir William Stanley, in whose honour the republic had so blindly confided, and those cities it was now necessary to reduce by regular siege before the communications between the eastern and western portions of the little commonwealth could ever be established.

Still farther in the ancient Frisian depths, the memorable treason of that native Netherlander, the high-born Renneberg, had opened the way for the Spaniard's foot into the city of Groningen. Thus this whole important province—with its capital—long subject to the foreign oppressor, was garrisoned with his troops.

Verdugo, a veteran officer of Portuguese birth, who had risen from the position of hostler to that of colonel and royal stadholder, commanded in Friesland. He had in vain demanded reinforcements and supplies from Farnese, who most reluctantly was obliged to refuse them in order that he might obey his master's commands to neglect everything for the sake of the campaign in France.

And Verdugo, stripped of all adequate forces to protect his important province, was equally destitute of means for feeding the troops that were left to him. "I hope to God that I may do my duty to the king and your Highness," he cried, "but I find myself sold up and pledged to such an extent that I am poorer than when I was a soldier at four crowns a month. And everybody in the town is as desperate as myself."

Maurice, after making a feint of attacking Gertruydenberg and Bois le Duc, so that Farnese felt compelled, with considerable difficulty, to strengthen the garrison of those places, came unexpectedly to Arnhem with a force of nine thousand foot and sixteen hundred horse. He had previously and with great secrecy sent some companies of infantry under Sir Francis Vere to Doesburg.

On the 23rd May (1591) five peasants and six peasant women made their appearance at dawn of day before the chief guard-house of the great fort in the Badmeadow (Vel-uwe), opposite Zutphen, on the west side of the Yssel. It was not an unusual occurrence. These boors and their wives had brought baskets of eggs, butter, and cheese, for the garrison, and they now set themselves quietly down on the ground before the gate, waiting for the soldiers of the garrison to come out and traffic with them for their supplies. Very soon several of the guard made their appearance, and began to chaffer with the peasants, when suddenly one of the women plucked a pistol from under her petticoats and shot dead the soldier who was cheapening her eggs. The rest of the party, transformed in an instant from boors to soldiers, then sprang upon the rest of the guard, overpowered and bound them, and took possession of the gate. A considerable force, which had been placed in ambush by Prince Maurice near the spot, now rushed forward, and in a few minutes the great fort of Zutphen was mastered by the States' forces without loss of a man. It was a neat and perfectly successful stratagem.

Next day Maurice began the regular investment of the city. On the 26th, Count Lewis William arrived with some Frisian companies. On the 27th, Maurice threw a bridge of boats from the Badmeadow side, across the river to the Weert before the city. On the 28th he had got batteries, mounting thirty-two guns, into position, commanding the place at three points. On the 30th the town capitulated. Thus within exactly one week from the firing of the pistol shot by the supposed butterwoman, this fort and town, which had so long resisted the efforts of the States, and were such important possessions of the Spaniards, fell into the hands of Maurice. The terms of surrender were easy. The city being more important than its garrison, the soldiers were permitted to depart with bag and baggage. The citizens were allowed three days to decide whether to stay under loyal obedience to the States-General, or to take their departure. Those who chose to remain were to enjoy all the privileges of citizens of the United Provinces.

But very few substantial citizens were left, for such had been the tyranny, the misery, and the misrule during the long occupation by a foreign soldiery of what was once a thriving Dutch town, that scarcely anybody but paupers and vagabonds were left. One thousand houses were ruined and desolate. It is superfluous to add that the day of its restoration to the authority of the Union was the beginning of its renewed prosperity.

Maurice, having placed a national garrison in the place, marched the same evening straight upon Deventer, seven miles farther down the river, without pausing to sleep upon his victory. His artillery and munitions were sent rapidly down the Yssel.

Within five days he had thoroughly invested the city, and brought twenty-eight guns to bear upon the weakest part of its defences.

It was a large, populous, well-built town, once a wealthy member of the Hanseatic League, full of fine buildings, both public and private, the capital of the rich and fertile province of Overyssel, and protected by a strong wall and moat—as well-fortified a place as could be found in the Netherlands. The garrison consisted of fourteen hundred Spaniards and Walloons, under the command of Count Herman van den Berg, first

cousin of Prince Maurice.

No sooner had the States army come before the city than a Spanish captain observed—"We shall now have a droll siege—cousins on the outside, cousins on the inside. There will be a sham fight or two, and then the cousins will make it up, and arrange matters to suit themselves."

Such hints had deeply wounded Van den Berg, who was a fervent Catholic, and as loyal a servant to Philip II. as he could have been, had that monarch deserved, by the laws of nature and by his personal services and virtues, to govern all the swamps of Friesland. He slept on the gibe, having ordered all the colonels and captains of the garrison to attend at solemn mass in the great church the next morning. He there declared to them all publicly that he felt outraged at the suspicions concerning his fidelity, and after mass he took the sacrament, solemnly swearing never to give up the city or even to speak of it until he had made such resistance that he must be carried from the breach. So long as he could stand or sit he would defend the city entrusted to his care.

The whole council who had come from Zutphen to Maurice's camp were allowed to deliberate concerning the siege. The enemy had been seen hovering about the neighbourhood in considerable numbers, but had not ventured an attempt to throw reinforcements into the place. Many of the counsellors argued against the siege. It was urged that the resistance would be determined and protracted, and that the Duke of Parma was sure to take the field in person to relieve so important a city, before its reduction could be effected.

But Maurice had thrown a bridge across the Yssel above, and another below the town, had carefully and rapidly taken measures in the success of which he felt confident, and now declared that it would be cowardly and shameful to abandon an enterprise so well begun.

The city had been formally summoned to surrender, and a calm but most decided refusal had been returned.

On the 9th June the batteries began playing, and after four thousand six hundred shots a good breach had been effected in the defences along the Kaye—an earthen work lying between two strong walls of masonry.

The breach being deemed practicable, a storm was ordered. To reach the Kaye it was necessary to cross a piece of water called the Haven, over which a pontoon bridge was hastily thrown. There was now a dispute among the English, Scotch, and Netherlanders for precedence in the assault. It was ultimately given to the English, in order that the bravery of that nation might now on the same spot wipe out the disgrace inflicted upon its name by the treason of Sir William Stanley. The English did their duty well and rushed forward merrily, but the bridge proved too short. Some sprang over and pushed boldly for the breach. Some fell into the moat and were drowned. Others, sustained by the Netherlanders under Solms, Meetkerke, and Brederode, effected their passage by swimming, leaping, or wading, so that a resolute attack was made. Herman van den Berg met them in the breach at the head of seven companies. The defenders were most ferocious in their resistance. They were also very drunk. The count had placed many casks of Rhenish and of strong beer within reach, and ordered his soldiers to drink their fill as they fought. He was himself as vigorous in his potations as he was chivalrous with sword and buckler. Two pages and two lieutenants fell at his side, but still he fought at the head of his men with a desperation worthy of his vow, until he fell wounded in the eye and was carried from the place. Notwithstanding this disaster to the commander of the town, the assailants were repulsed, losing two hundred-and twenty-five in killed and wounded—Colonel Meetkerke and his brother, two most valuable Dutch officers, among them.

During the whole of the assault, a vigorous cannonade had been kept up upon other parts of the town, and houses and church-towers were toppling down in all directions. Meanwhile the inhabitants—for it was Sunday—instead of going to service were driven towards the breach by the serjeant-major, a truculent Spaniard, next in command to Van den Berg, who ran about the place with a great stick, summoning the Dutch burghers to assist the Spanish garrison on the wall. It was thought afterwards that this warrior would have been better occupied among the soldiers, at the side of his commander.

A chivalrous incident in the open field occurred during the assault. A gigantic Albanian cavalry officer came prancing out of Deventer into the spaces between the trenches, defying any officer in the States' army to break a lance with him. Prince Maurice forbade any acceptance of the challenge, but Lewis van der Cathulle, son of the famous Ryhove of Ghent, unable to endure the taunts and bravado of this champion, at last obtained permission to encounter him in single combat. They met accordingly with much ceremony, tilted against each other, and shivered their lances in good style, but without much effect. The Albanian then drew a pistol. Cathulle had no weapon save a cutlass, but with this weapon he succeeded in nearly cutting off the hand which held the pistol. He then took his enemy prisoner, the vain-glorious challenger throwing his gold chain around his conqueror's neck in token of his victory. Prince Maurice caused his wound to be bound up and then liberated him, sending him into the city with a message to the governor.

During the following night the bridge, over which the assailants had nearly forced their way into the town, was vigorously attacked by the garrison, but Count Lewis William, in person, with a chosen band defended it stoutly till morning, beating back the Spaniards with heavy loss in a sanguinary midnight contest.

Next morning there was a unanimous outcry on the part of the besieged for a capitulation. It was obvious that, with the walls shot to ruins as they had been, the place was no longer tenable against Maurice's superior forces. A trumpet was sent to the prince before the dawn of day, and on the 10th of June, accordingly, the place capitulated.

It was arranged that the garrison should retire with arms and baggage whithersoever they chose. Van den Berg stipulated nothing in favour of the citizens, whether through forgetfulness or spite does not distinctly appear. But the burghers were received like brothers. No plunder was permitted, no ransom demanded, and the city took its place among its sisterhood of the United Provinces.

Van den Berg himself was received at the prince's head, quarters with much cordiality. He was quite blind; but his wound seemed to be the effect of exterior contusions, and he ultimately recovered the sight of one eye. There was mach free conversation between himself and his cousins during the brief interval in which he was their guest.

"I've often told Verdugo," said he, "that the States had no power to make a regular siege, nor to come with

proper artillery into the field, and he agreed with me. But we were both wrong, for I now see the contrary."

To which Count Lewis William replied with a laugh: "My dear cousin, I've observed that in all your actions you were in the habit of despising us Beggars, and I have said that you would one day draw the shortest straw in consequence. I'm glad to hear this avowal from your own lips." Herman attempted no reply but let the subject drop, seeming to regret having said so much.

Soon afterwards he was forwarded by Maurice in his own coach to Ulff, where he was attended by the prince's body physician till he was re-established in health.

Thus within ten days of his first appearance before its walls, the city of Deventer, and with it a whole province, had fallen into the hands of Maurice. It began to be understood that the young pedant knew something about his profession, and that he had not been fagging so hard at the science of war for nothing.

The city was in a sorry plight when the States took possession of it. As at Zutphen, the substantial burghers had wandered away, and the foreign soldiers bivouacking there so long had turned the stately old Hanseatic city into a brick and mortar wilderness. Hundreds of houses had been demolished by the garrison, that the iron might be sold and the woodwork burned for fuel; for the enemy had conducted himself as if feeling in his heart that the occupation could not be a permanent one, and as if desirous to make the place as desolate as possible for the Beggars when they should return.

The dead body of the traitor York, who had died and been buried in Deventer, was taken from the tomb, after the capture of the city, and with the vulgar ferocity so characteristic of the times, was hung, coffin and all, on the gibbet for the delectation of the States' soldiery.

Maurice, having thus in less than three weeks recovered two most important cities, paused not an instant in his career but moved at once on Groningen. There was a strong pressure put upon him to attempt the capture of Nymegen, but the understanding with the Frisian stadholders and his troops had been that the enterprise upon Groningen should follow the reduction of Deventer.

On the 26th June Maurice appeared before Groningen. Next day, as a precautionary step, he moved to the right and attacked the strong city of Delfzyl. This place capitulated to him on the 2nd July. The fort of Opslag surrendered on the 7th July. He then moved to the west of Groningen, and attacked the forts of Yementil and Lettebaest, which fell into his hands on the 11th July. He then moved along the Nyenoort through the Seven Wolds and Drenthe to Steenwyk, before which strongly fortified city he arrived on the 15th July.

Meantime, he received intercepted letters from Verdugo to the Duke of Parma, dated 19th June from Groningen. In these, the Spanish stadholder informed Farnese that the enemy was hovering about his neighbourhood, and that it would be necessary for the duke to take the field in person in considerable force, or that Groningen would be lost, and with it the Spanish forces in the province. He enclosed a memorial of the course proper to be adopted by the duke for his relief.

Notwithstanding the strictness by which Philip had tied his great general's hands, Farnese felt the urgency of the situation. By the end of June, accordingly, although full of his measures for marching to the relief of the Leaguers in Normandy, he moved into Gelderland, coming by way of Xanten, Rees, and neighbouring places. Here he paused for a moment perplexed, doubting whether to take the aggressive in Gelderland or to march straight to the relief of Groningen. He decided that it was better for the moment to protect the line of the Waal. Shipping his army accordingly into the Batavian Island or Good-meadow (Bet-uwe), which lies between the two great horns of the Rhine, he laid siege to Fort Knodsenburg, which Maurice had built the year before, on the right bank of the Waal for the purpose of attacking Nymegen. Farnese, knowing that the general of the States was occupied with his whole army far away to the north, and separated from him by two great rivers, wide and deep, and by the whole breadth of that dangerous district called the Foul-meadow (Vel-uwe), and by the vast quagmire known as the Rouvenian morass, which no artillery nor even any organised forces had ever traversed since the beginning of the world, had felt no hesitation in throwing his army in boats across the Waal. He had no doubt of reducing a not very powerful fortress long before relief could be brought to it, and at the same time of disturbing by his presence in Batavia the combinations of his young antagonist in Friesland and Groningen.

So with six thousand foot and one thousand horse, Alexander came before Knodsenburg. The news reached Maurice at Steenwyk on the 15th July. Instantly changing his plans, the prince decided that Farnese must be faced at once, and, if possible, driven from the ground, thinking it more important to maintain, by concentration, that which had already been gained, than to weaken and diffuse his forces in insufficient attempts to acquire more. Before two days had passed, he was on the march southward, having left Lewis William with a sufficient force to threaten Groningen. Coming by way of Hasselt Zwol to Deventer, he crossed the Yssel on a bridge of boats on the 18th of July, 1591 and proceeded to Arnhem. His army, although excessively fatigued by forced marches in very hot weather, over nearly impassable roads, was full of courage and cheerfulness, having learned implicit confidence in their commander. On the 20th he was at Arnhem. On the 22nd his bridge of boats was made, and he had thrown his little army across the Rhine into Batavia, and entrenched himself with his six thousand foot and fourteen hundred horse in the immediate neighbourhood of Farnese—Foul-meadow and Good-meadow, dyke, bog, wold, and quagmire, had been successfully traversed, and within one week of his learning that the great viceroy of Philip had reached the Batavian island, Maurice stood confronting that famous chieftain in battle-array.

On the 22nd July, Farnese, after firing two hundred and eighty-five shots at Fort Knodsenburg, ordered an assault, expecting that so trifling a work could hardly withstand a determined onslaught by his veterans. To his surprise they were so warmly received that two hundred of the assailants fell at the first onset, and the attack was most conclusively repulsed.

And now Maurice had appeared upon the scene, determined to relieve a place so important for his ulterior designs. On the 24th July he sent out a small but picked force of cavalry to reconnoitre the enemy. They were attacked by a considerable body of Italian and Spanish horse from the camp before Knodsenburg, including Alexander's own company of lancers under Nicelli. The States troops fled before them in apparent dismay for a little distance, hotly pursued by the royalists, until, making a sudden halt, they turned to the attack, accompanied by five fresh companies of cavalry and a thousand musketeers, who fell upon the foe from all

directions. It was an ambush, which had been neatly prepared by Maurice in person, assisted by Sir Francis Vere. Sixty of the Spaniards and Italians were killed and one hundred and fifty prisoners, including Captain Nicelli, taken, while the rest of the party sought safety in ignominious flight. This little skirmish, in which ten companies of the picked veterans of Alexander Farnese had thus been utterly routed before his eyes, did much to inspire the States troops with confidence in themselves and their leader.

Parma was too experienced a campaigner, and had too quick an eye, not to recognise the error which he had committed in placing the dangerous river Waal, without a bridge; between himself and his supplies. He had not dreamed that his antagonist would be capable of such celerity of movement as he had thus displayed, and his first business now was to extricate himself from a position which might soon become fatal. Without hesitation, he did his best to amuse the enemy in front of the fort, and then passed the night in planting batteries upon the banks of the river, under cover of which he succeeded next day in transporting in ferry-boats his whole force, artillery and: baggage, to the opposite shore, without loss, and with his usual skill.

He remained but a short time in Nymegen, but he was hampered by the express commands of the king. Moreover, his broken health imperatively required that he should once more seek the healing influence of the waters of Spa, before setting forth on his new French expedition. Meanwhile, although he had for a time protected the Spanish possessions in the north by his demonstration in Gelderland, it must be confessed that the diversion thus given to the plans of Maurice was but a feeble one.

Having assured the inhabitants of Nymegen that he would watch over the city like the apple of, his eye, he took his departure on the 4th of August for Spa. He was accompanied on his journey by his son, Prince Ranuccio, just arrived from Italy.

After the retreat of Farnese, Maurice mustered his forces at Arnhem, and found himself at the head of seven thousand foot and fifteen hundred horse. It was expected by all the world that, being thus on the very spot, he would forthwith proceed to reduce the ancient, wealthy, imperial city of Nynegen. The garrison and burghers accordingly made every preparation to resist the attack, disconcerted as they were, however, by the departure of Parma, and by the apparent incapacity of Verdugo to bring them effectual relief.

But to the surprise of all men, the States forces suddenly disappeared from the scene, having been, as it were, spirited away by night-time, along those silent watery highways and crossways of canal, river, and estuary—the military advantages of which to the Netherlands, Maurice was the first thoroughly to demonstrate. Having previously made great preparations of munitions and provisions in Zeeland, the young general, who was thought hard at work in Gelderland, suddenly presented himself on the 19th September, before the gates of Hulst, on the border of Zeeland and Brabant.

It was a place of importance from its situation, its possession by the enemy being a perpetual thorn in the side of the States, and a constant obstacle to the plans of Maurice. His arrangements having been made with the customary, neatness, celerity, and completeness, he received the surrender of the city on the fifth day after his arrival.

Its commander, Castillo, could offer no resistance; and was subsequently, it is said, beheaded by order of the Duke of Parma for his negligence. The place is but a dozen miles from Antwerp, which city was at the very, moment keeping great holiday and outdoing itself in magnificent festivals in honour of young Ranuccio. The capture of Hulst before his eyes was a demonstration quite unexpected by the prince, and great was the wrath of old Mondragon, governor of Antwerp, thus bearded in his den. The veteran made immediate preparations for chastising the audacious Beggars of Zeeland and their pedantic young commander, but no sooner had the Spaniards taken the field than the wily foe had disappeared as magically as he had come.

The Flemish earth seemed to have bubbles as the water hath, and while Mondragon was beating the air in vain on the margin of the Scheld, Maurice was back again upon the Waal, horse, foot, and artillery, bag, baggage, and munition, and had fairly set himself down in earnest to besiege Nymegen, before the honest burghers and the garrison had finished drawing long breaths at their recent escape. Between the 14th and 16th October he had bridged the deep, wide, and rapid river, had transported eight thousand five hundred infantry and, sixteen companies of cavalry to the southern side, had entrenched his camp and made his approaches, and had got sixty-eight pieces of artillery into three positions commanding the weakest part of the defences of the city between the Falcon Tower and the Hoender gate. The fort of Knodsenburg was also ready to throw hot shot across the river into the town. Not a detail in all these preparations escaped the vigilant eye of the Commander-in-Chief, and again and again was he implored not so recklessly to expose a life already become precious to his country. On the 20th October, Maurice sent to demand the surrender of the city. The reply was facetious but decisive.

The prince was but a young suitor, it was said, and the city a spinster not so lightly to be won. A longer courtship and more trouble would be necessary.

Whereupon the suitor opened all his batteries without further delay, and the spinster gave a fresh example of the inevitable fate of talking castles and listening ladies.

Nymegen, despite her saucy answer on the 20th, surrendered on the 21st. Relief was impossible. Neither Parma, now on his way to France, nor Verdugo, shut up in Friesland, could come to the rescue of the place, and the combinations of Maurice were an inexorable demonstration.

The terms of the surrender were similar to those accorded to Zutphen and Deventer. In regard to the religious point it was expressly laid down by Maurice that the demand for permission to exercise publicly the Roman Catholic religion should be left to the decision of the States-General.

And thus another most important city had been added to the domains of the republic. Another triumph was inscribed on the record of the young commander. The exultation was very great throughout the United Netherlands, and heartfelt was the homage rendered by all classes of his countrymen to the son of William the Silent.

Queen Elizabeth wrote to congratulate him in warmest terms on his great successes, and even the Spaniards began to recognise the merits of the new chieftain. An intercepted letter from Verdugo, who had been foiled in his efforts to arrest the career of Maurice, indicated great respect for his prowess. "I have been informed," said the veteran, "that Count Maurice of Nassau wishes to fight me. Had I the opportunity I assure

you that I should not fail him, for even if ill luck were my portion, I should at least not escape the honour of being beaten by such a personage. I beg you to tell him so with my affectionate compliments. Yours, FRANCIS VERDUGO."

These chivalrous sentiments towards Prince Maurice had not however prevented Verdugo from doing his best to assassinate Count Lewis William. Two Spaniards had been arrested in the States camp this summer, who came in as deserters, but who confessed "with little, or mostly without torture," that they had been sent by their governor and colonel with instructions to seize a favourable opportunity to shoot Lewis William and set fire to his camp. But such practices were so common on the part of the Spanish commanders as to occasion no surprise whatever.

It will be remembered that two years before, the famous Martin Schenk had come to a tragic end at Nymegen. He had been drowned, fished up, hanged, drawn, and quartered; after which his scattered fragments, having been exposed on all the principal towers of the city, had been put in pickle and deposited in a chest. They were now collected and buried triumphantly in the tomb of the Dukes of Gelderland. Thus the shade of the grim freebooter was at last appeased.

The government of the city was conferred upon Count Lewis William, with Gerard de Jonge as his lieutenant. A substantial garrison was placed in the city, and, the season now far advanced Maurice brought the military operations of the year, saving a slight preliminary demonstration against Gertruydenberg, to a close. He had deserved and attained—considerable renown. He had astonished the leisurely war-makers and phlegmatic veterans of the time, both among friends and foes, by the unexampled rapidity of his movements and the concentration of his attacks. He had carried great waggon trains and whole parks of siege artillery—the heaviest then known—over roads and swamps which had been deemed impassable even for infantry. He had traversed the length and breadth of the republic in a single campaign, taken two great cities in Overyssel, picked up cities and fortresses in the province of Groningen, and threatened its capital, menaced Steenwyk, relieved Knodsenburg though besieged in person by the greatest commander of the age, beaten the most famous cavalry of Spain and Italy under the eyes of their chieftain, swooped as it were through the air upon Brabant, and carried off an important city almost in the sight of Antwerp, and sped back again in the freezing weather of early autumn, with his splendidly served and invincible artillery, to the imperial city of Nymegen, which Farnese had sworn to guard like the apple of his eye, and which, with consummate skill, was forced out of his grasp in five days.

"Some might attribute these things to blind fortune," says an honest chronicler who had occupied important posts in the service of the prince and of his cousin Lewis William, "but they who knew the prince's constant study and laborious attention to detail, who were aware that he never committed to another what he could do himself, who saw his sobriety, vigilance, his perpetual study and holding of council with Count Lewis William (himself possessed of all these good gifts, perhaps even in greater degree), and who never found him seeking, like so many other commanders, his own ease and comfort, would think differently."

CHAPTER XXV.

War in Brittany and Normandy—Death of La Noue—Religious and political persecution in Paris—Murder of President Brisson, Larcher, and Tardif—The sceptre of France offered to Philip—The Duke of Mayenne punishes the murderers of the magistrates—Speech of Henry's envoy to the States-General—Letter of Queen Elizabeth to Henry—Siege of Rouen—Farnese leads an army to its relief—The king is wounded in a skirmish—Siege of Rue by Farnese—Henry raises the siege of Rouen—Siege of Caudebec—Critical position of Farnese and his army—Victory of the Duke of Mercoeur in Brittany.

Again the central point towards which the complicated events to be described in this history gravitate is found on the soil of France. Movements apparently desultory and disconnected—as they may have seemed to the contemporaneous observer, necessarily occupied with the local and daily details which make up individual human life—are found to be necessary parts of a whole, when regarded with that breadth and clearness of vision which is permitted to human beings only when they can look backward upon that long sequence of events which make up the life of nations and which we call the Past. It is only by the anatomical study of what has ceased to exist that we can come thoroughly to comprehend the framework and the vital conditions of that which lives. It is only by patiently lifting the shroud from the Past that we can enable ourselves to make even wide guesses at the meaning of the dim Present and the veiled Future. It is only thus that the continuity of human history reveals itself to us as the most important of scientific facts.

If ever commonwealth was apparently doomed to lose that national existence which it had maintained for a brief period at the expense of infinite sacrifice of blood and treasure, it was the republic of the United Netherlands in the period immediately succeeding the death of William the Silent. Domestic treason, secession of important provinces, religious-hatred, foreign intrigue, and foreign invasion—in such a sea of troubles was the republic destined generations long to struggle. Who but the fanatical, the shallow-minded, or the corrupt could doubt the inevitable issue of the conflict? Did not great sages and statesmen whose teachings seemed so much wiser in their generation than the untaught impulses of the great popular heart, condemn over and over again the hopeless struggles and the atrocious bloodshed which were thought to disgrace the age, and by which it was held impossible that the cause of human liberty should ever be advanced?

To us who look back from the vantage summit which humanity has reached—thanks to the toil and sacrifices of those who have preceded us—it may seem doubtful whether premature peace in the Netherlands, France, and England would have been an unmitigated blessing, however easily it might have

been purchased by the establishment all over Europe of that holy institution called the Inquisition, and by the tranquil acceptance of the foreign domination of Spain.

If, too; ever country seemed destined to the painful process of national vivisection and final dismemberment, it was France: Its natural guardians and masters, save one, were in secret negotiation with foreign powers to obtain with their assistance a portion of the national territory under acknowledgment of foreign supremacy. There was hardly an inch of French soil that had not two possessors. In Burgundy Baron Biron was battling against the Viscount Tavannes; in the Lyonese and Dauphiny Marshal des Digiueres was fighting with the Dukes of Savoy and Nemours; in Provence, Epernon was resisting Savoy; in Languedoc, Constable Montmorency contended with the Duke of Joyeuse; in Brittany, the Prince of Dombes was struggling with the Duke of Mercoeur.

But there was one adventurer who thought he could show a better legal title to the throne of France than all the doctors of the Sorbonne could furnish to Philip II. and his daughter, and who still trusted, through all the disasters which pursued him, and despite the machinations of venal warriors and mendicant princes, to his good right and his good sword, and to something more potent than both, the cause of national unity. His rebuke to the intriguing priests at the interview of St. Denis, and his reference to the judgment of Solomon, formed the text to his whole career.

The brunt of the war now fell upon Brittany and Normandy. Three thousand Spaniards under Don John de Aquila had landed in the port of Blavet which they had fortified, as a stronghold on the coast. And thither, to defend the integrity of that portion of France, which, in Spanish hands, was a perpetual menace to her realm, her crown, even to her life, Queen Elizabeth had sent some three thousand Englishmen, under commanders well known to France and the Netherlands. There was black Norris again dealing death among the Spaniards and renewing his perpetual squabbles with Sir Roger Williams. There was that doughty Welshman himself, truculent and caustic as ever—and as ready with sword or pen, foremost in every mad adventure or every forlorn hope, criticising with sharpest tongue the blunders and shortcomings of friend and foe, and devoting the last drop in his veins with chivalrous devotion to his Queen. "The world cannot deny," said he, "that any carcase living ventured himself freer and oftener for his prince, state, and friends than I did mine. There is no more to be had of a poor beast than his skin, and for want of other means I never respected mine in the least respect towards my sovereign's service, or country." And so passing his life in the saddle and under fire, yet finding leisure to collect the materials for, and to complete the execution of, one of the most valuable and attractive histories of the age, the bold Welshman again and again appears, wearing the same humorous but truculent aspect that belonged to him when he was wont to run up and down in a great morion and feathers on Flemish battlefields, a mark for the Spanish sharpshooters.

There, too, under the banner of the Bearnese, that other historian of those sanguinary times, who had fought on almost every battle-field where tyranny and liberty had sought to smite each other dead, on French or Flemish soil, and who had prepared his famous political and military discourses in a foul dungeon swarming with toads and rats and other villainous reptiles to which the worse than infernal tyranny of Philip II. had consigned him for seven years long as a prisoner of war—the brave and good La Noue, with the iron arm, hero of a hundred combats, was fighting his last fight. At the siege of Lamballe in Brittany, he had taken off his calque and climbed a ladder to examine the breach effected by the batteries. An arquebus shot from the town grazed his forehead, and, without inflicting a severe wound, stunned him so much that he lost his balance and fell head foremost towards the ground; his leg, which had been wounded at the midnight assault upon Paris, where he stood at the side of King Henry, caught in the ladder and held him suspended. His head was severely bruised, and the contusions and shock to his war-worn frame were so great that he died after lingering eighteen days.

His son de Teligny; who in his turn had just been exchanged and released from the prison where he had lain since his capture before Antwerp, had hastened with joy to join his father in the camp, but came to close his eyes. The veteran caused the chapter in Job on the resurrection of the body to be read to him on his death-bed, and died expressing his firm faith in a hereafter. Thus passed away, at the age of sixty, on the 4th August, 1591, one of the most heroic spirits of France. Prudence, courage, experience, military knowledge both theoretic and practical, made him one of the first captains of the age, and he was not more distinguished for his valour than for the purity of his life, and the moderation, temperance, and justice of his character. The Prince of Dombes, in despair at his death, raised the siege of Lamballe.

There was yet another chronicler, fighting among the Spaniards, now in Brittany, now in Normandy, and now in Flanders, and doing his work as thoroughly with his sword as afterwards with his pen, Don Carlos Coloma, captain of cavalry, afterwards financier, envoy, and historian. For it was thus that those writers prepared themselves for their work. They were all actors in the great epic, the episodes of which they have preserved. They lived and fought, and wrought and suffered and wrote. Rude in tongue; aflame with passion, twisted all awry by prejudice, violent in love and hate, they have left us narratives which are at least full of colour and thrilling with life.

Thus Netherlanders, Englishmen, and Frenchmen were again mingling their blood and exhausting their energies on a hundred petty battle-fields of Brittany and Normandy; but perhaps to few of those hard fighters was it given to discern the great work which they were slowly and painfully achieving.

In Paris the League still maintained its ascendancy. Henry, having again withdrawn from his attempts to reduce the capital, had left the sixteen tyrants who governed it more leisure to occupy themselves with internal politics. A network of intrigue was spread through the whole atmosphere of the place. The Sixteen, sustained by the power of Spain and Rome, and fearing nothing so much as the return of peace, by which their system of plunder would come to an end, proceeded with their persecution of all heretics, real or supposed, who were rich enough to offer a reasonable chance of spoil. The soul of all these intrigues was the new legate, Sego, bishop of Piacenza. Letters from him to Alexander Farnese, intercepted by Henry, showed a determination to ruin the Duke of Mayenne and Count Belin governor of Paris, whom he designated as Colossus and Renard, to extirpate the magistrates, and to put Spanish partizans in their places, and in general to perfect the machinery by which the authority of Philip was to be established in France. He was perpetually urging upon that monarch the necessity of spending more money among his creatures in order to

carry out these projects.

Accordingly the attention of the Sixteen had been directed to President Brisson, who had already made himself so dangerously conspicuous by his resistance to the insolent assumption of the cardinal-legate. This eminent juris-consult had succeeded Pomponne de Bellievre as first president of the Parliament of Paris. He had been distinguished for talent, learning, and eloquence as an advocate; and was the author of several important legal works. His ambition to fill the place of first president had caused him to remain in Paris after its revolt against Henry III. He was no Leaguer; and, since his open defiance of the ultra-Catholic party, he had been a marked man—doomed secretly by the confederates who ruled the capital. He had fondly imagined that he could govern the Parisian populace as easily as he had been in the habit of influencing the Parliament or directing his clients. He expected to restore the city to its obedience to the constituted authorities. He hoped to be himself the means of bringing Henry IV. in triumph to the throne of his ancestors. He found, however, that a revolution was more difficult to manage than a law case; and that the confederates of the Holy League were less tractable than his clients had usually been found.

On the night of the 14th November; 1591; he was seized on the bridge St. Michel, while on his way to parliament, and was told that he was expected at the Hotel de Ville. He was then brought to the prison of the little Chatelet.

Hardly had he been made secure in the dimly-lighted dungeon, when Crome, a leader among the Parisian populacey made his appearance, accompanied by some of his confederates, and dressed in a complete suit of mail. He ordered the magistrate to take off his hat and to kneel. He then read a sentence condemning him to death. Profoundly astonished, Brisson demanded to know of what crime he was accused; and under what authority. The answer was a laugh; and an assurance that he had no time to lose. He then begged that at least he might be imprisoned long enough to enable him to complete a legal work on which he was engaged, and which, by his premature death, would be lost to the commonwealth. This request produced no doubt more merriment than his previous demands. His judges were inflexible; and allowed him hardly time to confess himself. He was then hanged in his dungeon.

Two other magistrates, Larcher and Tardif, were executed in the same way, in the same place, and on the same night. The crime charged against them was having spoken in a public assembly somewhat freely against the Sixteen, and having aided in the circulation in Paris of a paper drawn up by the Duke of Nevers, filled with bitterness against the Lorraine princes and the League, and addressed to the late Pope Sixtus.

The three bodies were afterwards gibbeted on the Greve in front of the Hotel de Ville, and exposed for two days to the insults and fury of the populace.

This was the culminating point of the reign of terror in Paris. Never had the sixteen tyrants; lords of the market halls, who governed the capital by favour of and in the name of the populace, seemed more omnipotent. As representatives or plenipotentiaries of Madam League they had laid the crown at the feet of the King of Spain, hoping by still further drafts on his exchequer and his credulity to prolong indefinitely their own ignoble reign. The extreme democratic party, which had hitherto supported the House of Lorraine and had seemed to idolize that family in the person of the great Balafre, now believed themselves possessed of sufficient power to control the Duke of Mayenne and all his adherents. They sent the Jesuit Claude Mathieu with a special memorial to Philip II. That monarch was implored to take, the sceptre of France, and to reign over them, inasmuch as they most willingly threw themselves into his arms? They assured him that all reasonable people, and especially the Holy League, wished him to take the reins of Government, on condition of exterminating heresy throughout the kingdom by force of arms, of publishing the Council of Trent, and of establishing everywhere the Holy inquisition—an institution formidable only to the wicked and desirable for the good. It was suggested that Philip should not call himself any longer King of Spain nor adopt the title of King of France, but that he should proclaim himself the Great King, or make use of some similar designation, not indicating any specialty but importing universal dominion.

Should Philip, however, be disinclined himself to accept the monarchy, it was suggested that the young Duke of Guise, son of the first martyr of France, would be the most appropriate personage to be honoured with the hand of the legitimate Queen of France, the Infanta Clara Isabella.

But the Sixteen were reckoning without the Duke of Mayenne. That great personage, although an indifferent warrior and an utterly unprincipled and venal statesman, was by no means despicable as a fisherman in the troubled waters of revolution. He knew how to manage intrigues with both sides for his own benefit. Had he been a bachelor he might have obtained the Infanta and shared her prospective throne. Being encumbered with a wife he had no hope of becoming the son-in-law of Philip, and was determined that his nephew Guise should not enjoy a piece of good fortune denied to himself. The escape of the young duke from prison had been the signal for the outbreak of jealousies between uncle and nephew, which Parma and other agents had been instructed by their master to foster to the utmost. "They must be maintained in such disposition in regard to me," he said, "that the one being ignorant of my relations to the other, both may without knowing it do my will."

But Mayenne, in this grovelling career of self-seeking, in this perpetual loading of dice and marking of cards, which formed the main occupation of so many kings and princes of the period, and which passed for Machiavellian politics, was a fair match for the Spanish king and his Italian viceroy. He sent President Jeannin on special mission to Philip, asking for two armies, one to be under his command, the other under that of Farnese, and assured him that he should be king himself, or appoint any man he liked to the vacant throne. Thus he had secured one hundred thousand crowns a month to carry on his own game withal. "The maintenance of these two armies costs me 261,000 crowns a month," said Philip to his envoy Ybarra.

And what was the result of all this expenditure of money, of all this lying and counter-lying, of all this frantic effort on the part of the most powerful monarch of the age to obtain property which did not belong to him—the sovereignty of a great kingdom, stocked with a dozen millions of human beings—of all this endless bloodshed of the people in the interests of a high-born family or two, of all this infamous brokerage charged by great nobles for their attempts to transfer kingdoms like private farms from one owner to another? Time was to show. Meanwhile men trembled at the name of Philip II., and grovelled before him as the incarnation

of sagacity, high policy, and king-craft.

But Mayenne, while taking the brokerage, was less anxious about the transfer. He had fine instinct enough to suspect that the Bearnese, outcast though he seemed, might after all not be playing so desperate a game against the League as it was the fashion to suppose. He knew whether or not Henry was likely to prove a more fanatical Huguenot in 1592 than he bad shown himself twenty years before at the Bartholomew festival. And he had wit enough to foresee that the "instruction" which the gay free-thinker held so cautiously in his fingers might perhaps turn out the trump card. A bold, valorous Frenchman with a flawless title, and washed whiter than snow by the freshet of holy water, might prove a more formidable claimant to the allegiance of Frenchmen than a foreign potentate, even though backed by all the doctors of the Sorbonne.

The murder of President Brisson and his colleagues by the confederates of the sixteen quarters, was in truth the beginning of the end. What seemed a proof of supreme power was the precursor of a counter-revolution, destined ere long to lead farther than men dreamed. The Sixteen believed themselves omnipotent. Mayenne being in their power, it was for them to bestow the crown at their will, or to hold it suspended in air as long as seemed best to them. They felt no doubt that all the other great cities in the kingdom would follow the example of Paris.

But the lieutenant-general of the realm felt it time for him to show that his authority was not a shadow—that he was not a pasteboard functionary like the deceased cardinal-king, Charles X. The letters entrusted by the Sixteen to Claude Mathieu were intercepted by Henry, and, very probably, an intimation of their contents was furnished to Mayenne. At any rate, the duke, who lacked not courage nor promptness when his own interests were concerned, who felt his authority slipping away from him, now that it seemed the object of the Spaniards to bind the democratic party to themselves by a complicity in crime, hastened at once to Paris, determined to crush these intrigues and to punish the murderers of the judges. The Spanish envoy Ybarra, proud, excitable, violent, who had been privy to the assassinations, and was astonished that the deeds had excited indignation and fury instead of the terror counted upon, remonstrated with Mayenne, intimating that in times of civil commotion it was often necessary to be blind and deaf.

In vain. The duke carried it with a high and firm hand. He arrested the ringleaders, and hanged four of them in the basement of the Louvre within twenty days after the commission of their crime. The energy was well-timed and perfectly successful. The power of the Sixteen was struck to the earth at a blow. The ignoble tyrants became in a moment as despicable as they had been formidable and insolent. Crome, more fortunate than many of his fellows, contrived to make his escape out of the kingdom.

Thus Mayenne had formally broken with the democratic party, so called-with the market-halls oligarchy. In thus doing, his ultimate rupture with the Spaniards was foreshadowed. The next combination for him to strive for would be one to unite the moderate Catholics and the Bearnese. Ah! if Henry would but "instruct" himself out of hand, what a game the duke might play!

The burgess-party, the mild royalists, the disgusted portion of the Leaguers, coalescing with those of the Huguenots whose fidelity might prove stanch even against the religious apostasy contemplated by their chief—this combination might prove an over-match for the ultra-leaguers, the democrats, and the Spaniards. The king's name would be a tower of strength for that "third party," which began to rear its head very boldly and to call itself "Politica." Madam League might succumb to this new rival in the fickle hearts of the French.

At the beginning of the year 1591; Buzanval had presented his credentials to the States-General at the Hague as envoy of Henry IV. In the speech which he made on this occasion he expressed the hope that the mission of the Viscount Turenne, his Majesty's envoy to England and to the Netherlands, had made known the royal sentiments towards the States and the great satisfaction of the king with their energetic sympathy and assistance. It was notorious, said Buzanval, that the King of Spain for many years had been governed by no other motive than to bring all the rest of Christendom under his dominion, while at the same time he forced upon those already placed under his sceptre a violent tyranny, passing beyond all the bounds that God, nature, and reason had set to lawful forms of government. In regard to nations born under other laws than his, he had used the pretext of religion for reducing them to servitude. The wars stirred up by his family in Germany, and his recent invasion of England, were proofs of this intention, still fresh in the memory of all men. Still more flagrant were his machinations in the present troubles of France. Of his dealings with his hereditary realms, the condition of the noble provinces of the Netherlands, once so blooming under reasonable laws, furnished, a sufficient illustration. You see, my masters, continued the envoy, the subtle plans of the Spanish king and his counsellors to reach with certainty the object of their ambition. They have reflected that Spain, which is the outermost corner of Europe, cannot conveniently make war upon other Christian realms. They have seen that a central position is necessary to enable them to stretch their arms to every side. They have remembered that princes who in earlier days were able to spread their wings over all Christendom had their throne in France, like Charles the Great and his descendants. Therefore the king is now earnestly bent on seizing this occasion to make himself master of France. The death of the late king (Henry III.) had no sooner occurred, than—as the blood through great terror rushes from the extremities and overflows the heart—they here also, fearing to lose their opportunity and astonished at the valour of our present king, abandoned all their other enterprises in order to pour themselves upon France.

Buzanval further reminded the States that Henry had received the most encouraging promises from the protestant princes of Germany, and that so great a personage as the Viscount Turenne, who had now gone thither to reap the fruit of those promises, would not have been sent on such a mission except that its result was certain. The Queen of England, too, had promised his Majesty most liberal assistance.

It was not necessary to argue as to the close connection between the cause of the Netherlands and that of France. The king had beaten down the mutiny of his own subjects, and repulsed the invasion of the Dukes of Savoy and of Lorraine. In consideration of the assistance promised by Germany and England—for a powerful army would be at the command of Henry in the spring—it might be said that the Netherlands might repose for a time and recruit their exhausted energies, under the shadow of these mighty preparations.

"I do not believe, however," said the minister, "that you will all answer me thus. The faint-hearted and the inexperienced might flatter themselves with such thoughts, and seek thus to cover their cowardice, but the

zealous and the courageous will see that it is time to set sail on the ship, now that the wind is rising so freshly and favourably.

"For there are many occasions when an army might be ruined for want of twenty thousand crowns. What a pity if a noble edifice, furnished to the roof-tree, should fall to decay for want of a few tiles. No doubt your own interests are deeply connected with our own. Men may say that our proposals should be rejected on the principle that the shirt is nearer to the skin than the coat, but it can be easily proved that our cause is one. The mere rumour of this army will prevent the Duke of Parma from attacking you. His forces will be drawn to France. He will be obliged to intercept the crash of this thunderbolt. The assistance of this army is worth millions to you, and has cost you nothing. To bring France into hostility with Spain is the very policy that you have always pursued and always should pursue in order to protect your freedom. You have always desired a war between France and Spain, and here is a fierce and cruel one in which you have hazarded nothing. It cannot come to an end without bringing signal advantages to yourselves.

"You have always desired an alliance with a French sovereign, and here is a firm friendship offered you by our king, a natural alliance.

"You know how unstable are most treaties that are founded on shifting interests, and do not concern the freedom of bodies and souls. The first are written with pen upon paper, and are generally as light as paper. They have no roots in the heart. Those founded on mutual assistance on trying occasions have the perpetual strength of nature. They bring always good and enduring fruit in a rich soil like the heart of our king; that heart which is as beautiful and as pure from all untruth as the lily upon his shield.

"You will derive the first profits from the army thus raised. From the moment of its mustering under a chief of such experience as Turenne, it will absorb the whole attention of Spain, and will draw her thoughts from the Netherlands to France."

All this and more in the same earnest manner did the envoy urge upon the consideration of the States-General, concluding with a demand of 100,000 florins as their contribution towards the French campaign.

His eloquence did not fall upon unwilling ears; for the States-General, after taking time to deliberate, replied to the propositions by an expression of the strongest sympathy with, and admiration for, the heroic efforts of the King of France. Accordingly, notwithstanding their own enormous expenses, past and present, and their strenuous exertions at that very moment to form an army of foot and horse for the campaign, the brilliant results of which have already been narrated, they agreed to furnish the required loan of 100,000 florins to be repaid in a year, besides six or seven good ships of war to co-operate with the fleets of England and France upon the coasts of Normandy. And the States were even better than their word.

Before the end of autumn of the year 1591, Henry had laid siege to Rouen, then the second city of the kingdom. To leave much longer so important a place—dominating, as it did, not only Normandy but a principal portion of the maritime borders of France—under the control of the League and of Spain was likely to be fatal to Henry's success. It was perfectly sound in Queen Elizabeth to insist as she did, with more than her usual imperiousness towards her excellent brother, that he should lose no more time before reducing that city. It was obvious that Rouen in the hands of her arch-enemy was a perpetual menace to the safety of her own kingdom. It was therefore with correct judgment, as well as with that high-flown gallantry so dear to the heart of Elizabeth, that her royal champion and devoted slave assured her of his determination no longer to defer obeying her commands in this respect.

The queen had repeatedly warned him of the necessity of defending the maritime frontier of his kingdom, and she was not sparing of her reproaches that the large sums which she expended in his cause had been often ill bestowed. Her criticisms on what she considered his military mistakes were not few, her threats to withdraw her subsidies frequent. "Owning neither the East nor the West Indies," she said, "we are unable to supply the constant demands upon us; and although we have the reputation of being a good housewife, it does not follow that we can be a housewife for all the world." She was persistently warning the king of an attack upon Dieppe, and rebuking him for occupying himself with petty enterprises to the neglect of vital points. She expressed her surprise that after the departure of Parma, he had not driven the Spaniards out of Brittany, without allowing them to fortify themselves in that country. "I am astonished," she said to him, "that your eyes are so blinded as not to see this danger. Remember, my dear brother," she frankly added, "that it is not only France that I am aiding, nor are my own natural realms of little consequence to me. Believe me, if I see that you have no more regard to the ports and maritime places nearest to us, it will be necessary that my prayers should serve you in place of any other assistance, because it does not please me to send my people to the shambles where they may perish before having rendered you any assistance. I am sure the Spaniards will soon besiege Dieppe. Beware of it, and excuse my bluntness, for if in the beginning you had taken the maritime forts, which are the very gates of your kingdom, Paris would not have been so well furnished, and other places nearer the heart of the kingdom would not have received so much foreign assistance, without which the others would have soon been vanquished. Pardon my simplicity as belonging to my own sex wishing to give a lesson to one who knows better, but my experience in government makes me a little obstinate in believing that I am not ignorant of that which belongs to a king, and I persuade myself that in following my advice you will not fail to conquer your assailants."

Before the end of the year Henry had obtained control of the Seine, both above and below the city, holding Pont de l'Arche on the north—where was the last bridge across the river; that of Rouen, built by the English when they governed Normandy, being now in ruins—and Caudebec on the south in an iron grasp. Several war-vessels sent by the Hollanders, according to the agreement with Buzanval, cruised in the north of the river below Caudebec, and rendered much service to the king in cutting off supplies from the beleaguered place, while the investing army of Henry, numbering twenty-five thousand foot—inclusive of the English contingent, and three thousand Netherlanders—and ten thousand cavalry, nearly all French, was fast reducing the place to extremities.

Parma, as usual, in obedience to his master's orders, but entirely against his own judgment, had again left the rising young general of the Netherlands to proceed from one triumph to another, while he transferred beyond the borders of that land which it was his first business to protect, the whole weight of his military

genius and the better portion of his well disciplined forces.

Most bitterly and indignantly did he express himself, both at the outset and during the whole progress of the expedition, concerning the utter disproportions between the king's means and aims. The want of money was the cause of wholesale disease, desertion, mutiny, and death in his slender army.

Such great schemes as his master's required, as he perpetually urged, liberality of expenditure and measures of breadth. He protested that he was not to blame for the ruin likely to come upon the whole enterprise. He had besought, remonstrated, reasoned with the king in vain. He had seen his beard first grow, he said, in the king's service, and he had grown gray in that service, but rather than be kept longer in such a position, without money, men, or means to accomplish the great purposes on which he was sent, he protested that he would "abandon his office and retire into the woods to feed on roots." Repeatedly did he implore his master for a large and powerful army; for money and again money. The royal plans should be enforced adequately or abandoned entirely. To spend money in small sums, as heretofore, was only throwing it into the sea.

It was deep in the winter however before he could fairly come to the rescue of the besieged city. Towards the end of January, 1592, he moved out of Hainault, and once more made his junction at Guise with the Duke of Mayenne. At a review of his forces on 16th January, 1592, Alexander found himself at the head of thirteen thousand five hundred and sixteen infantry and four thousand and sixty-one cavalry. The Duke of Mayenne's army, for payment of which that personage received from Philip 100,000 dollars a month, besides 10,000 dollars a month for his own pocket, ought to have numbered ten thousand foot and three thousand horse, according to contract, but was in reality much less.

The Duke of Montemarciano, nephew of Gregory XIV., had brought two thousand Swiss, furnished by the pontiff to the cause of the League, and the Duke of Lorraine had sent his kinsmen, the Counts Chaligny and Vaudemont, with a force of seven hundred lancers and cuirassiers.

The town of Fere was assigned in pledge to Farnese to hold as a convenient: mustering-place and station in proximity to his own borders, and, as usual, the chief command over the united armies was placed in his hands. These arrangements concluded, the allies moved slowly forward much in the same order as in the previous year. The young Duke of Guise, who had just made his escape from the prison of Tours, where he had been held in durance since the famous assassination of his father and uncle, and had now come to join his uncle Mayenne, led the vanguard. Ranuccio, son of the duke, rode also in the advance, while two experienced commanders, Vitry and De la Chatre, as well as the famous Marquis del Vasto, formerly general of cavalry in the Netherlands, who had been transferred to Italy but was now serving in the League's army as a volunteer, were associated with the young princes. Parma, Mayenne, and Montemarciano rode in the battalia, the rear being under command of the Duke of Aumale and the Count Chaligny. Wings of cavalry protected the long trains of wagons which were arranged on each flank of the invading army. The march was very slow, a Farnese's uniform practice to guard himself scrupulously against any possibility of surprise and to entrench himself thoroughly at nightfall.

By the middle of February they reached the vicinity of Aumale in Picardy. Meantime Henry, on the news of the advance of the relieving army, had again the same problem to solve that had been presented to him before Paris in the summer of 1590. Should he continue in the trenches, pressing more and more closely the city already reduced to great straits? Should he take the open field against the invaders and once more attempt to crush the League and its most redoubtable commander in a general engagement? Biron strenuously advised the continuance of the siege. Turenne, now, through his recent marriage with the heiress, called Duc de Bouillon, great head of the Huguenot party in France, counselled as warmly the open attack. Henry, hesitating more than was customary with him, at last decided on a middle course. The resolution did not seem a very wise one, but the king, who had been so signally out-generalled in the preceding campaign by the great Italian, was anxious to avoid his former errors, and might perhaps fall into as great ones by attempting two inconsistent lines of action. Leaving Biron in command of the infantry and a portion of the horse to continue the siege, he took the field himself with the greater part of the cavalry, intending to intercept and harass the enemy and to prevent his manifest purpose of throwing reinforcements and supplies into the invested city.

Proceeding to Neufchatel and Aumale, he soon found himself in the neighbourhood of the Leaguers, and it was not long before skirmishing began. At this time, on a memorable occasion, Henry, forgetting as usual, in his eagerness for the joys of the combat that he was not a young captain of cavalry with his spurs to win by dashing into every mad adventure that might present itself, but a king fighting for his crown, with the welfare of a whole people depending on his fortunes, thought proper to place himself at the head of a handful of troopers to reconnoitre in person the camp of the Leaguers. Starting with five hundred horse, and ordering Lavardin and Givry to follow with a larger body, while the Dukes of Nevers and Longueville were to move out, should it prove necessary, in force, the king rode forth as merrily as to a hunting party, drove in the scouts and pickets of the confederated armies, and, advancing still farther in his investigations, soon found himself attacked by a cavalry force of the enemy much superior to his own. A skirmish began, and it was necessary for the little troop to beat a hasty retreat, fighting as it ran. It was not long before Henry was recognised by the enemy, and the chase became all the more lively; George Basti, the famous Albanian trooper, commanding the force which pressed most closely upon the king. The news spread to the camp of the League that the Bearnese was the leader of the skirmishers. Mayenne believed it, and urged the instant advance of the flying squadron and of the whole vanguard. Farnese refused. It was impossible that the king should be there, he said, doing picket duty at the head of a company. It was a clumsy ambush to bring on a general engagement in the open field, and he was not to be drawn out of his trenches into a trap by such a shallow device. A French captain, who by command of Henry had purposely allowed himself to be taken, informed his captors that the skirmishers were in reality supported by a heavy force of infantry. This suggestion of the ready Bearnese confirmed the doubts of Alexander. Meantime the skirmishing steeplechase went on before his eyes. The king dashing down a hill received an arquebus shot in his side, but still rode for his life. Lavardin and Givry came to the rescue, but a panic seized their followers as the rumour flew that the king was mortally wounded—was already dead—so that they hardly brought a sufficient force to beat back the

Leaguers. Givry's horse was soon killed under him, and his own thigh crushed; Lavardin was himself dangerously wounded. The king was more hard pressed than ever, men were falling on every side of him, when four hundred French dragoons—as a kind of musketeers who rode on hacks to the scene of action but did their work on foot, were called at that day—now dismounted and threw themselves between Henry and his pursuers. Nearly every man of them laid down his life, but they saved the king's. Their vigorous hand to hand fighting kept off the assailants until Nevers and Longueville received the king at the gates of Aumale with a force before which the Leaguers were fain to retreat as rapidly as they had come.

In this remarkable skirmish of Aumale the opposite qualities of Alexander and of Henry were signally illustrated. The king, by his constitutional temerity, by his almost puerile love of confronting danger for the danger's sake, was on the verge of sacrificing himself with all the hopes of his house and of the nobler portion of his people for an absolute nothing; while the duke, out of his superabundant caution, peremptorily refused to stretch out his hand and seize the person of his great enemy when directly within his, grasp. Dead or alive, the Bearnese was unquestionably on that day in the power of Farnese, and with him the whole issue of the campaign and of the war. Never were the narrow limits that separate valour on the one side and discretion on the other from unpardonable lunacy more nearly effaced than on that occasion.'

When would such an opportunity occur again?

The king's wound proved not very dangerous, although for many days troublesome, and it required, on account of his general state of health, a thorough cure. Meantime the royalists fell back from Aumale and Neufchatel, both of which places were at once occupied by the Leaguers: In pursuance of his original plan, the Duke of Parma advanced with his customary steadiness and deliberation towards Rouen. It was his intention to assault the king's army in its entrenchments in combination with a determined sortie to be made by the besieged garrison. His preparations for the attack were ready on the 26th February, when he suddenly received a communication from De Villars, who had thus far most ably and gallantly conducted the defence of the place, informing him that it was no longer necessary to make a general attack. On the day before he had made a sally from the four gates of the city, had fallen upon the besiegers in great force, had wounded Biron and killed six hundred of his soldiers, had spiked several pieces of artillery and captured others which he had successfully brought into the town, and had in short so damaged the enemy's works and disconcerted him in all his plans, that he was confident of holding the place longer than the king could afford to stay in front of him. All he wished was a moderate reinforcement of men and munitions. Farnese by no means sympathized with the confident tone of Villars nor approved of his proposition. He had come to relieve Rouen and to raise the siege, and he preferred to do his work thoroughly. Mayenne was however most heartily in favour of taking the advice of Villars. He urged that it was difficult for the Bearnese to keep an army long in the field, still more so in the trenches. Let them provide for the immediate wants of the city; then the usual process of decomposition would soon be witnessed in the ill-paid, ill-fed, desultory forces of the heretic pretender.

Alexander deferred to the wishes of Mayenne, although against his better judgment. Eight hundred infantry, were successfully sent into Rouen. The army of the League then countermarched into Picardy near the confines of Artois.

They were closely followed by Henry at the head of his cavalry, and lively skirmishes were of frequent occurrence. In a military point of view none of these affairs were of consequence, but there was one which partook at once of the comic and the pathetic. For it chanced that in a cavalry action of more than common vivacity the Count Chaligny found himself engaged in a hand to hand conflict with a very dashing swordsman, who, after dealing and receiving many severe blows, at last succeeded in disarming the count and taking him prisoner. It was the fortune of war, and, but a few days before, might have been the fate of the great Henry himself. But Chaligny's mortification at his captivity became intense when he discovered that the knight to whom he had surrendered was no other than the king's jester. That he, a chieftain of the Holy League, the long-descended scion of the illustrious house of Lorraine, brother of the great Duke of Mercoeur, should become the captive of a Huguenot buffoon seemed the most stinging jest yet perpetrated since fools had come in fashion. The famous Chicot—who was as fond of a battle as of a gibe, and who was almost as reckless a rider as his master—proved on this occasion that the cap and bells could cover as much magnanimity as did the most chivalrous crest. Although desperately wounded in the struggle which had resulted in his triumph, he generously granted to the Count his freedom without ransom. The proud Lorrainer returned to his Leaguers and the poor fool died afterwards of his wounds.

The army of the allies moved through Picardy towards the confines of Artois, and sat down leisurely to beleaguer Rue, a low-lying place on the banks and near the mouth of the Somme, the only town in the province which still held for the king. It was sufficiently fortified to withstand a good deal of battering, and it certainly seemed mere trifling for the great Duke of Parma to leave the Netherlands in such confusion, with young Maurice of Nassau carrying everything before him, and to come all the way into Normandy in order, with the united armies of Spain and the League, to besiege the insignificant town of Rue.

And this was the opinion of Farnese, but he had chosen throughout the campaign to show great deference to the judgment of Mayenne. Meantime the month of March wore away, and what had been predicted came to pass. Henry's forces dwindled away as usual. His cavaliers rode off to forage for themselves, when their battles were denied them, and the king was now at the head of not more than sixteen thousand foot and five thousand horse. On the other hand the Leaguers' army had been melting quite as rapidly. With the death of Pope Sfondrato, his nephew Montemarciano had disappeared with his two thousand Swiss; while the French cavalry and infantry, ill-fed and uncomfortable, were diminishing daily. Especially the Walloons, Flemings, and other Netherlanders of Parma's army, took advantage of their proximity to the borders and escaped in large numbers to their own homes. It was but meagre and profitless campaigning on both sides during those wretched months of winter and early spring, although there was again an opportunity for Sir Roger Williams, at the head of two hundred musketeers and one hundred and fifty pikemen, to make one of his brilliant skirmishes under the eye of the Bearnese. Surprised and without armour, he jumped, in doublet and hose, on horseback, and led his men merrily against five squadrons of Spanish and Italian horse, and six companies of Spanish infantry; singled out and unhorsed the leader of the Spanish troopers, and nearly cut off the head, of the famous Albanian chief George Basti with one swinging blow of his sword. Then, being reinforced by some

other English companies, he succeeded in driving the whole body of Italians and Spaniards, with great loss, quite into their entrenchments. "The king doth commend him very highly," said Umton, "and doth more than wonder at the valour of our nation. I never heard him give more honour to any service nor to any man than he doth to Sir Roger Williams and the rest, whom he held as lost men, and for which he has caused public thanks to be given to God."

At last Villars, who had so peremptorily rejected assistance at the end of February, sent to say that if he were not relieved by the middle of April he should be obliged to surrender the city. If the siege were not raised by the twentieth of the month he informed Parma, to his profound astonishment, that Rouen would be in Henry's hands.

In effecting this result the strict blockade maintained by the Dutch squadron at the mouth of the river, and the resolute manner in which those cruisers dashed at every vessel attempting to bring relief to Rouen, were mainly instrumental. As usual with the stern Hollanders and Zeelanders when engaged at sea with the Spaniards, it was war to the knife. Early in April twelve large vessels, well armed and manned, attempted to break the blockade. A combat ensued, at the end of which eight of the Spanish ships were captured, two were sunk, and two were set on fire in token of victory, every man on board of all being killed and thrown into the sea. Queen Elizabeth herself gave the first news of this achievement to the Dutch envoy in London. "And in truth," said he, "her Majesty expressed herself, in communicating these tidings, with such affection and extravagant joy to the glory and honour of our nation and men-of-war's-men, that it wonderfully delighted me, and did me good into my very heart to hear it from her."

Instantly Farnese set himself to the work which, had he followed his own judgment, would already have been accomplished. Henry with his cavalry had established himself at Dieppe and Arques, within a distance of five or six leagues from the infantry engaged in the siege of Rouen. Alexander saw the profit to be derived from the separation between the different portions of the enemy's forces, and marched straight upon the enemy's entrenchments. He knew the disadvantage of assailing a strongly fortified camp, but believed that by a well-concerted, simultaneous assault by Villars from within and the Leaguers from without, the king's forces would be compelled to raise the siege or be cut up in their trenches.

But Henry did not wait for the attack. He had changed his plan, and, for once in his life, substituted extreme caution for his constitutional temerity. Neither awaiting the assault upon his entrenchments nor seeking his enemy in the open field, he ordered the whole camp to be broken up, and on the 20th of April raised the siege.

Farnese marched into Rouen, where the Leaguers were received with tumultuous joy, and this city, most important for the purposes of the League and for Philip's ulterior designs, was thus wrested from the grasp just closing upon it. Henry's main army now concentrated itself in the neighbourhood of Dieppe, but the cavalry under his immediate superintendence continued to harass the Leaguers. It was now determined to lay siege to Caudebec, on the right bank of the Seine, three leagues below Rouen; the possession of this place by the enemy being a constant. danger and difficulty to Rouen, whose supplies by the Seine were thus cut off.

Alexander, as usual, superintended the planting of the batteries against the place. He had been suffering during the whole campaign with those dropsical ailments which were making life a torture to him; yet his indomitable spirit rose superior to his physical disorders, and he wrought all day long on foot or on horseback, when he seemed only fit to be placed on his bed as a rapid passage to his grave. On this occasion, in company with the Italian engineer Properzio, he had been for some time examining with critical nicety the preliminaries, for the siege, when it was suddenly observed by those around him that he was growing pale. It then appeared that he had received a musket-ball between the wrist and the elbow, and had been bleeding profusely; but had not indicated by a word or the movement of a muscle that he had been wounded, so intent was he upon carrying out the immediate task to which he had set himself. It was indispensable, however, that he should now take to his couch. The wound was not trifling, and to one in his damaged and dropsical condition it was dangerous. Fever set in, with symptoms of gangrene, and it became necessary to entrust the command of the League to Mayenne. But it was hardly concealed from Parma that the duke was playing a double game. Prince Ranuccio, according to his father's express wish, was placed provisionally at the head of the Flemish forces. This was conceded; however, with much heart-burning, and with consequences easily to be imagined.

Meantime Caudebec fell at once. Henry did nothing to relieve it, and the place could offer but slight resistance to the force arrayed against it. The bulk of the king's army was in the neighbourhood of Dieppe, where they had been recently strengthened by twenty companies of Netherlanders and Scotchmen brought by Count Philip Nassau. The League's headquarters were in the village of Yvetot, capital of the realm of the whimsical little potentate so long renowned under that name.

The king, in pursuance of the plan he had marked out for himself, restrained his skirmishing more than was his wont. Nevertheless he lay close to Yvetot. His cavalry, swelling and falling as usual like an Alpine torrent, had now filled up its old channels again, for once more the mountain chivalry had poured themselves around their king. With ten thousand horsemen he was now pressing the Leaguers, from time to time, very hard, and on one occasion the skirmishing became so close and so lively that a general engagement seemed imminent. Young Ranuccio had a horse shot under him, and his father—suffering as he was—had himself dragged out of bed and brought on a litter into the field, where he was set on horseback, trampling on wounds and disease, and, as it were, on death itself, that he might by his own unsurpassed keenness of eye and quickness of resource protect the army which had been entrusted to his care. The action continued all day; young Bentivoglio, nephew of the famous cardinal, historian and diplomatist, receiving a bad wound in the leg, as he fought gallantly at the side of Ranuccio. Carlo Coloma also distinguished himself in the engagement. Night separated the combatants before either side had gained a manifest advantage, and on the morrow it seemed for the interest of neither to resume the struggle.

The field where this campaign was to be fought was a narrow peninsula enclosed between the sea and the rivers Seine and Dieppe. In this peninsula, called the Land of Caux, it was Henry's intention to shut up his enemy. Farnese had finished the work that he had been sent to do, and was anxious, as Henry was aware, to return to the Netherlands. Rouen was relieved, Caudebec had fallen. There was not food or forage enough in

the little peninsula to feed both the city and the whole army of the League. Shut up in this narrow area, Alexander must starve or surrender. His only egress was into Picardy and so home to Artois, through the base of the isosceles triangle between the two rivers and on the borders of Picardy. On this base Henry had posted his whole army. Should Farnese assail him, thus provided with a strong position and superiority of force, defeat was certain. Should he remain where he was, he must inevitably starve. He had no communications with the outside. The Hollanders lay with their ships below Caudebec, blockading the river's mouth and the coast. His only chance of extrication lay across the Seine. But Alexander was neither a bird nor a fish, and it was necessary, so Henry thought, to be either the one or the other to cross that broad, deep, and rapid river, where there were no bridges, and where the constant ebb and flow of the tide made transportation almost impossible in face of a powerful army in rear and flank. Farnese's situation seemed, desperate; while the shrewd Bearnese sat smiling serenely, carefully watching at the mouth of the trap into which he had at last inveigled his mighty adversary. Secure of his triumph, he seemed to have changed his nature, and to have become as sedate and wary as, by habit, he was impetuous and hot.

And in truth Farnese found himself in very narrow quarters. There was no hay for his horses, no bread for his men. A penny loaf was sold for two shillings. A jug of water was worth a crown. As for meat or wine, they were hardly to be dreamed of. His men were becoming furious at their position. They had enlisted to fight, not to starve, and they murmured that it was better for an army to fall with weapons in its hands than to drop to pieces hourly with the enemy looking on and enjoying their agony.

It was obvious to Farnese that there were but two ways out of his dilemma. He might throw himself upon Henry—strongly entrenched as he was, and with much superior forces to his own, upon ground deliberately chosen for himself—defeat him utterly, and march over him back to the Netherlands. This would be an agreeable result; but the undertaking seemed difficult, to say the least. Or he might throw his army across the Seine and make his escape through the isle of France and Southern Picardy back to the so-called obedient provinces. But it seemed, hopeless without bridges or pontoons to attempt the passage of the Seine.

There was; however, no time left, for hesitation. Secretly he took his resolution and communicated it in strict confidence to Mayenne, to Ranuccio, and to one or two other chiefs. He came to Caudebec, and there, close to the margin of the river, he threw up a redoubt. On the opposite bank, he constructed another. On both he planted artillery, placing a force of eight hundred Netherlanders under Count Bossu in the one, and an equal number of the same nation, Walloons chiefly, under Barlotte in the other. He collected all the vessels, flatboats,—wherries,—and rafts that could be found or put together at Rouen, and then under cover of his forts he transported all the Flemish infantry, and the Spanish, French, and Italian cavalry, during the night of 22nd May to the 22 May, opposite bank of the Seine. Next morning he sent up all the artillery together with the Flemish cavalry to Rouen, where, making what use he could by temporary contrivances of the broken arches of the broken bridge, in order to shorten the distance from shore to shore, he managed to convey his whole army with all its trains across the river.

A force was left behind, up to the last moment, to engage in the customary skirmishes, and to display themselves as largely as possible for the purpose of imposing upon the enemy. The young Prince of Parma had command of this rearguard. The device was perfectly successful. The news of the movement was not brought to the ears of Henry until after it had been accomplished. When the king reached the shore of the Seine, he saw to his infinite chagrin and indignation that the last stragglers of the army, including the garrison of the fort on the right bank, were just ferrying themselves across under command of Ranuccio.

Furious with disappointment, he brought some pieces of artillery to bear upon the triumphant fugitives. Not a shot told, and the Leaguers had the satisfaction of making a bonfire in the king's face of the boats which had brought them over. Then, taking up their line of march rapidly inland, they placed themselves completely out of the reach of the Huguenot guns.

Henry had a bridge at Pont de l'Arche, and his first impulse was to pursue with his cavalry, but it was obvious that his infantry could never march by so circuitous a route fast enough to come up with the enemy, who had already so prodigious a stride in advance.

There was no need to disguise it to himself. Henry saw himself for the second time out-generalled by the consummate Farnese. The trap was broken, the game had given him the slip. The manner in which the duke had thus extricated himself from a profound dilemma; in which his fortunes seemed hopelessly sunk, has usually been considered one of the most extraordinary exploits of his life.

Precisely at this time, too, ill news reached Henry from Brittany and the neighbouring country. The Princes Conti and Dombes had been obliged, on the 13th May, 1592, to raise the siege of Craon, in consequence of the advance of the Duke of Mercoeur, with a force of seven thousand men.

They numbered, including lanzknechts and the English contingent, about half as many, and before they could effect their retreat, were attacked by Mercoeur, and utterly routed. The English, who alone stood to their colours, were nearly all cut to pieces. The rest made a disorderly retreat, but were ultimately, with few exceptions, captured or slain. The duke, following up his victory, seized Chateau Gontier and La Val, important crossing places on the river Mayenne, and laid siege to Mayenne, capital city of that region. The panic, spreading through Brittany and Maine, threatened the king's cause there with complete overthrow, hampered his operations in Normandy, and vastly encouraged the Leaguers. It became necessary for Henry to renounce his designs upon Rouen, and the pursuit of Parma, and to retire to Vernon, there to occupy himself with plans for the relief of Brittany. In vain had the Earl of Essex, whose brother had already been killed in the campaign, manifested such headlong gallantry in that country as to call forth the sharpest rebukes from the admiring but anxious Elizabeth. The handful of brave Englishmen who had been withdrawn from the Netherlands, much to the dissatisfaction of the States-General, in order to defend the coasts of Brittany, would have been better employed under Maurice of Nassau. So soon as the heavy news reached the king, the faithful Umton was sent for. "He imparted the same unto me," said the envoy, "with extraordinary passion and discontent. He discoursed at large of his miserable estate, of the factions of his servants, and of their ill-dispositions, and then required my opinion touching his course for Brittan, as also what further aid he might expect from her Majesty; alleging that unless he were presently strengthened by England it was impossible for him, longer to resist the greatness of the King of Spain, who assailed his country by Brittany,

Languedoc, the Low Countries by the Duke of Saxony and the Duke of Lorraine, and so ended his speech passionately." Thus adjured, Sir Henry spoke to the king firmly but courteously, reminding him how, contrary to English advice, he had followed other counsellors to the neglect of Brittany, and had broken his promises to the queen. He concluded by urging him to advance into that country in person, but did not pledge himself on behalf of her Majesty to any further assistance. "To this," said Umton, "the king gave a willing ear, and replied, with many thanks, and without disallowing of anything that I alleged, yielding many excuses of his want of means, not of disposition, to provide a remedy, not forgetting to acknowledge her Majesty's care of him and his country, and especially of Brittany, excusing much the bad disposition of his counsellors, and inclining much to my motion to go in person thither, especially because he might thereby give her Majesty better satisfaction; . . . . and protesting that he would either immediately himself make war there in those parts or send an army thither. I do not doubt," added the ambassador, "but with good handling her Majesty may now obtain any reasonable matter for the conservation of Brittany, as also for a place of retreat for the English, and I urge continually the yielding of Brest into her Majesty's hands, whereunto I find the king well inclined, if he might bring it to pass."

Alexander passed a few days in Paris, where he was welcomed with much cordiality, recruiting his army for a brief period in the land of Brie, and then—broken in health but entirely successful—he dragged himself once more to Spa to drink the waters. He left an auxiliary force with Mayenne, and promised—infinitely against his own wishes—to obey his master's commands and return again before the winter to do the League's work.

And thus Alexander had again solved a difficult problem. He had saved for his master and for the League the second city of France and the whole coast of Normandy. Rouen had been relieved in masterly manner even as Paris had been succoured the year before. He had done this, although opposed by the sleepless energy and the exuberant valour of the quick-witted Navarre, and although encumbered by the assistance of the ponderous Duke of Mayenne. His military reputation, through these two famous reliefs and retreats, grew greater than ever.

No commander of the age was thought capable of doing what he had thus done. Yet, after all, what had he accomplished? Did he not feel in his heart of hearts that he was but a strong and most skilful swimmer struggling for a little while against an ocean-tide which was steadily sweeping him and his master and all their fortunes far out into the infinite depths?

Something of this breathed ever in his most secret utterances. But, so long as life was in him, his sword and his genius were at the disposal of his sovereign, to carry out a series of schemes as futile as they were nefarious.

For us, looking back upon the Past, which was then the Future, it is easy to see how remorselessly the great current of events was washing away the system and the personages seeking to resist its power and to oppose the great moral principles by which human affairs in the long run are invariably governed. Spain and Rome were endeavouring to obliterate the landmarks of race, nationality, historical institutions, and the tendencies of awakened popular conscience, throughout Christendom, and to substitute for them a dead level of conformity to one regal and sacerdotal despotism.

England, Holland, the Navarre party in France, and a considerable part of Germany were contending for national unity and independence, for vested and recorded rights. Much farther than they themselves or their chieftains dreamed those millions of men were fighting for a system of temperate human freedom; for that emancipation under just laws from arbitrary human control, which is the right—however frequently trampled upon—of all classes, conditions, and races of men; and for which it is the instinct of the human race to continue to struggle under every disadvantage, and often against all hope, throughout the ages, so long as the very principle of humanity shall not be extinguished in those who have been created after their Maker's image.

It may safely be doubted whether the great Queen, the Bearnese, Alexander Farnese, or his master, with many of their respective adherents, differed very essentially from each other in their notions of the right divine and the right of the people. But history has shown us which of them best understood the spirit of the age, and had the keenest instinct to keep themselves in the advance by moving fastest in the direction whither it was marshalling all men. There were many, earnest, hard-toiling men in those days, men who believed in the work to which they devoted their lives. Perhaps, too, the devil-worshippers did their master's work as strenuously and heartily as any, and got fame and pelf for their pains. Fortunately, a good portion of what they so laboriously wrought for has vanished into air; while humanity has at least gained something from those who deliberately or instinctively conformed themselves to her eternal laws.

ETEXT EDITOR'S BOOKMARKS:

Anatomical study of what has ceased to exist
Artillery
Bomb-shells were not often used although known for a century
Court fatigue, to scorn pleasure
For us, looking back upon the Past, which was then the Future
Hardly an inch of French soil that had not two possessors
Holy institution called the Inquisition
Inevitable fate of talking castles and listening ladies
Life of nations and which we call the Past
Often necessary to be blind and deaf
Picturesqueness of crime
Royal plans should be enforced adequately or abandoned entirely
Toil and sacrifices of those who have preceded us
Use of the spade
Utter disproportions between the king's means and aims
Valour on the one side and discretion on the other
Walk up and down the earth and destroy his fellow-creatures
We have the reputation of being a good housewife
Weapons

CHAPTER XXVI. 1592

Return of Prince Maurice to the siege of Steenwyck—Capitulation of the besieged—Effects of the introduction of mining operations—Maurice besieges Coeworden—Verdugo attempts to relieve the city, but fails—The city capitulates, and Prince Maurice retreats into winter quarters.

While Farnese had thus been strengthening the bulwarks of Philip's universal monarchy in that portion of his proposed French dominions which looked towards England, there had been opportunity for Prince Maurice to make an assault upon the Frisian defences of this vast realm. It was difficult to make half Europe into one great Spanish fortification, guarding its every bastion and every point of the curtain, without far more extensive armaments than the "Great King," as the Leaguers proposed that Philip should entitle himself, had ever had at his disposal. It might be a colossal scheme to stretch the rod of empire over so large a portion of the earth, but the dwarfish attempts to carry the design into execution hardly reveal the hand of genius. It is astonishing to contemplate the meagre numbers and the slender funds with which this world-empire was to be asserted and maintained. The armies arrayed at any important point hardly exceeded a modern division or two; while the resources furnished for a year would hardly pay in later days for a few weeks' campaign.

When Alexander, the first commander of his time, moved out of Flanders into France with less than twenty thousand men, he left most vital portions of his master's hereditary dominions so utterly unprotected that it was possible to attack them with a handful of troops. The young disciple of Simon Stevinus now resumed that practical demonstration of his principles which had been in the previous year so well begun.

On the 28th May, 1592, Maurice, taking the field with six thousand foot and two thousand horse, came once more before Steenwyck. It will be remembered that he had been obliged to relinquish the siege of this place in order to confront the Duke of Parma in July, 1591, at Nymegen.

The city—very important from its position, being the key to the province of Drenthe as well as one of the safeguards of Friesland—had been besieged in vain by Count Renneberg after his treasonable surrender of Groningen, of which he was governor, to the Spaniards, but had been subsequently surprised by Tassis. Since that time it had held for the king. Its fortifications were strong, and of the best description known at that day. Its regular garrison was sixteen companies of foot and some cavalry under Antoine de Quocqueville, military governor. Besides these troops were twelve hundred Walloon infantry, commanded by Lewis, youngest Count van den Berg, a brave lad of eighteen years, with whom were the lord of Waterdyck and other Netherland nobles.

To the military student the siege may possess importance as marking a transitional epoch in the history of the beleaguering science. To the general reader, as in most of the exploits of the young Poliorcetes, its details have but slender interest. Perhaps it was here that the spade first vindicated its dignity, and entitled itself to be classed as a military weapon of value along with pike and arquebus. It was here that the soldiers of Maurice, burrowing in the ground at ten stuyvers a day, were jeered at by the enemy from the battlements as boors and ditchers, who had forfeited their right to be considered soldiers—but jeered at for the last time.

From 30th May to 9th June the prince was occupied in throwing up earthworks on the low grounds in order to bring his guns into position. On the 13th June he began to batter with forty-five pieces, but effected little more than to demolish some of the breast-works. He threw hot shot into the town very diligently, too, but did small damage. The cannonading went on for nearly a week, but the practice was so very indifferent—notwithstanding the protection of the blessed Barbara and the tuition of the busmasters—that the besieged began to amuse themselves with these empty and monotonous salvos of the honourable Artillery Guild. When all this blazing and thundering had led to no better result than to convert a hundred thousand good Flemish florins into noise and smoke, the thrifty Netherlanders on both sides of the walls began to disparage the young general's reputation. After all, they said, the Spaniards were right when they called artillery mere 'espanta-vellacos' or scare-cowards. This burrowing and bellowing must at last give place to the old-fashioned push of pike, and then it would be seen who the soldiers were. Observations like these were freely made under a flag of truce; for on the 19th June—notwithstanding their contempt for the 'espanta-vellacos'—the besieged had sent out a deputation to treat for an honourable surrender. Maurice entertained the negotiators hospitably in his own tent, but the terms suggested to him were inadmissible. Nothing came of the conference therefore but mutual criticisms, friendly enough, although sufficiently caustic.

Maurice now ceased cannonading, and burrowed again for ten days without interruption. Four mines, leading to different points of the defences, were patiently constructed, and two large chambers at the terminations, neatly finished off and filled respectively with five thousand and twenty-five hundred pounds of powder, were at last established under two of the principal bastions.

During all this digging there had been a couple of sorties in which the besieged had inflicted great damage on their enemy, and got back into the town with a few prisoners, having lost but six of their own men. Sir Francis Vere had been severely wounded in the leg, so that he was obliged to keep his bed during the rest of the siege. Verdugo, too, had made a feeble attempt to reinforce the place with three hundred men, sixty or seventy of whom had entered, while the rest had been killed or captured. On such a small scale was Philip's world-empire contended for by his stadholder in Friesland; yet it was certainly not the fault of the stout old Portuguese. Verdugo would rather have sent thirty thousand men to save the front door of his great province than three hundred. But every available man—and few enough of them they were—had been sent out of the Netherlands, to defend the world-empire in its outposts of Normandy and Brittany.

This was Philip the Prudent's system for conquering the world, and men looked upon him as the consummation of kingcraft.

On the 3rd July Maurice ordered his whole force to be in readiness for the assault. The mines were then sprung.

The bastion of the east gate was blown to ruins. The mine under the Gast-Huys bulwark, burst outwardly, and buried alive many Hollanders standing ready for the assault. At this untoward accident Maurice hesitated to give the signal for storming the breach, but the panic within the town was so evident that Lewis William lost no time in seizing the overthrown eastern bulwark, from the ruins of which he looked over the whole city. The other broken bastion was likewise easily mastered, and the besieged, seeing the storm about to burst upon them with irresistible fury, sent a trumpet. Meantime Maurice, inspecting the effects of the explosion and preparing for the assault, had been shot through the left cheek. The wound was not dangerous, and the prince extracted the bullet with his own hand, but the change of half an inch would have made it fatal. He was not incapacitated—after his wound had been dressed, amidst the remonstrances of his friends for his temerity-from listening to the propositions of the city. They were refused, for the prince was sure of having his town on his own terms.

Next day he permitted the garrison to depart; the officers and soldiers promising not to serve the King of Spain on the Netherland side of the Rhine for six months. They were to take their baggage, but to leave arms, flags, munitions, and provisions. Both Maurice and Lewis William were for insisting on sterner conditions, but the States' deputies and members of the council who were present, as usual, in camp urged the building of the golden bridge. After all, a fortified city, the second in importance after Groningen of all those regions, was the real prize contended for. The garrison was meagre and much reduced during the siege. The fortifications, of masonry and earthwork combined, were nearly as strong as ever. Saint Barbara had done them but little damage, but the town itself was in a sorry plight. Churches and houses were nearly all shot to pieces, and the inhabitants had long been dwelling in the cellars. Two hundred of the garrison remained, severely wounded, in the town; three hundred and fifty had been killed, among others the young cousin of the Nassaus, Count Lewis van den Berg. The remainder of the royalists marched out, and were treated with courtesy by Maurice, who gave them an escort, permitting the soldiers to retain their side-arms, and furnishing horses to the governor.

In the besieging army five or six hundred had been killed and many wounded, but not in numbers bearing the same proportion to the slain as in modern battles.

The siege had lasted forty-four days. When it was over, and men came out from the town to examine at leisure the prince's camp and his field of operations, they were astounded at the amount of labor performed in so short a time. The oldest campaigners confessed that they never before had understood what a siege really was, and they began to conceive a higher respect for the art of the engineer than they had ever done before. "Even those who were wont to rail at science and labour," said one who was present in the camp of Maurice, "declared that the siege would have been a far more arduous undertaking had it not been for those two engineers, Joost Matthes of Alost, and Jacob Kemp of Gorcum. It is high time to take from soldiers the false notion that it is shameful to work with the spade; an error which was long prevalent among the Netherlanders, and still prevails among the French, to the great detriment of the king's affairs, as may be seen in his sieges."

Certainly the result of Henry's recent campaign before Rouen had proved sufficiently how much better it would have been for him had there been some Dutch Joosts and Jacobs with their picks and shovels in his army at that critical period. They might perhaps have baffled Parma as they had done Verdugo.

Without letting the grass grow under his feet, Maurice now led his army from Steenwyck to Zwol and arrived on the 26th July before Coeworden.

This place, very strong by art and still stronger by-nature, was the other key to all north Netherland—Friesland, Groningen, and Drenthe. Should it fall into the hands of the republic it would be impossible for the Spaniards to retain much longer the rich and important capital of all that country, the city of Groningen. Coeworden lay between two vast morasses, one of which—the Bourtange swamp—extended some thirty miles to the bay of the Dollart; while the other spread nearly as far in a westerly direction to the Zuyder Zee. Thus these two great marshes were a frame—an almost impassable barrier—by which the northern third of the whole territory of the republic was encircled and defended. Throughout this great morass there was not a hand-breadth of solid ground—not a resting-place for a human foot, save the road which led through Coeworden. This passage lay upon a natural deposit of hard, dry sand, interposed as if by a caprice of nature between the two swamps; and was about half a mile in width.

The town itself was well fortified, and Verdugo had been recently strengthening the position with additional earthworks. A thousand veterans formed the garrison under command of another Van den Berg, the Count Frederic. It was the fate of these sister's-children of the great founder of the republic to serve the cause of foreign despotism with remarkable tenacity against their own countrymen, and against their nearest blood relations. On many conspicuous occasions they were almost as useful to Spain and the Inquisition as the son and nearly all the other kinsmen of William the Silent had rendered themselves to the cause of Holland and of freedom.

Having thoroughly entrenched his camp before Coeworden and begun the regular approaches, Maurice left his cousin Lewis William to superintend the siege operations for the moment, and advanced towards Ootmarsum, a frontier town which might give him trouble if in the hands of a relieving force. The place fell at once, with the loss of but one life to the States army, but that a very valuable one; General de Famars, one of the original signers of the famous Compromise; and a most distinguished soldier of the republic, having been killed before the gates.

On the 31st July, Maurice returned to his entrenchments. The enemy professed unbounded confidence; Van den Berg not doubting that he should be relieved by Verdugo, and Verdugo being sure that Van den Berg would need no relief. The Portuguese veteran indeed was inclined to wonder at Maurice's presumption in attacking so impregnable a fortress. "If Coeworden does not hold," said he, "there is no place in the world that can hold."

Count Peter Ernest, was still acting as governor-general for Alexander Farnese, on returning from his

second French campaign, had again betaken himself, shattered and melancholy, to the waters of Spa, leaving the responsibility for Netherland affairs upon the German octogenarian. To him; and to the nonagenarian Mondragon at Antwerp, the veteran Verdugo now called loudly for aides against the youthful pedant, whom all men had been laughing at a twelvemonth or so before. The Macedonian phalanx, Simon Stevinus and delving Dutch boors—unworthy of the name of soldiers—seemed to be steadily digging the ground from under Philip's feet in his hereditary domains.

What would become of the world-empire, where was the great king—not of Spain alone, nor of France alone—but the great monarch of all Christendom, to plant his throne securely, if his Frisian strongholds, his most important northern outposts, were to fall before an almost beardless youth at the head of a handful of republican militia?

Verdugo did his best, but the best was little. The Spanish and Italian legions had been sent out of the Netherlands into France. Many had died there, many were in hospital after their return, nearly all the rest were mutinous for want of pay.

On the 16th August, Maurice formally summoned Coeworden to surrender. After the trumpeter had blown thrice; Count Van den Berg, forbidding all others, came alone upon the walls and demanded his message. "To claim this city in the name of Prince Maurice of Nassau and of the States-General," was the reply.

"Tell him first to beat down my walls as flat as the ditch," said Van den Berg, "and then to bring five or six storms. Six months after that I will think whether I will send a trumpet."

The prince proceeded steadily with his approaches, but he was infinitely chagrined by the departure out of his camp of Sir Francis Vere with his English contingent of three regiments, whom Queen Elizabeth had peremptorily ordered to the relief of King Henry in Brittany.

Nothing amazes the modern mind so much as the exquisite paucity of forces and of funds by which the world-empire was fought for and resisted in France, Holland, Spain, and England. The scenes of war were rapidly shifted—almost like the slides of a magic-lantern—from one country to another; the same conspicuous personages, almost the same individual armies, perpetually re-appearing in different places, as if a wild phantasmagoria were capriciously repeating itself to bewilder the imagination. Essex, and Vere, and Roger Williams, and Black Norris-Van der Does, and Admiral Nassau, the Meetkerks and Count Philip-Farnese and Mansfeld, George Basti, Arenberg, Berlaymont, La None and Teligny, Aquila and Coloma—were seen alternately fighting, retreating, triumphant, beleaguering, campaigning all along the great territory which extends from the Bay of Biscay to the crags of Brittany, and across the narrow seas to the bogs of Ireland, and thence through the plains of Picardy and Flanders to the swamps of Groningen and the frontiers of the Rhine.

This was the arena in which the great struggle was ever going on, but the champions were so few in number that their individual shapes become familiar to us like the figures of an oft-repeated pageant. And now the withdrawal of certain companies of infantry and squadrons of cavalry from the Spanish armies into France, had left obedient Netherland too weak to resist rebellious Netherland, while, on the other hand, the withdrawal of some twenty or thirty companies of English auxiliaries—most hard-fighting veterans it is true, but very few in number—was likely to imperil the enterprise of Maurice in Friesland.

The removal of these companies from the Low Countries to strengthen the Bearnese in the north of France, formed the subject of much bitter diplomatic conference between the States and England; the order having been communicated by the great queen herself in many a vehement epistle and caustic speech, enforced by big, manly oaths.

Verdugo, although confident in the strength of the place, had represented to Parma and to Mansfeld the immense importance of relieving Coeworden. The city, he said, was more valuable than all the towns taken the year before. All Friesland hung upon it, and it would be impossible to save Groningen should Coeworden fall.

Meantime Count Philip Nassau arrived from the campaign in France with his three regiments which he threw into garrison, and thus set free an equal number of fresh troops, which were forthwith sent to the camp of Maurice. The prince at the same time was made aware that Verdugo was about to receive important succour, and he was advised by the deputies of the States-General present at his headquarters to send out his German Reiters to intercept them. Maurice refused. Should his cavalry be defeated, he said, his whole army would be endangered. He determined to await within his fortified camp the attack of the relieving force.

During the whole month of August he proceeded steadily with his sapping and mining. By the middle of the month his lines had come through the ditch, which he drained of water into the counterscarp. By the beginning of September he had got beneath the principal fort, which, in the course of three or four days, he expected to blow into the air. The rainy weather had impeded his operations and the march of the relieving army. Nevertheless that army was at last approaching. The regiments of Mondragon, Charles Mansfeld, Gonzaga, Berlaymont, and Arenberg had been despatched to reinforce Verdugo. On the 23rd August, having crossed the Rhine at Rheinberg, they reached Olfen in the country of Benthem, ten miles from Coeworden. Here they threw up rockets and made other signals that relief was approaching the town. On the 3rd of September Verdugo, with the whole force at his disposal, amounting to four thousand foot and eighteen hundred horse, was at the village of Emblichen, within a league of the besieged city. That night a peasant was captured with letters from Verdugo to the Governor of Coeworden, giving information that he intended to make an assault on the besiegers on the night of 6th-7th September.

Thus forewarned, Maurice took the best precautions and calmly within his entrenchments awaited the onslaught. Punctual to his appointment, Verdugo with his whole force, yelling "Victoria! Victoria!" made a shirt-attack, or camiciata—the men wearing their shirts outside their armour to distinguish each other in the darkness—upon that portion of the camp which was under command of Hohenlo. They were met with determination and repulsed, after fighting all night, with a loss of three hundred killed and a proportionate number of wounded. The Netherlanders had but three killed and six wounded. Among the latter, however, was Lewis William, who received a musket-ball in the belly, but remained on the ground until the enemy had retreated. It was then discovered that his wound was not mortal—the intestines not having been injured—and

he was soon about his work again. Prince Maurice, too, as usual, incurred the remonstrances of the deputies and others for the reckless manner in which he exposed himself wherever the fire was hottest He resolutely refused, however, to permit his cavalry to follow the retreating enemy. His object was Coeworden—a prize more important than a new victory over the already defeated Spaniards would prove—and this object he kept ever before his eyes.

This was Verdugo's first and last attempt to relieve the city. He had seen enough of the young prince's tactics and had no further wish to break his teeth against those scientific entrenchments. The Spaniards at last, whether they wore their shirts inside or outside their doublets, could no longer handle the Dutchmen at pleasure. That people of butter, as the iron duke of Alva was fond of calling the Netherlanders, were grown harder with the pressure of a twenty-five years' war.

Five days after the sanguinary 'camiciata' the besieged offered to capitulate. The trumpet at which the proud Van den Berg had hinted for six months later arrived on the 12th September. Maurice was glad to get his town. His "little soldiers" did not insist, as the Spaniards and Italians were used to do in the good old days, on unlimited murder, rape, and fire, as the natural solace and reward of their labours in the trenches. Civilization had made some progress, at least in the Netherlands. Maurice granted good terms, such as he had been in the habit of conceding to all captured towns. Van den Berg was courteously received by his cousins, as he rode forth from the place at the head of what remained of his garrison, five hundred in number, with colours flying, matches burning, bullet in mouth, and with all their arms and baggage except artillery and ammunition, and the heroic little Lewis, notwithstanding the wound in his belly, got on horseback and greeted him with a cousinly welcome in the camp.

The city was a most important acquisition, as already sufficiently set forth, but Queen Elizabeth, much misinformed on this occasion, was inclined to undervalue it. She wrote accordingly to the States, reproaching them for using all that artillery and that royal force against a mere castle and earthheap, instead of attempting some considerable capital, or going in force to the relief of Brittany. The day was to come when she would acknowledge the advantage of not leaving this earth-heap in the hands of the Spaniard. Meantime, Prince Maurice—the season being so far advanced—gave the world no further practical lessons in the engineering science, and sent his troops into winter quarters.

These were the chief military phenomena in France and Flanders during three years of the great struggle to establish Philip's universal dominion.

CHAPTER XXVII.

Negotiations between Queen Elizabeth and the States—Aspect of affair between England and the Netherlands—Complaints of the Hollanders on the piratical acts of the English—The Dutch Envoy and the English Government—Caron's interview with Elizabeth—The Queen promises redress of grievances.

It is now necessary to cast a glance at certain negotiations on delicate topics which had meantime been occurring between Queen Elizabeth and the States.

England and the republic were bound together by ties so close that it was impossible for either to injure the other without inflicting a corresponding damage on itself. Nevertheless this very community of interest, combined with a close national relationship—for in the European family the Netherlanders and English were but cousins twice removed—with similarity of pursuits, with commercial jealousy, with an intense and ever growing rivalry for that supremacy on the ocean towards which the monarchy and the republic were so earnestly struggling, with a common passion for civil and religious freedom, and with that inveterate habit of self-assertion—the healthful but not engaging attribute of all vigorous nations—which strongly marked them both, was rapidly producing an antipathy between the two countries which time was likely rather to deepen than efface. And the national divergences were as potent as the traits of resemblance in creating this antagonism.

The democratic element was expanding itself in the republic so rapidly as to stifle for a time the oligarchical principle which might one day be developed out of the same matrix; while, despite the hardy and adventurous spirit which characterised the English nation throughout all its grades, there was never a more intensely aristocratic influence in the world than the governing and directing spirit of the England of that age.

It was impossible that the courtiers of Elizabeth and the burgher-statesmen of Holland and Friesland should sympathize with each other in sentiment or in manner. The republicans in their exuberant consciousness of having at last got rid of kings and kingly paraphernalia in their own, land—for since the rejection of the sovereignty offered to France and England in 1585 this feeling had become so predominant as to make it difficult to believe that those offers had been in reality so recent—were insensibly adopting a frankness, perhaps a roughness, of political and social demeanour which was far from palatable to the euphuistic formalists of other, countries.

Especially the English statesmen, trained to approach their sovereign with almost Oriental humility, and accustomed to exact for themselves a large amount of deference, could ill brook the free and easy tone occasionally adopted in diplomatic and official intercourse by these upstart republicans.

[The Venetian ambassador Contarin relates that in the reign of James I. the great nobles of England were served at table by lackeys on they knees.]

A queen, who to loose morals, imperious disposition, and violent temper united as inordinate a personal vanity as was ever vouchsafed to woman, and who up to the verge of decrepitude was addressed by her

courtiers in the language of love-torn swain to blooming shepherdess, could naturally find but little to her taste in the hierarchy of Hans Brewer and Hans Baker. Thus her Majesty and her courtiers, accustomed to the faded gallantries with which the serious affairs of State were so grotesquely intermingled, took it ill when they were bluntly informed, for instance, that the State council of the Netherlands, negotiating on Netherland affairs, could not permit a veto to the representatives of the queen, and that this same body of Dutchmen discussing their own business insisted upon talking Dutch and not Latin.

It was impossible to deny that the young Stadholder was a gentleman of a good house, but how could the insolence of a common citizen like John of Olden-Barneveld be digested? It was certain that behind those shaggy, overhanging brows there was a powerful brain stored with legal and historic lore, which supplied eloquence to an ever-ready tongue and pen. Yet these facts, difficult to gainsay, did not make the demands so frequently urged by the States-General upon the English Government for the enforcement of Dutch rights and the redress of English wrongs the more acceptable.

Bodley, Gilpin, and the rest were in a chronic state of exasperation with the Hollanders, not only because of their perpetual complaints, but because their complaints were perpetually just.

The States-General were dissatisfied, all the Netherlanders were dissatisfied—and not entirely without reason—that the English, with whom the republic was on terms not only of friendship but of alliance, should burn their ships on the high seas, plunder their merchants, and torture their sea-captains in order to extort information as to the most precious portions of their cargoes. Sharp language against such malpractices was considered but proof of democratic vulgarity. Yet it would be hard to maintain that Martin Frobisher, Mansfield, Grenfell, and the rest of the sea-kings, with all their dash and daring and patriotism, were not as unscrupulous pirates as ever sailed blue water, or that they were not apt to commit their depredations upon friend and foe alike.

On the other hand; by a liberality of commerce in extraordinary contrast with the practice of modern times, the Netherlanders were in the habit of trading directly with the arch-enemy of both Holland and England, even in the midst of their conflict with him, and it was complained of that even the munitions of war and the implements of navigation by which Spain had been enabled to effect its foot-hold in Brittany, and thus to threaten the English coast, were derived from this very traffic.

The Hollanders replied, that, according to their contract with England, they were at liberty to send as many as forty or fifty vessels at a time to Spain and Portugal, that they had never exceeded the stipulated number, that England freely engaged in the same traffic herself with the common enemy, that it was not reasonable to consider cordage or dried fish or shooks and staves, butter, eggs, and corn as contraband of war, that if they were illegitimate the English trade was vitiated to the same degree, and that it would be utterly hopeless for the provinces to attempt to carry on the war, except by enabling themselves, through the widest and most unrestricted foreign commerce, even including the enemy's realms, to provide their nation with the necessary wealth to sustain so gigantic a conflict.

Here were ever flowing fountains of bitterest discussion and recrimination. It must be admitted however that there was occasionally an advantage in the despotic and summary manner in which the queen took matters into her own hands. It was refreshing to see this great sovereign—who was so well able to grapple with questions of State, and whose very imperiousness of temper impelled her to trample on shallow sophistries and specious technicalities—dealing directly with cases of piracy and turning a deaf ear to the counsellors, who in that, as in every age, were too prone to shove by international justice in order to fulfil municipal forms.

It was, however, with much difficulty that the envoy of the republic was able to obtain a direct hearing from her Majesty in order to press the long list of complaints on account of the English piratical proceedings upon her attention. He intimated that there seemed to be special reasons why the great ones about her throne were disposed to deny him access to the queen, knowing as they did in what intent he asked for interviews. They described in strong language the royal wrath at the opposition recently made by the States to detaching the English auxiliaries in the Netherlands for the service of the French king in Normandy, hoping thereby to deter him from venturing into her presence with a list of grievances on the part of his government. "I did my best to indicate the danger incurred by such transferring of troops at so critical a moment," said Noel de Canon, "showing that it was directly in opposition to the contract made with her Majesty. But I got no answer save very high words from the Lord Treasurer, to the effect that the States-General were never willing to agree to any of her Majesty's prepositions, and that this matter was as necessary to the States' service as to that of the French king. In effect, he said peremptorily that her Majesty willed it and would not recede from her resolution."

The envoy then requested an interview with the queen before her departure into the country.

Next day, at noon, Lord Burghley sent word that she was to leave between five and six o'clock that evening, and that the minister would be welcome meantime at any hour.

"But notwithstanding that I presented myself," said Caron, "at two o'clock in the afternoon, I was unable to speak to her Majesty until a moment before she was about to mount her horse. Her language was then very curt. She persisted in demanding her troops, and strongly expressed her dissatisfaction that we should have refused them on what she called so good an occasion for using them. I was obliged to cut my replies very short, as it was already between six and seven o'clock, and she was to ride nine English miles to the place where she was to pass the night. I was quite sensible, however; that the audience was arranged to be thus brief, in order that I should not be able to stop long enough to give trouble, and perhaps to find occasion to renew our complaints touching the plunderings and robberies committed upon us at sea. This is what some of the great personages here, without doubt, are afraid of, for they were wonderfully well overhauled in my last audience. I shall attempt to speak to her again before she goes very deep into the country."

It was not however before the end of the year, after Caron had made a voyage to Holland and had returned, that he 14 Nov. was able to bring the subject thoroughly before her Majesty. On the 14th November he had preliminary interviews with the Lord High Admiral and the Lord Treasurer at Hampton Court, where the queen was then residing. The plundering business was warmly discussed between himself and the Admiral,

and there was much quibbling and special pleading in defence of the practices which had created so much irritation and pecuniary loss in Holland. There was a good deal of talk about want of evidence and conflict of evidence, which, to a man who felt as sure of the facts and of the law as the Dutch envoy did—unless it were according to public law for one friend and, ally to plunder and burn the vessels of another friend and ally—was not encouraging as to the probable issue of his interview with her Majesty. It would be tedious to report the conversation as fully as it was laid by Noel de Caron before the States-General; but at last the admiral expressed a hope that the injured parties would be able to make good their case. At any rate he assured the envoy that he would take care of Captain Mansfield for the present, who was in prison with two other captains, so that proceedings might be had against them if it was thought worth while.

Caron answered with Dutch bluntness. "I recommended him very earnestly to do this," he said, "and told him roundly that this was by all means necessary for the sake of his own honour. Otherwise no man could ever be made to believe that his Excellency was not seeking to get his own profit out of the affair. But he vehemently swore and protested that this was not the case."

He then went to the Lord Treasurer's apartment, where a long and stormy interview followed on the subject of the withdrawal of the English troops. Caron warmly insisted that the measure had been full of danger, for the States; that they had been ordered out of Prince Maurice's camp at a most critical moment; that; had it not, been for the Stallholder's promptness and military skill; very great disasters to the common cause must have ensued; and that, after all, nothing had been done by the contingent in any other field, for they had been for six months idle and sick, without ever reaching Brittany at all.

"The Lord Treasurer, who, contrary to his custom," said the envoy, "had been listening thus long to what I had to say, now observed that the States had treated her Majesty very ill, that they had kept her running after her own troops nearly half a year, and had offered no excuse for their proceedings."

It would be superfluous to repeat the arguments by which Caron endeavoured to set forth that the English troops, sent to the Netherlands according to a special compact, for a special service, and for a special consideration and equivalent, could not honestly be employed, contrary to the wishes of the States-General, upon a totally different service and in another country. The queen willed it, he was informed, and it was ill-treatment of her Majesty on the part of the Hollanders to oppose her will. This argument was unanswerable.

Soon afterwards, Caron was admitted to the presence of Elizabeth. He delivered, at first, a letter from the States-General, touching the withdrawal of the troops. The queen, instantly broke the seal and read the letter to the end. Coming to the concluding passage, in which the States observed that they had great and just cause highly to complain on that subject, she paused, reading the sentences over twice or thrice, and then remarked:

"Truly these are comical people. I have so often been complaining that they refused to send my troops, and now the States complain that they are obliged to let them go. Yet my intention is only to borrow them for a little while, because I can give my brother of France no better succour than by sending him these soldiers, and this I consider better than if I should send him four thousand men. I say again, I am only borrowing them, and surely the States ought never to make such complaints, when the occasion was such a favourable one, and they had received already sufficient aid from these troops, and had liberated their whole country. I don't comprehend these grievances. They complain that I withdraw my people, and meantime they are still holding them and have brought them ashore again. They send me frivolous excuses that the skippers don't know the road to my islands, which is, after all, as easy to find as the way to Caen, for it is all one. I have also sent my own pilots; and I complain bitterly that by making this difficulty they will cause the loss of all Brittany. They run with their people far away from me, and meantime they allow the enemy to become master of all the coasts lying opposite me. But if it goes badly with me they will rue it deeply themselves."

There was considerable reason, even if there were but little justice, in this strain of remarks. Her Majesty continued it for some little time longer, and it is interesting to see the direct and personal manner in which this great princess handled the weightiest affairs of state. The transfer of a dozen companies of English infantry from Friesland to Brittany was supposed to be big with the fate of France, England, and the Dutch republic, and was the subject of long and angry controversy, not as a contested point of principle, in regard to which numbers, of course, are nothing, but as a matter of practical and pressing importance.

"Her Majesty made many more observations of this nature," said Caron, "but without getting at all into a passion, and, in my opinion, her discourse was sensible, and she spoke with more moderation than she is wont at other times."

The envoy then presented the second letter from the States-General in regard to the outrages inflicted on the Dutch merchantmen. The queen read it at once, and expressed herself as very much displeased with her people. She said that she had received similar information from Counsellor Bodley, who had openly given her to understand that the enormous outrages which her people were committing at sea upon the Netherlanders were a public scandal. It had made her so angry, she said, that she knew not which way to turn. She would take it in hand at once, for she would rather make oath never more to permit a single ship of war to leave her ports than consent to such thieveries and villanies. She told Caron that he would do well to have his case in regard to these matters verified, and then to give it into her own hands, since otherwise it would all be denied her and she would find herself unable to get at the truth.

"I have all the proofs and documents of the merchants by me," replied the envoy, "and, moreover, several of the sea-captains who have been robbed and outraged have come over with me, as likewise some merchants who were tortured by burning of the thumbs and other kinds of torments."

This disturbed the queen very much, and she expressed her wish that Caron should not allow himself to be put off with, delays by the council, but should insist upon all due criminal punishment, the infliction of which she promised in the strongest terms to order; for she could never enjoy peace of mind, she said; so long as such scoundrels were tolerated in her kingdom.

The envoy had brought with him a summary of the cases, with the names of all the merchants interested, and a list of all the marks on the sacks of money which had been stolen. The queen looked over it very carefully, declaring it to be her intention that there should be no delays interposed in the conduct of this

affair by forms of special pleading, but that speedy cognizance should be taken of the whole, and that the property should forthwith be restored.

She then sent for Sir Robert Cecil, whom she directed to go at once and tell his father, the Lord Treasurer, that he was to assist Caron in this affair exactly as if it were her own. It was her intention, she said, that her people were in no wise to trouble the Hollanders in legitimate mercantile pursuits. She added that it was not enough for her people to say that they had only been seizing Spaniards' goods and money, but she meant that they should prove it, too, or else they should swing for it.

Caron assured her Majesty that he had no other commission from his masters than to ask for justice, and that he had no instructions to claim Spanish property or enemy's goods. He had brought sufficient evidence with him, he said, to give her Majesty entire satisfaction.

It is not necessary to pursue the subject any farther. The great nobles still endeavoured to interpose delays, and urged the propriety of taking the case before the common courts of law. Carom strong in the support of the queen, insisted that it should be settled, as her Majesty had commanded, by the council, and it was finally arranged that the judge of admiralty should examine the evidence on both sides, and then communicate the documents at once to the Lord Treasurer. Meantime the money was to be deposited with certain aldermen of London, and the accused parties kept in prison. The ultimate decision was then to be made by the council, "not by form of process but by commission thereto ordained." In the course of the many interviews which followed between the Dutch envoy and the privy counsellors, the Lord Admiral stated that an English merchant residing in the Netherlands had sent to offer him a present of two thousand pounds sterling, in case the affair should be decided against the Hollanders. He communicated the name of the individual to Caron, under seal of secrecy, and reminded the Lord Treasurer that he too had seen the letter of the Englishman. Lord Burghley observed that he remembered the fact that certain letters had been communicated to him by the Lord Admiral, but that he did not know from whence they came, nor anything about the person of the writer.

The case of the plundered merchants was destined to drag almost as slowly before the council as it might have done in the ordinary tribunals, and Caron was "kept running," as he expressed it, "from the court to London, and from London to the court," and it was long before justice was done to the sufferers. Yet the energetic manner in which the queen took the case into her own hands, and the intense indignation with which she denounced the robberies and outrages which had been committed by her subjects upon her friends and allies, were effective in restraining such wholesale piracy in the future.

On the whole, however, if the internal machinery is examined by which the masses of mankind were moved at epoch in various parts of Christendom, we shall not find much reason to applaud the conformity of Governments to the principles of justice, reason, or wisdom.

ETEXT EDITOR'S BOOKMARKS:

Accustomed to the faded gallantries
Conformity of Governments to the principles of justice
Considerable reason, even if there were but little justice
Disciple of Simon Stevinus
Self-assertion—the healthful but not engaging attribute

CHAPTER XXVIII. 1592-1594

Influence of the rule and character of Philip II.—Heroism of the sixteenth century—Contest for the French throne—Character and policy of the Duke of Mayenne—Escape of the Duke of Guise from Castle Tours—Propositions for the marriage of the Infanta—Plotting of the Catholic party—Grounds of Philip's pretensions to the crown of France—Motives of the Duke of Parma maligned by Commander Moreo —He justifies himself to the king—View of the private relations between Philip and the Duke of Mayenne and their sentiments towards each other—Disposition of the French politicians and soldiers towards Philip—Peculiar commercial pursuits of Philip—Confused state of affairs in France—Treachery of Philip towards the Duke of Parma—Recall of the duke to Spain—His sufferings and death.

The People—which has been generally regarded as something naturally below its rulers, and as born to be protected and governed, paternally or otherwise, by an accidental selection from its own species, which by some mysterious process has shot up much nearer to heaven than itself—is often described as brutal, depraved, self-seeking, ignorant, passionate, licentious, and greedy.

It is fitting, therefore, that its protectors should be distinguished, at great epochs of the world's history, by an absence of such objectionable qualities.

It must be confessed, however, that if the world had waited for heroes—during the dreary period which followed the expulsion of something that was called Henry III. of France from the gates of his capital, and especially during the time that followed hard upon the decease of that embodiment of royalty—its axis must have ceased to turn for a long succession of years. The Bearnese was at least alive, and a man. He played his part with consummate audacity and skill; but alas for an epoch or a country in which such a shape—notwithstanding all its engaging and even commanding qualities—looked upon as an incarnation of human greatness!

But the chief mover of all things—so far as one man can be prime mover—was still the diligent scribe who lived in the Escorial. It was he whose high mission it was to blow the bellows of civil war, and to scatter curses over what had once been the smiling abodes of human creatures, throughout the leading countries of

Christendom. The throne of France was vacant, nominally as well as actually, since—the year 1589. During two-and-twenty years preceding that epoch he had scourged the provinces, once constituting the richest and most enlightened portions of his hereditary domains, upon the theory that without the Spanish Inquisition no material prosperity was possible on earth, nor any entrance permitted to the realms of bliss beyond the grave. Had every Netherlander consented to burn his Bible, and to be burned himself should he be found listening to its holy precepts if read to him in shop, cottage, farm-house, or castle; and had he furthermore consented to renounce all the liberal institutions which his ancestors had earned, in the struggle of centuries, by the sweat of their brows and the blood of, their hearts; his benignant proprietor and master, who lived at the ends of the earth, would have consented at almost any moment to peace. His arms were ever open. Let it not be supposed that this is the language of sarcasm or epigram. Stripped of the decorous sophistication by which human beings are so fond of concealing their naked thoughts from each other, this was the one simple dogma always propounded by Philip. Grimace had done its worst, however, and it was long since it had exercised any power in the Netherlands. The king and the Dutchmen understood each other; and the plain truths with which those republicans answered the imperial proffers of mediation, so frequently renewed, were something new, and perhaps not entirely unwholesome in diplomacy.

It is not an inviting task to abandon the comparatively healthy atmosphere of the battle-field, the blood-stained swamp, the murderous trench—where human beings, even if communing only by bullets and push of pike, were at least dealing truthfully with each other—and to descend into those subterranean regions where the effluvia of falsehood becomes almost too foul for ordinary human organisation.

Heroes in those days, in any country, there were few. William the Silent was dead. De la Noue was dead. Duplessis-Mornay was living, but his influence over his royal master was rapidly diminishing. Cecil, Hatton, Essex, Howard, Raleigh, James Croft, Valentine Dale, John Norris, Roger Williams, the "Virgin Queen" herself —does one of these chief agents in public affairs, or do all of them together, furnish a thousandth part of that heroic whole which the England of the sixteenth century presents to every imagination? Maurice of Nassau-excellent soldier and engineer as he had already proved himself—had certainly not developed much of the heroic element, although thus far he was walking straightforward like a man, in the path of duty, with the pithy and substantial Lewis William ever at his side. Olden-Barneveld—tough burgher-statesman, hard-headed, indomitable man of granite—was doing more work, and doing it more thoroughly, than any living politician, but he was certainly not of the mythological brotherhood who inhabit the serene regions of space beyond the moon. He was not the son of god or goddess, destined, after removal from this sphere, to shine with planetary lustre, among other constellations, upon the scenes of mortal action. Those of us who are willing to rise-or to descend if the phrase seems wiser—to the idea of a self-governing people must content ourselves, for this epoch, with the fancy of a hero-people and a people-king.

A plain little republic, thrusting itself uninvited into the great political family-party of heaven-anointed sovereigns and long-descended nobles, seemed a somewhat repulsive phenomenon. It became odious and dangerous when by the blows it could deal in battle, the logic it could chop in council, it indicated a remote future for the world, in which right divine and regal paraphernalia might cease to be as effective stage-properties as they had always been considered.

Yet it will be difficult for us to find the heroic individualised very perceptibly at this period, look where we may. Already there seemed ground for questioning the comfortable fiction that the accidentally dominant families and castes were by nature wiser, better, braver than that much-contemned entity, the People. What if the fearful heresy should gain ground that the People was at least as wise, honest, and brave as its masters? What if it should become a recognised fact that the great individuals and castes, whose wealth and station furnished them with ample time and means for perfecting themselves in the science of government, were rather devoting their leisure to the systematic filling of their own pockets than to the hiving up of knowledge for the good of their fellow creatures? What if the whole theory of hereditary superiority should suddenly exhale? What if it were found out that we were all fellow-worms together, and that those which had crawled highest were not necessarily the least slimy?

Meantime it will be well for us, in order to understand what is called the Past, to scrutinise somewhat closely that which was never meant to be revealed. To know the springs which once controlled the world's movements, one must ponder the secret thoughts, purposes, aspirations, and baffled attempts of the few dozen individuals who once claimed that world in fee-simple. Such researches are not in a cheerful field; for the sources of history are rarely fountains of crystal, bubbling through meadows of asphodel. Vast and noisome are the many sewers which have ever run beneath decorous Christendom.

Some of the leading military events in France and Flanders, patent to all the world, which grouped themselves about the contest for the French throne, as the central point in the history of Philip's proposed world-empire, have already been indicated.

It was a species of triangular contest—so far as the chief actors were concerned—for that vacant throne. Philip, Mayenne, Henry of Navarre, with all the adroitness which each possessed, were playing for the splendid prize.

Of Philip it is not necessary to speak. The preceding volumes of this work have been written in vain, if the reader has not obtained from irrefragable testimony—the monarch's own especially—a sufficient knowledge of that human fetish before which so much of contemporary humanity grovelled.

The figure of Navarre is also one of the most familiar shapes in history.

As for the Duke of Mayenne, he had been, since the death of his brother the Balafre, ostensible leader of the League, and was playing, not without skill, a triple game.

Firstly, he hoped for the throne for himself.

Secondly, he was assisting the King of Spain to obtain that dignity.

Thirdly, he was manoeuvring in dull, dumb, but not ineffective manner, in favour of Navarre.

So comprehensive and self-contradictory a scheme would seem to indicate an elasticity of principle and a fertility of resource not often vouchsafed to man.

Certainly one of the most pregnant lessons of history is furnished in the development of these cabals, nor is it, in this regard, of great importance whether the issue was to prove them futile or judicious. It is sufficient for us now, that when those vanished days constituted the Present—the vital atmosphere of Christendom—the world's affairs were controlled by those plotters and their subordinates, and it is therefore desirable for us to know what manner of men they were, and how they played their parts.

Nor should it ever be forgotten that the leading motive with all was supposed to be religion. It was to maintain the supremacy of the Roman Church, or to vindicate, to a certain extent, liberty of conscience, through the establishment of a heterodox organisation, that all these human beings of various lineage and language throughout Christendom had been cutting each other's throats for a quarter of a century.

Mayenne was not without courage in the field when he found himself there, but it was observed of him that he spent more time at table than the Bearnese in sleep, and that he was so fat as to require the assistance of twelve men to put him in the saddle again whenever he fell from his horse. Yet slow fighter as he was, he was a most nimble intriguer. As for his private character, it was notoriously stained with every vice, nor was there enough of natural intelligence or superior acquirement to atone for his, crapulous; licentious, shameless life. His military efficiency at important emergencies was impaired and his life endangered by vile diseases. He was covetous and greedy beyond what was considered decent even in that cynical age. He received subsidies and alms with both hands from those who distrusted and despised him, but who could not eject him from his advantageous position.

He wished to arrive at the throne of France. As son of Francis of Guise, as brother of the great Balafre, he considered himself entitled to the homage of the fishwomen and the butchers' halls. The constitution of the country in that age making a People impossible, the subtle connection between a high-born intriguer and the dregs of a populace, which can only exist in societies of deep chasms and precipitous contrasts, was easily established.

The duke's summary dealing with the sixteen tyrants of Paris in the matter of the president's murder had, however, loosened his hold on what was considered the democracy; but this was at the time when his schemes were silently swinging towards the Protestant aristocracy; at the moment when Politica was taking the place of Madam League in his secret affections. Nevertheless, so long as there seemed a chance, he was disposed to work the mines for his own benefit. His position as lieutenant-general gave him an immense advantage for intriguing with both sides, and—in case his aspirations for royalty were baffled—for obtaining the highest possible price for himself in that auction in which Philip and the Bearnese were likely to strain all their resources in outbidding each other.

On one thing his heart was fixed. His brother's son should at least not secure the golden prize if he could prevent it. The young Duke of Guise, who had been immured in Castle Tours since the famous murder of his father and uncle, had made his escape by a rather neat stratagem. Having been allowed some liberty for amusing himself in the corridors in the neighbourhood of his apartment, he had invented a game of hop, skip, and jump up stairs and down, which he was wont to play with the soldiers of the guard, as a solace to the tediousness of confinement. One day he hopped and skipped up the staircase with a rapidity which excited the admiration of the companions of his sport, slipped into his room, slammed and bolted the doors, and when the guard, after in vain waiting a considerable tine for him to return and resume the game, at last forced an entrance, they found the bird flown out of window. Rope-ladders, confederates, fast-galloping post-horses did the rest, and at last the young duke joined his affectionate uncle in camp, much to that eminent relative's discomfiture. Philip gave alternately conflicting instructions to Farnese—sometimes that he should encourage the natural jealousy between the pair; sometimes that he should cause them to work harmoniously together for the common good—that common good being the attainment by the King of Spain of the sovereignty of France.

But it was impossible, as already intimated, for Mayenne to work harmoniously with his nephew. The Duke of Guise might marry with the infanta and thus become King of France by the grace of God and Philip. To such a consummation in the case of his uncle there stood, as we know, an insuperable obstacle in the shape of the Duchess of Mayenne. Should it come to this at last, it was certain that the Duke would make any and every combination to frustrate such a scheme. Meantime he kept his own counsel, worked amiably with Philip, Parma, and the young duke, and received money in overflowing measure, and poured into his bosom from that Spanish monarch whose veterans in the Netherlands were maddened by starvation into mutiny.

Philip's plans were a series of alternatives. France he regarded as the property of his family. Of that there could be no doubt at all. He meant to put the crown upon his own head, unless the difficulties in the way should prove absolutely insuperable. In that case he claimed France and all its inhabitants as the property of his daughter. The Salic law was simply a pleasantry, a bit of foolish pedantry, an absurdity. If Clara Isabella, as daughter of Isabella of France, as grandchild of Henry II., were not manifestly the owner of France—queen-proprietary, as the Spanish doctors called it—then there was no such thing, so he thought, as inheritance of castle, farm-house, or hovel—no such thing as property anywhere in the world. If the heiress of the Valois could not take that kingdom as her private estate, what security could there ever be for any possessions public or private?

This was logical reasoning enough for kings and their counsellors. There was much that might be said, however, in regard to special laws. There was no doubt that great countries, with all their livestock—human or otherwise—belonged to an individual, but it was not always so clear who that individual was. This doubt gave much work and comfortable fees to the lawyers. There was much learned lore concerning statutes of descent, cutting off of entails, actions for ejectment, difficulties of enforcing processes, and the like, to occupy the attention of diplomatists, politicians and other sages. It would have caused general hilarity, however, could it have been suggested that the live-stock had art or part in the matter; that sheep, swine, or men could claim a choice of their shepherds and butchers.

Philip—humbly satisfied, as he always expressed himself, so long as the purity of the Roman dogmas and the supremacy of the Romish Church over the whole earth were maintained—affected a comparative indifference as to whether he should put the crown of St. Louis and of Hugh Capet upon his own grey head or whether he should govern France through his daughter and her husband. Happy the man who might

exchange the symbols of mutual affection with Philip's daughter.

The king had various plans in regard to the bestowal of the hand thus richly endowed. First and foremost it was suggested—and the idea was not held too monstrous to be even believed in by some conspicuous individuals—that he proposed espousing his daughter himself. The pope was to be relied on, in this case, to give a special dispensation. Such a marriage, between parties too closely related to be usually united in wedlock, might otherwise shock the prejudices of the orthodox. His late niece and wife was dead, so that there was no inconvenience on that score, should the interests of his dynasty, his family, and, above all, of the Church, impel him, on mature reflection, to take for his fourth marriage one step farther within the forbidden degrees than he had done in his third. Here is the statement, which, if it have no other value, serves to show the hideous designs of which the enemies of Philip sincerely believed that monarch capable.

"But God is a just God," wrote Sir Edward Stafford, "and if with all things past, that be true that the king ('videlicet' Henry IV.) yesterday assured me to be true, and that both his ambassador from Venice writ to him and Monsieur de Luxembourg from Rome, that the Count Olivarez had made a great instance to the pope (Sixtus V.) a little afore his death, to permit his master to marry his daughter, no doubt God will not leave it long unpunished."

Such was the horrible tale which was circulated and believed in by Henry the Great of France and by eminent nobles and ambassadors, and at least thought possible by the English envoy. By such a family arrangement it was obvious that the conflicting claims of father and daughter to the proprietorship of France would be ingeniously adjusted, and the children of so well assorted a marriage might reign in undisputed legitimacy over France and Spain, and the rest of the world-monarchy. Should the king decide on the whole against this matrimonial project, should Innocent or Clement prove as intractable as Sixtus, then it would be necessary to decide among various candidates for the Infanta's hand.

In Mayenne's Opinion the Duke of Guise was likely to be the man; but there is little doubt that Philip, in case these more cherished schemes should fail, had made up his mind—so far as he ever did make up his mind upon anything—to select his nephew the Archduke Ernest, brother of the Emperor Rudolph, for his son-in-law. But it was not necessary to make an immediate choice. His quiver was full of archdukes, any one of whom would be an eligible candidate, while not one of them would be likely to reject the Infanta with France on her wedding-finger. Meantime there was a lion in the path in the shape of Henry of Navarre.

Those who disbelieve in the influence of the individual on the fate of mankind may ponder the possible results to history and humanity, had the dagger of Jacques Clement entered the stomach of Henry IV. rather than of Henry III. in the summer of 1589, or the perturbations in the world's movements that might have puzzled philosophers had there been an unsuspected mass of religious conviction revolving unseen in the mental depths of the Bearnese. Conscience, as it has from time to time exhibited itself on this planet of ours, is a powerful agent in controlling political combinations; but the instances are unfortunately not rare, so far as sublunary progress is concerned, in which the absence of this dominant influence permits a prosperous rapidity to individual careers. Eternal honour to the noble beings, true chieftains among men, who have forfeited worldly power or sacrificed life itself at the dictate of religious or moral conviction—even should the basis of such conviction appear to some of us unsafe or unreal. Shame on the tongue which would malign or ridicule the martyr or the honest convert to any form of Christian faith! But who can discover aught that is inspiring to the sons of men in conversions—whether of princes or of peasants—wrought, not at risk of life and pelf, but for the sake of securing and increasing the one and the other?

Certainly the Bearnese was the most candid of men. It was this very candour, this freedom from bigotry, this want of conviction, and this openness to conviction, that made him so dangerous and caused so much anxiety to Philip. The Roman Church might or might not be strengthened by the re-conversion of the legitimate heir of France, but it was certain that the claims of Philip and the Infanta to the proprietorship of that kingdom would be weakened by the process. While the Spanish king knew himself to be inspired in all his actions by a single motive, the maintenance of the supremacy of the Roman Church, he was perfectly aware that the Prince of Bearne was not so single-hearted nor so conscientious as himself.

The Prince of Bearne—heretic, son of heretics, great chieftain of heretics—was supposed capable of becoming orthodox whenever the Pope would accept his conversion. Against this possibility Philip struggled with all his strength.

Since Pope Sixtus V., who had a weakness for Henry, there had been several popes. Urban VII., his immediate successor, had reigned but thirteen days. Gregory XIV. (Sfondrato) had died 15th October, 1591, ten months after his election. Fachinetti, with the title of Innocent IX., had reigned two months, from 29th October to 29th December, 1591. He died of "Spanish poison," said Envoy Umton, as coolly as if speaking of gout, or typhus, or any other recognised disorder. Clement VIII. (Aldobrandini) was elected 30th January, 1592. He was no lover of Henry, and lived in mortal fear of Philip, while it must be conceded that the Spanish ambassador at Rome was much given to brow-beating his Holiness. Should he dare to grant that absolution which was the secret object of the Bearnese, there was no vengeance, hinted the envoy, that Philip would not wreak on the holy father. He would cut off his supplies from Naples and Sicily, and starve him and all-his subjects; he would frustrate all his family schemes, he would renounce him, he would unpope him, he would do anything that man and despot could do, should the great shepherd dare to re-admit this lost sheep, and this very black sheep, into the fold of the faithful.

As for Henry himself, his game—for in his eyes it was nothing but a game—lay every day plainer and plainer before him. He was indispensable to the heretics. Neither England, nor Holland, nor Protestant Germany, could renounce him, even should he renounce "the religion." Nor could the French Huguenots exist without that protection which, even although Catholic, he could still extend to them when he should be accepted as king by the Catholics.

Hereditary monarch by French law and history, released from his heresy by the authority that could bind and loose, purged as with hyssop and washed whiter than snow, it should go hard with him if Philip, and Farnese, and Mayenne, and all the pikemen and reiters they might muster, could keep him very long from the throne of his ancestors.

Nothing could match the ingenuousness with which he demanded the instruction whenever the fitting time for it should arrive; as if, instead of having been a professor both of the Calvinist and Catholic persuasion, and having relapsed from both, he had been some innocent Peruvian or Hindoo, who was invited to listen to preachings and to examine dogmas for the very first time in his life.

Yet Philip had good grounds for hoping a favourable result from his political and military manoeuvre. He entertained little doubt that France belonged to him or to his daughter; that the most powerful party in the country was in favour of his claims, provided he would pay the voters liberally enough for their support, and that if the worst came to the worst it would always be in his power to dismember the kingdom, and to reserve the lion's share for himself, while distributing some of the provinces to the most prominent of his confederates.

The sixteen tyrants of Paris had already, as we have seen, urged the crown upon him, provided he would establish in France the Inquisition, the council of Trent, and other acceptable institutions, besides distributing judiciously a good many lucrative offices among various classes of his adherents.

The Duke of Mayenne, in his own name and that of all the Catholics of France, formally demanded of him to maintain two armies, forty thousand men in all, to be respectively under command of the duke himself and of Alexander Farnese, and regularly to pay for them. These propositions, as has been seen, were carried into effect as nearly as possible, at enormous expense to Philip's exchequer, and he naturally expected as good faith on the part of Mayenne.

In the same paper in which the demand was made Philip was urged to declare himself king of France. He was assured that the measure could be accomplished "by freely bestowing marquisates, baronies, and peerages, in order to content the avarice and ambition of many persons, without at the same time dissipating the greatness from which all these members depended. Pepin and Charlemagne," said the memorialists, "who were foreigners and Saxons by nation, did as much in order to get possession of a kingdom to which they had no other right except that which they acquired there by their prudence and force, and after them Hugh Capet, much inferior to them in force and authority, following their example, had the same good fortune for himself and his posterity, and one which still endures.

"If the authority of the holy see could support the scheme at the same time," continued Mayenne and friends, "it would be a great help. But it being perilous to ask for that assistance before striking the blow, it would be better to obtain it after the execution."

That these wholesome opinions were not entirely original on the part of Mayenne, nor produced spontaneously, was plain from the secret instructions given by Philip to his envoys, Don Bernardino de Mendoza, John Baptist de Tassis, and the commander Moreo, whom he had sent soon after the death of Henry III. to confer with Cardinal Gaetano in Paris.

They were told, of course, to do everything in their power to prevent the election of the Prince of Bearne, "being as he was a heretic, obstinate and confirmed, who had sucked heresy with his mother's milk." The legate was warned that "if the Bearnese should make a show of converting himself, it would be frigid and fabricated."

If they were asked whom Philip desired for king—a question which certainly seemed probable under the circumstances—they were to reply that his foremost wish was to establish the Catholic religion in the kingdom, and that whatever was most conducive to that end would be most agreeable to him. "As it is however desirable, in order to arrange matters, that you should be informed of everything," said his Majesty, "it is proper that you should know that I have two kinds of right to all that there is over there. Firstly, because the crown of France has been usurped from me, my ancestors having been unjustly excluded by foreign occupation of it; and secondly, because I claim the same crown as first male of the house of Valois."

Here certainly were comprehensive pretensions, and it was obvious that the king's desire for the establishment of the Catholic religion must have been very lively to enable him to invent or accept such astonishing fictions.

But his own claims were but a portion of the case. His daughter and possible spouse had rights of her own, hard, in his opinion, to be gainsaid. "Over and above all this," said Philip, "my eldest daughter, the Infanta, has two other rights; one to all the states which as dower-property are joined by matrimony and through females to this crown, which now come to her in direct line, and the other to the crown itself, which belongs directly to the said Infanta, the matter of the Salic law being a mere invention."

Thus it would appear that Philip was the legitimate representative, not only of the ancient races of French monarchs—whether Merovingians, Carlovingians, or otherwise was not stated but also of the usurping houses themselves, by whose intrusion those earlier dynasties had been ejected, being the eldest male heir of the extinct line of Valois, while his daughter was, if possible, even more legitimately the sovereign and proprietor of France than he was himself.

Nevertheless in his magnanimous desire for the peace of the world and the advancement of the interests of the Church, he was, if reduced to extremities, willing to forego his own individual rights—when it should appear that they could by no possibility be enforced—in favour of his daughter and of the husband whom he should select for her.

"Thus it may be seen," said the self-denying man, "that I know how, for the sake of the public repose, to strip myself of my private property."

Afterwards, when secretly instructing the Duke of Feria, about to proceed to Paris for the sake of settling the sovereignty of the kingdom, he reviewed the whole subject, setting forth substantially the same intentions. That the Prince of Bearne could ever possibly succeed to the throne of his ancestors was an idea to be treated only with sublime scorn by all right-minded and sensible men. "The members of the House of Bourbon," said he, "pretend that by right of blood the crown belongs to them, and hence is derived the pretension made by the Prince of Bearne; but if there were wanting other very sufficient causes to prevent this claim—which however are not wanting—it is quite enough that he is a relapsed heretic, declared to be such by the Apostolic See, and pronounced incompetent, as well as the other members of his house, all of them, to say the least, encouragers of heresy; so that not one of them can ever be king of France, where there

have been such religious princes in time past, who have justly merited the name of Most Christian; and so there is no possibility of permitting him or any of his house to aspire to the throne, or to have the subject even treated of in the estates. It should on the contrary be entirely excluded as prejudicial to the realm and unworthy to be even mentioned among persons so Catholic as those about to meet in that assembly."

The claims of the man whom his supporters already called Henry the Fourth of France being thus disposed of, Philip then again alluded with his usual minuteness to the various combinations which he had formed for the tranquillity and good government of that kingdom and of the other provinces of his world-empire.

It must moreover be never forgotten that what he said passed with his contemporaries almost for oracular dispensations. What he did or ordered to be done was like the achievements or behests of a superhuman being. Time, as it rolls by, leaves the wrecks of many a stranded reputation to bleach in the sunshine of after-ages. It is sometimes as profitable to learn what was not done by the great ones of the earth, in spite of all their efforts, as to ponder those actual deeds which are patent to mankind. The Past was once the Present, and once the Future, bright with rainbows or black with impending storm; for history is a continuous whole of which we see only fragments.

He who at the epoch with which we are now occupied was deemed greatest and wisest among the sons of earth, at whose threats men quailed, at whose vast and intricate schemes men gasped in palefaced awe, has left behind him the record of his interior being. Let us consider whether he was so potent as his fellow mortals believed, or whether his greatness was merely their littleness; whether it was carved out, of the inexhaustible but artificial quarry of human degradation. Let us see whether the execution was consonant with the inordinate plotting; whether the price in money and blood—and certainly few human beings have squandered so much of either as did Philip the Prudent in his long career—was high or low for the work achieved.

Were after generations to learn, only after curious research, of a pretender who once called himself, to the amusement of his contemporaries, Henry the Fourth of France; or was the world-empire for which so many armies were marshalled, so many ducats expended, so many falsehoods told, to prove a bubble after all? Time was to show. Meantime wise men of the day who, like the sages of every generation, read the future like a printed scroll, were pitying the delusion and rebuking the wickedness of Henry the Bearnese; persisting as he did in his cruel, sanguinary, hopeless attempt to establish a vanished and impossible authority over a land distracted by civil war.

Nothing could be calmer or more reasonable than the language of the great champion of the Inquisition.

"And as President Jeannin informs me," he said, "that the Catholics have the intention of electing me king, that appearing to them the gentlest and safest method to smooth all rivalries likely to arise among the princes aspiring to the crown, I reply, as you will see by the copy herewith sent. You will observe that after not refusing myself to that which may be the will of our Lord, should there be no other mode of serving Him, above all I desire that which concerns my daughter, since to her belongs the kingdom. I desire nothing else nor anything for myself, nor for anybody else, except as a means for her to arrive at her right."

He had taken particular pains to secure his daughter's right in Brittany, while the Duchess of Mercoeur, by the secret orders of her husband, had sent a certain ecclesiastic to Spain to make over the sovereignty of this province to the Infanta. Philip directed that the utmost secrecy should be observed in regard to this transaction with the duke and duchess, and promised the duke, as his reward for these proposed services in dismembering his country, the government of the province for himself and his heirs.

For the king was quite determined—in case his efforts to obtain the crown for himself or for his daughter were unsuccessful—to dismember France, with the assistance of those eminent Frenchmen who were now so industriously aiding him in his projects.

"And in the third place," said he, in his secret instructions to Feria, "if for the sins of all, we don't manage to make any election, and if therefore the kingdom (of France) has to come to separation and to be divided into many hands; in this case we must propose to the Duke of Mayenne to assist him in getting possession of Normandy for himself, and as to the rest of the kingdom, I shall take for myself that which seems good to me—all of us assisting each other."

But unfortunately it was difficult for any of these fellow-labourers to assist each other very thoroughly, while they detested each other so cordially and suspected each other with such good reason.

Moreo, Ybarra, Feria, Parma, all assured their master that Mayenne was taking Spanish money as fast as he could get it, but with the sole purpose of making himself king. As to any of the House of Lorraine obtaining the hand of the Infanta and the throne with it, Feria assured Philip that Mayenne "would sooner give the crown to the Grand Turk."

Nevertheless Philip thought it necessary to continue making use of the duke. Both were indefatigable therefore in expressing feelings of boundless confidence each in the other.

It has been seen too how entirely the king relied on the genius and devotion of Alexander Farnese to carry out his great schemes; and certainly never had monarch a more faithful, unscrupulous, and dexterous servant. Remonstrating, advising, but still obeying—entirely without conscience, unless it were conscience to carry out his master's commands, even when most puerile or most diabolical—he was nevertheless the object of Philip's constant suspicion, and felt himself placed under perpetual though secret supervision.

Commander Moreo was unwearied in blackening the duke's character, and in maligning his every motive and action, and greedily did the king incline his ear to the calumnies steadily instilled by the chivalrous spy.

"He has caused all the evil we are suffering," said Moreo. "When he sent Egmont to France 'twas without infantry, although Egmont begged hard for it, as did likewise the Legate, Don Bernardino, and Tassis. Had he done this there is no doubt at all that the Catholic cause in France would have been safe, and your Majesty would now have the control over that kingdom which you desire. This is the opinion of friends and foes. I went to the Duke of Parma and made free to tell him that the whole world would blame him for the damage done to Christianity, since your Majesty had exonerated yourself by ordering him to go to the assistance of the French Catholics with all the zeal possible. Upon this he was so disgusted that he has never shown me a

civil face since. I doubt whether he will send or go to France at all, and although the Duke of Mayenne despatches couriers every day with protestations and words that would soften rocks, I see no indications of a movement."

Thus, while the duke was making great military preparations far invading France without means; pawning his own property to get bread for his starving veterans, and hanging those veterans whom starving had made. mutinous, he was depicted, to the most suspicious and unforgiving mortal that ever wore a crown, as a traitor and a rebel, and this while he was renouncing his own judicious and well-considered policy in obedience to the wild schemes of his master.

"I must make bold to remind your Majesty," again whispered the spy, "that there never was an Italian prince who failed to pursue his own ends, and that there are few in the world that are not wishing to become greater than they are. This man here could strike a greater blow than all the rest of them put together. Remember that there is not a villain anywhere that does not desire the death of your Majesty. Believe me, and send to cut off my head if it shall be found that I am speaking from passion, or from other motive than pure zeal for your royal service."

The reader will remember into what a paroxysm of rage Alexander was thrown on, a former occasion, when secretly invited to listen to propositions by which the sovereignty over the Netherlands was to be secured to himself, and how near he was to inflicting mortal punishment with his own hand on the man who had ventured to broach that treasonable matter.

Such projects and propositions were ever floating, as it were, in the atmosphere, and it was impossible for the most just men to escape suspicion in the mind of a king who fed upon suspicion as his daily bread. Yet nothing could be fouler or falser than the calumny which described Alexander as unfaithful to Philip. Had he served his God as he served his master perhaps his record before the highest tribunal would have been a clearer one.

And in the same vein in which he wrote to the monarch in person did the crafty Moreo write to the principal secretary of state, Idiaquez, whose mind, as well as his master's, it was useful to poison, and who was in daily communication with Philip.

"Let us make sure of Flanders," said he, "otherwise we shall all of us be well cheated. I will tell you something of that which I have already told his Majesty, only not all, referring you to Tassis, who, as a personal witness to many things, will have it in his power to undeceive his Majesty, I have seen very clearly that the duke is disgusted with his Majesty, and one day he told me that he cared not if the whole world went to destruction, only not Flanders."

"Another day he told me that there was a report abroad that his Majesty was sending to arrest him, by means of the Duke of Pastrana, and looking at me he said: 'See here, seignior commander, no threats, as if it were in the power of mortal man to arrest me, much less of such fellows as these.'"

"But this is but a small part of what I could say," continued the detective knight-commander, "for I don't like to trust these ciphers. But be certain that nobody in Flanders wishes well to these estates or to the Catholic cause, and the associates of the Duke of Parma go about saying that it does not suit the Italian potentates to have his Majesty as great a monarch as he is trying to be."

This is but a sample of the dangerous stuff with which the royal mind was steadily drugged, day after day, by those to whom Farnese was especially enjoined to give his confidence.

Later on it will be seen how-much effect was thus produced both upon the king and upon the duke. Moreo, Mendoza, and Tasais were placed about the governor-general, nominally as his counsellors, in reality as police-officers.

"You are to confer regularly with Mendoza, Tassis, and Moreo," said Philip to Farnese.

"You are to assist, correspond, and harmonize in every way with the Duke of Parma," wrote Philip to Mendoza, Tassis, and Moreo. And thus cordially and harmoniously were the trio assisting and corresponding with the duke.

But Moreo was right in not wishing to trust the ciphers, and indeed he had trusted them too much, for Farnese was very well aware of his intrigues, and complained bitterly of them to the king and to Idiaquez.

Most eloquently and indignantly did he complain of the calumnies, ever renewing themselves, of which he was the subject. "'Tis this good Moreo who is the author of the last falsehoods," said he to the secretary; "and this is but poor payment for my having neglected my family, my parents and children for so many years in the king's service, and put my life ever on the hazard, that these fellows should be allowed to revile me and make game of me now, instead of assisting me."

He was at that time, after almost superhuman exertions, engaged in the famous relief of Paris. He had gone there, he said, against his judgment and remonstrating with his Majesty on the insufficiency of men and money for such an enterprise. His army was half-mutinous and unprovided with food, artillery, or munitions; and then he found himself slandered, ridiculed, his life's life lied away. 'Twas poor payment for his services, he exclaimed, if his Majesty should give ear to these calumniators, and should give him no chance of confronting his accusers and clearing his reputation. Moreo detested him, as he knew, and Prince Doria said that the commander once spoke so ill of Farnese in Genoa that he was on the point of beating him; while Moreo afterwards told the story as if he had been maltreated because of defending Farnese against Doria's slanders.

And still more vehemently did he inveigh against Moreo in his direct appeals to Philip. He had intended to pass over his calumnies, of which he was well aware, because he did not care to trouble the dead—for Moreo meantime had suddenly died, and the gossips, of course, said it was of Farnese poison—but he had just discovered by documents that the commander had been steadily and constantly pouring these his calumnies into the monarch's ears. He denounced every charge as lies, and demanded proof. Moreo had further been endeavouring to prejudice the Duke of Mayenne against the King of Spain and himself, saying that he, Farnese, had been commissioned to take Mayenne into custody, with plenty of similar lies.

"But what I most feel," said Alexander, with honest wrath, "is to see that your Majesty gives ear to them

without making the demonstration which my services merit, and has not sent to inform me of them, seeing that they may involve my reputation and honour. People have made more account of these calumnies than of my actions performed upon the theatre of the world. I complain, after all my toils and dangers in your Majesty's service, just when I stood with my soul in my mouth and death in my teeth, forgetting children, house, and friends, to be treated thus, instead of receiving rewards and honour, and being enabled to leave to my children, what was better than all the riches the royal hand could bestow, an unsullied and honourable name."

He protested that his reputation had so much suffered that he would prefer to retire to some remote corner as a humble servant of the king, and leave a post which had made him so odious to all. Above all, he entreated his Majesty to look upon this whole affair "not only like a king but like a gentleman."

Philip answered these complaints and reproaches benignantly, expressed unbounded confidence in the duke, assured him that the calumnies of his supposed enemies could produce no effect upon the royal mind, and coolly professed to have entirely forgotten having received any such letter as that of which his nephew complained. "At any rate I have mislaid it," he said, "so that you see how much account it was with me."

As the king was in the habit of receiving such letters every week, not only from the commander, since deceased, but from Ybarra and others, his memory, to say the least, seemed to have grown remarkably feeble. But the sequel will very soon show that he had kept the letters by him and pondered them to much purpose. To expect frankness and sincerity from him, however, even in his most intimate communications to his most trusted servants, would have been to "swim with fins of lead."

Such being the private relations between the conspirators, it is instructive to observe how they dealt with each other in the great game they were playing for the first throne in Christendom. The military events have been sufficiently sketched in the preceding pages, but the meaning and motives of public affairs can be best understood by occasional glances behind the scenes. It is well for those who would maintain their faith in popular Governments to study the workings of the secret, irresponsible, arbitrary system; for every Government, as every individual, must be judged at last by those moral laws which no man born of woman can evade.

During the first French expedition-in the course of which Farnese had saved Paris from falling into, the hands of Henry, and had been doing his best to convert it prospectively into the capital of his master's empire—it was his duty, of course, to represent as accurately as possible the true state of France. He submitted his actions to his master's will, but he never withheld from him the advantage that he might have derived, had he so chosen, from his nephew's luminous intelligence and patient observation.

With the chief personage he had to deal with he professed himself, at first, well satisfied. "The Duke of Mayenne," said he to Philip, "persists in desiring your Majesty only as King of France, and will hear of no other candidate, which gives me satisfaction such as can't be exaggerated." Although there were difficulties in the way, Farnese thought that the two together with God's help might conquer them. "Certainly it is not impossible that your Majesty may succeed," he said, "although very problematical; and in case your Majesty does succeed in that which we all desire and are struggling for, Mayenne not only demands the second place in the kingdom for himself, but the fief of some great province for his family."

Should it not be possible for Philip to obtain the crown, Farnese was, on the whole, of opinion that Mayenne had better be elected. In that event he would make over Brittany and Burgundy to Philip, together with the cities opposite the English coast. If they were obliged to make the duke king, as was to be feared, they should at any rate exclude the Prince of Bearne, and secure, what was the chief point, the Catholic religion. "This," said Alexander, "is about what I can gather of Mayenne's views, and perhaps he will put them down in a despatch to your Majesty."

After all, the duke was explicit enough. He was for taking all he could get—the whole kingdom if possible—but if foiled, then as large a slice of it as Philip would give him as the price of his services. And Philip's ideas were not materially different from those of the other conspirator.

Both were agreed on one thing. The true heir must be kept out of his rights, and the Catholic religion be maintained in its purity. As to the inclination of the majority of the inhabitants, they could hardly be in the dark. They knew that the Bearnese was instinctively demanded by the nation; for his accession to the throne would furnish the only possible solution to the entanglements which had so long existed.

As to the true sentiments of the other politicians and soldiers of the League with whom Bearnese came in contact in France, he did not disguise from his master that they were anything but favourable.

"That you may know, the humour of this kingdom," said he, "and the difficulties in which I am placed, I must tell you that I am by large experience much confirmed in that which I have always suspected. Men don't love nor esteem the royal name of your Majesty, and whatever the benefits and assistance they get from you they have no idea of anything redounding to your benefit and royal service, except so far as implied in maintaining the Catholic religion and keeping out the Bearne. These two things, however, they hold to be so entirely to your Majesty's profit, that all you are doing appears the fulfilment of a simple obligation. They are filled with fear, jealousy, and suspicion of your Majesty. They dread your acquiring power here. Whatever negotiations they pretend in regard to putting the kingdom or any of their cities under your protection, they have never had any real intention of doing it, but their only object is to keep up our vain hopes while they are carrying out their own ends. If to-day they seem to have agreed upon any measure, tomorrow they are sure to get out of it again. This has always been the case, and all your Majesty's ministers that have had dealings here would say so, if they chose to tell the truth. Men are disgusted with the entrance of the army, and if they were not expecting a more advantageous peace in the kingdom with my assistance than without it, I don't know what they would do; for I have heard what I have heard and seen what I have seen. They are afraid of our army, but they want its assistance and our money."

Certainly if Philip desired enlightenment as to the real condition of the country he had determined to, appropriate; and the true sentiments of its most influential inhabitants, here, was the man most competent of all the world to advise him; describing the situation for him, day by day, in the most faithful manner. And at every step the absolutely puerile inadequacy of the means, employed by the king to accomplish his gigantic

purposes became apparent. If the crime of subjugating or at least dismembering the great kingdom of France were to be attempted with any hope of success, at least it might have been expected that the man employed to consummate the deed would be furnished with more troops and money than would be required to appropriate a savage island off the Caribbean, or a German principality. But Philip expected miracles to be accomplished by the mere private assertion of his will. It was so easy to conquer realms the writing table.

"I don't say," continued Farnese, "if I could have entered France with a competent army, well paid and disciplined, with plenty of artillery, and munitions, and with funds enough to enable Mayenne to buy up the nobles of his party, and to conciliate the leaders generally with presents and promises, that perhaps they might not have softened. Perhaps interest and fear would have made that name agreeable which pleases them so little, now that the very reverse of all this has occurred. My want of means is causing a thousand disgusts among the natives of the country, and it is this penury that will be the chief cause of the disasters which may occur."

Here was sufficiently plain speaking. To conquer a war-like nation without an army; to purchase a rapacious nobility with an empty purse, were tasks which might break the stoutest heart. They were breaking Alexander's.

Yet Philip had funds enough, if he had possessed financial ability himself, or any talent for selecting good financiers. The richest countries of the old world and the new were under his sceptre; the mines of Peru and Mexico; the wealth of farthest Ind, were at his disposition; and moreover he drove a lucrative traffic in the sale of papal bulls and massbooks, which were furnished to him at a very low figure, and which he compelled the wild Indians of America and the savages of the Pacific to purchase of him at an enormous advance. That very year, a Spanish carrack had been captured by the English off the Barbary coast, with an assorted cargo, the miscellaneous nature of which gives an idea of royal commercial pursuits at that period. Besides wine in large quantities there were fourteen hundred chests of quicksilver, an article indispensable to the working of the silver mines, and which no one but the king could, upon pain of death, send to America. He received, according to contract; for every pound of quicksilver thus delivered a pound of pure silver, weight for weight. The ship likewise contained ten cases of gilded mass-books and papal bulls. The bulls, two million and seventy thousand in number, for the dead and the living, were intended for the provinces of New Spain, Yucatan, Guatemala, Honduras, and the Philippines. The quicksilver and the bulls cost the king three hundred thousand florins, but he sold them for five million. The price at, which the bulls were to be sold varied-according to the letters of advice found in the ships—from two to four reals a piece, and the inhabitants of those conquered regions were obliged to buy them. "From all this," says a contemporary chronicler; "is to be seen what a thrifty trader was the king."

The affairs of France were in such confusion that it was impossible for them, according to Farnese, to remain in such condition much longer without bringing about entire decomposition. Every man was doing as he chose—whether governor of a city, commander of a district, or gentleman in his castle. Many important nobles and prelates followed the Bearnese party, and Mayenne was entitled to credit for doing as well as he did. There was no pretence, however, that his creditable conduct was due to anything but the hope of being well paid. "If your Majesty should decide to keep Mayenne," said Alexander, "you can only do it with large: sums of money. He is a good Catholic and very firm in his purpose, but is so much opposed by his own party, that if I had not so stimulated him by hopes of his own grandeur, he would have grown desperate—such small means has he of maintaining his party—and, it is to be feared, he would have made arrangements with Bearne, who offers him carte-blanche."

The disinterested man had expressed his assent to the views of Philip in regard to the assembly of the estates and the election of king, but had claimed the sum of six hundred thousand dollars as absolutely necessary to the support of himself and followers until those events should occur. Alexander not having that sum at his disposal was inclined to defer matters, but was more and more confirmed in his opinion that the Duke was a "man of truth, faith, and his word." He had distinctly agreed that no king should be elected, not satisfactory to Philip, and had "stipulated in return that he should have in this case, not only the second place in the kingdom, but some very great and special reward in full property."

Thus the man of truth, faith, and his word had no idea of selling himself cheap, but manifested as much commercial genius as the Fuggers themselves could have displayed, had they been employed as brokers in these mercantile transactions.

Above all things, Alexander implored the king to be expeditious, resolute, and liberal; for, after all, the Bearnese might prove a more formidable competitor than he was deemed. "These matters must be arranged while the iron is hot," he said, "in order that the name and memory of the Bearne and of all his family may be excluded at once and forever; for your Majesty must not doubt that the whole kingdom inclines to him, both because he is natural successor, to the crowns and because in this way the civil war would cease. The only thing that gives trouble is the religions defect, so that if this should be remedied in appearance, even if falsely, men would spare no pains nor expense in his cause."

No human being at that moment, assuredly, could look into the immediate future accurately enough to see whether the name and memory of the man, whom his adherents called Henry the Fourth of France, and whom Spaniards, legitimists and enthusiastic papists, called the Prince of Bearne, were to be for ever excluded from the archives of France; whether Henry, after spending the whole of his life as a pretender, was destined to bequeath the same empty part to his descendants, should they think it worth their while to play it. Meantime the sages smiled superior at his delusion; while Alexander Farnese, on the contrary, better understanding the chances of the great game which they were all playing, made bold to tell his master that all hearts in France were inclining to their natural lord. "Differing from your Majesty," said he, "I am of opinion that there is no better means of excluding him than to make choice of the Duke of Mayenne, as a person agreeable to the people, and who could only reign by your permission and support."

Thus, after much hesitation and circumlocution, the nephew made up his mind to chill his uncle's hopes of the crown, and to speak a decided opinion in behalf of the man of his word, faith and truth.

And thus through the whole of the two memorable campaigns made by Alexander in France, he never failed

to give his master the most accurate pictures of the country, and an interior view of its politics; urging above all the absolute necessity of providing much more liberal supplies for the colossal adventure in which he was engaged. "Money and again money is what is required," he said. "The principal matter is to be accomplished with money, and the particular individuals must be bought with money. The good will of every French city must be bought with money. Mayenne must be humoured. He is getting dissatisfied. Very probably he is intriguing with Bearne. Everybody is pursuing his private ends. Mayenne has never abandoned his own wish to be king, although he sees the difficulties in the way; and while he has not the power to do us as much good as is thought, it is certainly in his hands to do us a great deal of injury."

When his army was rapidly diminishing by disease, desertion, mutiny, and death, he vehemently and perpetually denounced the utter inadequacy of the king's means to his vast projects. He protested that he was not to blame for the ruin likely to come upon the whole enterprise. He had besought, remonstrated, reasoned with Philip—in vain. He assured his master that in the condition of weakness in which they found themselves, not very triumphant negotiations could be expected, but that he would do his best. "The Frenchmen," he said, "are getting tired of our disorders, and scandalized by our weakness, misery, and poverty. They disbelieve the possibility of being liberated through us."

He was also most diligent in setting before the king's eyes the dangerous condition of the obedient Netherlands, the poverty of the finances, the mutinous degeneration of the once magnificent Spanish army, the misery of the country, the ruin of the people, the discontent of the nobles, the rapid strides made by the republic, the vast improvement in its military organization, the rising fame of its young stadholder, the thrift of its exchequer, the rapid development of its commerce, the menacing aspect which it assumed towards all that was left of Spanish power in those regions.

Moreover, in the midst of the toils and anxieties of war-making and negotiation, he had found time to discover and to send to his master the left leg of the glorious apostle St. Philip, and the head of the glorious martyr St. Lawrence, to enrich his collection of relics; and it may be doubted whether these treasures were not as welcome to the king as would have been the news of a decisive victory.

During the absence of Farnese in his expeditions against the Bearnese, the government of his provinces was temporarily in the hands of Peter Ernest Mansfeld.

This grizzled old fighter—testy, choleric, superannuated—was utterly incompetent for his post. He was a mere tool in the hands of his son. Count Charles hated Parma very cordially, and old Count Peter was made to believe himself in danger of being poisoned or poniarded by the duke. He was perpetually wrangling with, importuning and insulting him in consequence, and writing malicious letters to the king in regard to him. The great nobles, Arschot, Chimay, Berlaymont, Champagny, Arenberg, and the rest, were all bickering among themselves, and agreeing in nothing save in hatred to Farnese.

A tight rein, a full exchequer, a well-ordered and well-paid army, and his own constant patience, were necessary, as Alexander too well knew, to make head against the republic, and to hold what was left of the Netherlands. But with a monthly allowance, and a military force not equal to his own estimates for the Netherland work, he was ordered to go forth from the Netherlands to conquer France—and with it the dominion of the world—for the recluse of the Escorial.

Very soon it was his duty to lay bare to his master, still more unequivocally than ever, the real heart of Mayenne. No one could surpass Alexander in this skilful vivisection of political characters; and he soon sent the information that the Duke was in reality very near closing his bargain with the Bearnese, while amusing Philip and drawing largely from his funds.

Thus, while faithfully doing his master's work with sword and pen, with an adroitness such as no other man could have matched, it was a necessary consequence that Philip should suspect, should detest, should resolve to sacrifice him. While assuring his nephew, as we have seen, that elaborate, slanderous reports and protocols concerning him, sent with such regularity by the chivalrous Moreo and the other spies, had been totally disregarded, even if they had ever met his eye, he was quietly preparing—in the midst of all these most strenuous efforts of Alexander, in the field at peril of his life, in the cabinet at the risk of his soul—to deprive him of his office, and to bring him, by stratagem if possible, but otherwise by main force, from the Netherlands to Spain.

This project, once-resolved upon, the king proceeded to execute with that elaborate attention to detail, with that feline stealth which distinguished him above all kings or chiefs of police that have ever existed. Had there been a murder at the end of the plot, as perhaps there was to be—Philip could not have enjoyed himself more. Nothing surpassed the industry for mischief of this royal invalid.

The first thing to be done was of course the inditing of a most affectionate epistle to his nephew.

"Nephew," said he, "you know the confidence which I have always placed in you and all that I have put in your hands, and I know how much you are to me, and how earnestly you work in my service, and so, if I could have you at the same time in several places, it would be a great relief to me. Since this cannot be however, I wish to make use of your assistance, according to the times and occasions, in order that I may have some certainty as to the manner in which all this business is to be managed, may see why the settlement of affairs in France is thus delayed, and what the state of things in Christendom generally is, and may consult with, you about an army which I am getting levied here, and about certain schemes now on foot in regard to the remedy for all this; all which makes me desire your presence here for some time, even if a short time, in order to resolve upon and arrange with the aid of your advice and opinion, many affairs concerning the public good and facilitate their execution by means of your encouragement and presence, and to obtain the repose which I hope for in putting them into your hands. And so I charge and command you that, if you desire to content me, you use all possible diligence to let me see you here as soon as possible, and that you start at once for Genoa."

He was further directed to leave Count Mansfeld at the head of affairs during this temporary absence, as had been the case so often before, instructing him to make use of the Marquis of Cerralbo, who was already there, to lighten labours that might prove too much for a man of Mansfeld's advanced age.

"I am writing to the marquis," continued the king, "telling him that he is to obey all your orders. As to the

reasons of your going away, you will give out that it is a decision of your own, founded on good cause, or that it is a summons of mine, but full of confidence and good will towards you, as you see that it is."

The date of this letter was 20th February, 1592.

The secret instructions to the man who was thus to obey all the duke's orders were explicit enough upon that point, although they were wrapped in the usual closely-twisted phraseology which distinguished Philip's style when his purpose was most direct.

Cerralbo was entrusted with general directions as to the French matter, and as to peace negotiations with "the Islands;" but the main purport of his mission was to remove Alexander Farnese. This was to be done by fair means, if possible; if not, he was to be deposed and sent home by force.

This was to be the reward of all the toil and danger through which he had grown grey and broken in the king's service.

"When you get to the Netherlands" (for the instructions were older than the letter to Alexander just cited), "you are," said the king, "to treat of the other two matters until the exact time arrives for the third, taking good care not to, cut the thread of good progress in the affairs of France if by chance they are going on well there.

"When the time arrives to treat of commission number three," continued his Majesty, "you will take occasion of the arrival of the courier of 20th February, and will give with much secrecy the letter of that date to the duke; showing him at the same time the first of the two which you will have received."

If the duke showed the letter addressed to him by his uncle—which the reader has already seen—then the marquis was to discuss with him the details of the journey, and comment upon the benefits and increased reputation which would be the result of his return to Spain.

"But if the duke should not show you the letter," proceeded Philip, "and you suspect that he means to conceal and equivocate about the particulars of it, you can show him your letter number two, in which it is stated that you have received a copy of the letter to the duke. This will make the step easier."

Should the duke declare himself ready to proceed to Spain on the ground indicated—that the king had need of his services—the marquis was then to hasten his departure as earnestly as possible. Every pains were to be taken to overcome any objections that might be made by the duke on the score of ill health, while the great credit which attached to this summons to consult with the king in such arduous affairs was to be duly enlarged upon. Should Count Mansfeld meantime die of old age, and should Farnese insist the more vehemently, on that account, upon leaving his son the Prince Ranuccio in his post as governor, the marquis was authorised to accept the proposition for the moment—although secretly instructed that such an appointment was really quite out of the question—if by so doing the father could be torn from the place immediately.

But if all would not do, and if it should become certain that the duke would definitively refuse to take his departure, it would then become necessary to tell him clearly, but secretly, that no excuse would be accepted, but that go he must; and that if he did not depart voluntarily within a fixed time, he would be publicly deprived of office and conducted to Spain by force.

But all these things were to be managed with the secrecy and mystery so dear to the heart of Philip. The marquis was instructed to go first to the castle of Antwerp, as if upon financial business, and there begin his operations. Should he find at last all his private negotiations and coaxings of no avail, he was then to make use of his secret letters from the king to the army commanders, the leading nobles of the country, and of the neighbouring princes, all of whom were to be undeceived in regard to the duke, and to be informed of the will of his majesty.

The real successor of Farnese was to be the Archduke Albert, Cardinal of Austria, son of Archduke Ferdinand, and the letters on this subject were to be sent by a "decent and confidential person" so soon as it should become obvious that force would be necessary in order to compel the departure of Alexander. For if it came to open rupture, it would be necessary to have the cardinal ready to take the place. If the affair were arranged amicably, then the new governor might proceed more at leisure. The marquis was especially enjoined, in case the duke should be in France, and even if it should be necessary for him to follow him there on account of commissions number one and two, not to say a word to him then of his recall, for fear of damaging matters in that kingdom. He was to do his best to induce him to return to Flanders, and when they were both there, he was to begin his operations.

Thus, with minute and artistic treachery, did Philip provide for the disgrace and ruin of the man who was his near blood relation, and who had served him most faithfully from earliest youth. It was not possible to carry out the project immediately, for, as it has already been narrated, Farnese, after achieving, in spite of great obstacles due to the dulness of the king alone, an extraordinary triumph, had been dangerously wounded, and was unable for a brief interval to attend to public affairs.

On the conclusion of his Rouen campaign he had returned to the Netherlands, almost immediately betaking himself to the waters of Spa. The Marquis de Cerralbo meanwhile had been superseded in his important secret mission by the Count of Fuentes, who received the same instructions as had been provided for the marquis.

But ere long it seemed to become unnecessary to push matters to extremities. Farnese, although nominally the governor, felt himself unequal to take the field against the vigorous young commander who was carrying everything before him in the north and east. Upon the Mansfelds was the responsibility for saving Steenwyk and Coeworden, and to the Mansfelds did Verdugo send piteously, but in vain, for efficient help. For the Mansfelds and other leading personages in the obedient Netherlands were mainly occupied at that time in annoying Farnese, calumniating his actions, laying obstacles in the way of his administration, military and civil, and bringing him into contempt with the populace. When the weary soldier—broken in health, wounded and harassed with obtaining triumphs for his master such as no other living man could have gained with the means placed at his disposal—returned to drink the waters, previously to setting forth anew upon the task of achieving the impossible, he was made the mark of petty insults on the part of both the Mansfelds. Neither of

them paid their respects to him; ill as he was, until four days after his arrival. When the duke subsequently called a council; Count Peter refused to attend it on account of having slept ill the night before. Champagny; who was one of, the chief mischief-makers, had been banished by Parma to his house in Burgundy. He became very much alarmed, and was afraid of losing his head. He tried to conciliate the duke, but finding it difficult he resolved to turn monk, and so went to the convent of Capuchins, and begged hard to be admitted a member. They refused him on account of his age and infirmities. He tried a Franciscan monastery with not much better success, and then obeyed orders and went to his Burgundy mansion; having been assured by Farnese that he was not to lose his head. Alexander was satisfied with that arrangement, feeling sure, he said, that so soon as his back was turned Champagny would come out of his convent before the term of probation had expired, and begin to make mischief again. A once valiant soldier, like Champagny, whose conduct in the famous "fury of Antwerp" was so memorable; and whose services both in field and-cabinet had, been so distinguished, fallen so low as to, be used as a tool by the Mansfelds against a man like Farnese; and to be rejected as unfit company by Flemish friars, is not a cheerful spectacle to contemplate.

The walls of the Mansfeld house and gardens, too, were decorated by Count Charles with caricatures, intending to illustrate the indignities put upon his father: and himself.

Among others, one picture represented Count Peter lying tied hand and foot, while people were throwing filth upon him; Count Charles being pourtrayed as meantime being kicked away from the command of a battery of cannon by, De la Motte. It seemed strange that the Mansfelds should, make themselves thus elaborately ridiculous, in order to irritate Farnese; but thus it was. There was so much stir, about these works of art that Alexander transmitted copies of them to the king, whereupon Charles Mansfeld, being somewhat alarmed, endeavoured to prove that they had been entirely misunderstood. The venerable personage lying on the ground, he explained, was not his father, but Socrates. He found it difficult however to account for the appearance of La Motte, with his one arm wanting and with artillery by his side, because, as Farnese justly remarked, artillery had not been invented in the time of Socrates, nor was it recorded that the sage had lost an arm.

Thus passed the autumn of 1592, and Alexander, having as he supposed somewhat recruited his failing strength, prepared, according to his master's orders for a new campaign in France. For with almost preterhuman malice Philip was employing the man whom he had doomed to disgrace, perhaps to death, and whom he kept under constant secret supervision, in those laborious efforts to conquer without an army and to purchase a kingdom with an empty purse, in which, as it was destined, the very last sands of Parma's life were to run away.

Suffering from a badly healed wound, from water on the chest, degeneration of the heart, and gout in the limbs, dropsical, enfeebled, broken down into an old man before his time, Alexander still confronted disease and death with as heroic a front as he had ever manifested in the field to embattled Hollanders and Englishmen, or to the still more formidable array of learned pedants and diplomatists in the hall of negotiation. This wreck of a man was still fitter to lead armies and guide councils than any soldier or statesman that Philip could call into his service, yet the king's cruel hand was ready to stab the dying man in the dark.

Nothing could surpass the spirit with which the soldier was ready to do battle with his best friend, coming in the guise of an enemy. To the last moment, lifted into the saddle, he attended personally as usual to the details of his new campaign, and was dead before he would confess himself mortal. On the 3rd of December, 1592, in the city of Arran, he fainted after retiring at his usual hour to bed, and thus breathed his last.

According to the instructions in his last will, he was laid out barefoot in the robe and cowl of a Capuchin monk. Subsequently his remains were taken to Parma, and buried under the pavement of the little Franciscan church. A pompous funeral, in which the Italians and Spaniards quarrelled and came to blows for precedence, was celebrated in Brussels, and a statue of the hero was erected in the capitol at Rome.

The first soldier and most unscrupulous diplomatist of his age, he died when scarcely past his prime, a wearied; broken-hearted old man. His triumphs, military and civil, have been recorded in these pages, and his character has been elaborately pourtrayed. Were it possible to conceive of an Italian or Spaniard of illustrious birth in the sixteenth century, educated in the school of Machiavelli, at the feet of Philip, as anything but the supple slave of a master and the blind instrument of a Church, one might for a moment regret that so many gifts of genius and valour had been thrown away or at least lost to mankind. Could the light of truth ever pierce the atmosphere in which such men have their being; could the sad music of humanity ever penetrate to their ears; could visions of a world—on this earth or beyond it—not exclusively the property of kings and high-priests be revealed to them, one might lament that one so eminent among the sons of women had not been a great man. But it is a weakness to hanker for any possible connection between truth and Italian or Spanish statecraft of that day. The truth was not in it nor in him, and high above his heroic achievements, his fortitude, his sagacity, his chivalrous self-sacrifice, shines forth the baleful light of his perpetual falsehood.

[I pass over, as beneath the level of history, a great variety of censorious and probably calumnious reports as to the private character of Farnese, with which the secret archives of the times are filled. Especially Champagny, the man by whom the duke was most hated and feared, made himself busy in compiling the slanderous chronicle in which the enemies of Farnese, both in Spain and the Netherlands, took so much delight. According to the secret history thus prepared for the enlightenment of the king and his ministers, the whole administration of the Netherlands—especially the financial department, with the distribution of offices—was in the hands of two favourites, a beardless secretary named Cosmo e Massi, and a lady of easy virtue called Franceline, who seems to have had a numerous host of relatives and friends to provide for at the public expense. Towards the latter end of the duke's life, it was even said that the seal of the finance department was in the hands of his valet-de-chambre, who, in his master's frequent absences, was in the habit of issuing drafts upon the receiver-general. As the valet-dechambre was described as an idiot who did not know how to read, it

may be believed that the finances fell into confusion. Certainly, if such statements were to be accepted, it would be natural enough that for every million dollars expended by the king in the provinces, not more than one hundred thousand were laid out for the public service; and this is the estimate made by Champagny, who, as a distinguished financier and once chief of the treasury in the provinces, might certainly be thought to know something of the subject. But Champagny was beside himself with rage, hatred.]

CHAPTER XXIX.

Effect of the death of Farnese upon Philip's schemes—Priestly flattery and counsel—Assembly of the States-General of France—Meeting of the Leaguers at the Louvre—Conference at Surene between the chiefs of the League and the "political" leaders—Henry convokes an assembly of bishops, theologians, and others—Strong feeling on all sides on the subject of the succession—Philip commands that the Infanta and the Duke of Guise be elected King and Queen of France—Manifesto of the Duke of Mayenne—Formal re-admission of Henry to the Roman faith—The pope refuses to consent to his reconciliation with the Church—His consecration with the sacred oil—Entry of the king into Paris—Departure of the Spanish garrison from the capital—Dissimulation of the Duke of Mayenne—He makes terms with Henry—Grief of Queen Elizabeth on receipt of the communications from France.

During the past quarter of a century there had been tragic scenes enough in France, but now the only man who could have conducted Philip's schemes to a tragic if not a successful issue was gone. Friendly death had been swifter than Philip, and had removed Alexander from the scene before his master had found fitting opportunity to inflict the disgrace on which he was resolved. Meantime, Charles Mansfeld made a feeble attempt to lead an army from the Netherlands into France, to support the sinking fortunes of the League; but it was not for that general-of-artillery to attempt the well-graced part of the all-accomplished Farnese with much hope of success. A considerable force of Spanish infantry, too, had been sent to Paris, where they had been received with much enthusiasm; a very violent and determined churchman, Sega, archbishop of Piacenza, and cardinal-legate, having arrived to check on the part of the holy father any attempt by the great wavering heretic to get himself readmitted into the fold of the faithful.

The King of Spain considered it his duty, as well as his unquestionable right, to interfere in the affairs of France, and to save the cause of religion, civilization and humanity, in the manner so dear to the civilization-savers, by reducing that distracted country—utterly unable to govern itself—under his sceptre. To achieve this noble end no bribery was too wholesale, no violence too brutal, no intrigue too paltry. It was his sacred and special mission to save France from herself. If he should fail, he could at least carve her in pieces, and distribute her among himself and friends. Frenchmen might assist him in either of these arrangements, but it was absurd to doubt that on him devolved the work and the responsibility. Yet among his advisers were some who doubted whether the purchase of the grandees of France was really the most judicious course to pursue. There was a general and uneasy feeling that the grandees were making sport of the Spanish monarch, and that they would be inclined to remain his stipendiaries for an indefinite period, without doing their share of the work. A keen Jesuit, who had been much in France, often whispered to Philip that he was going astray. "Those who best understand the fit remedy for this unfortunate kingdom, and know the tastes and temper of the nation," said he, "doubt giving these vast presents and rewards in order that the nobles of France may affect your cause and further your schemes. It is the greatest delusion, because they love nothing but their own interest, and for this reason wish for no king at all, but prefer that the kingdom should remain topsy-turvy in order that they may enjoy the Spanish doubloons, as they say themselves almost publicly, dancing and feasting; that they may take a castle to-day, and to-morrow a city, and the day, after a province, and so on indefinitely. What matters it to them that blood flows, and that the miserable people are destroyed, who alone are good for anything?"

"The immediate cause of the ruin of France," continued the Jesuit, "comes from two roots which must be torn up; the one is the extreme ignorance and scandalous life of the ecclesiastics, the other is the tyranny and the abominable life of the nobility, who with sacrilege and insatiable avarice have entered upon the property of the Church. This nobility is divided into three factions. The first, and not the least, is heretic; the second and the most pernicious is politic or atheist; the third and last is catholic. All these, although they differ in opinion, are the same thing in corruption of life and manners, so that there is no choice among them." He then proceeded to set forth how entirely, the salvation of France depended on the King of Spain. "Morally speaking," he said, "it is impossible for any Frenchman to apply the remedy. For this two things are wanting; intense zeal for the honour of God, and power. I ask now what Frenchman: has both these, or either of them. No one certainly that we know. It is the King of Spain who alone in the world has the zeal and the power. No man who knows the insolence and arrogance of the French nature will believe that even if a king should be elected out of France he would be obeyed by the others. The first to oppose him would be Mayenne; even if a king were chosen from his family, unless everything should be given him that he asked; which would be impossible."

Thus did the wily Priest instil into the ready ears of Philip additional reasons for believing himself the incarnate providence of God. When were priestly flatterers ever wanting to pour this poison into the souls of tyrants? It is in vain for us to ask why it is permitted that so much power for evil should be within the grasp of one wretched human creature, but it is at least always instructive to ponder the career of these crowned conspirators, and sometimes consoling to find its conclusion different from the goal intended. So the Jesuit

advised the king not to be throwing away his money upon particular individuals, but with the funds which they were so unprofitably consuming to form a jolly army ('gallardo egercito') of fifteen thousand foot, and five thousand-horse, all Spaniards, under a Spanish general—not a Frenchman being admitted into it—and then to march forward, occupy all the chief towns, putting Spanish garrisons into them, but sparing the people, who now considered the war eternal, and who were eaten up by both armies. In a short time the king might accomplish all he wished, for it was not in the power of the Bearnese to make considerable resistance for any length of time.

This was the plan of Father Odo for putting Philip on the throne of France, and at the same time lifting up the downtrodden Church, whose priests, according to his statement, were so profligate, and whose tenets were rejected by all but a small minority of the governing classes of the country. Certainly it did not lack precision, but it remained to be seen whether the Bearnese was to prove so very insignificant an antagonist as the sanguine priest supposed.

For the third party—the moderate Catholics—had been making immense progress in France, while the diplomacy of Philip had thus far steadily counteracted their efforts at Rome. In vain had the Marquis Pisani, envoy of the politicians' party, endeavoured to soften the heart of Clement towards Henry. The pope lived in mortal fear of Spain, and the Duke of Sessa, Philip's ambassador to the holy see, denouncing all these attempts on the part of the heretic, and his friends, and urging that it was much better for Rome that the pernicious kingdom of France should be dismembered and subdivided, assured his holiness that Rome should be starved, occupied, annihilated, if such abominable schemes should be for an instant favoured.

Clement took to his bed with sickness brought on by all this violence, but had nothing for it but to meet Pisani and other agents of the same cause with a peremptory denial, and send most, stringent messages to his legate in Paris, who needed no prompting.

There had already been much issuing of bulls by the pope, and much burning of bulls by the hangman, according to decrees of the parliament of Chalons and other friendly tribunals, and burning of Chalons decrees by Paris hangmen, and edicts in favour of Protestants at Nantz and other places—measures the enactment, repeal, and reenactment of which were to mark the ebb and flow of the great tide of human opinion on the most important of subjects, and the traces of which were to be for a long time visible on the shores of time.

Early in 1593 Mayenne, yielding to the pressure of the Spanish party, reluctantly consented to assemble the States-General of France, in order that a king might be chosen. The duke, who came to be thoroughly known to Alexander Farnese before the death of that subtle Italian, relied on his capacity to outwit all the other champions of the League and agents of Philip now that the master-spirit had been removed. As firmly opposed as ever to the election of any other candidate but himself, or possibly his son, according to a secret proposition which he had lately made to the pope, he felt himself obliged to confront the army of Spanish diplomatists, Roman prelates, and learned doctors, by whom it was proposed to exclude the Prince of Bearne from his pretended rights. But he did not, after all, deceive them as thoroughly as he imagined. The Spaniards shrewdly suspected the French tactics, and the whole business was but a round game of deception, in which no one was much deceived, who ever might be destined ultimately, to pocket the stakes: "I know from a very good source," said Fuentes, "that Mayenne, Guise, and the rest of them are struggling hard in order not to submit to Bearne, and will suffer everything your Majesty may do to them, even if you kick them in the mouth, but still there is no conclusion on the road we are travelling, at least not the one which your Majesty desires. They will go on procrastinating and gaining time, making authority for themselves out of your Majesty's grandeur, until the condition of things comes which they are desiring. Feria tells me that they are still taking your Majesty's money, but I warn your Majesty that it is only to fight off Bearne, and that they are only pursuing their own ends at your Majesty's expense."

Perhaps Mayenne had already a sufficiently clear insight into the not far-distant future, but he still presented himself in Spanish cloak and most ultramontane physiognomy. His pockets were indeed full of Spanish coin at that moment, for he had just claimed and received eighty-eight thousand-nine hundred dollars for back debts, together with one hundred and eighty, thousand dollars more to distribute among the deputies of the estates. "All I can say about France," said Fuentes, "is that it is one great thirst for money. The Duke of Feria believes in a good result, but I think that Mayenne is only trying to pocket as much money as he can."

Thus fortified, the Duke of Mayenne issued the address to the States-General of the kingdom, to meet at an early day in order to make arrangements to secure religion and peace, and to throw off the possible yoke of the heretic pretender. The great seal affixed to the document represented an empty throne, instead of the usual effigy of a king.

The cardinal-legate issued a thundering manifesto at the same time sustaining Mayenne and virulently denouncing the Bearnese.

The politicians' party now seized the opportunity to impress upon Henry that the decisive moment was come.

The Spaniard, the priest; and the League, had heated the furnace. The iron was at a white heat. Now was the time to strike. Secretary of State Revol Gaspar de Schomberg, Jacques Auguste de Thou, the eminent historian, and other influential personages urged the king to give to the great question the only possible solution.

Said the king with much meekness, "If I am in error, let those who attack me with so much fury instruct me, and show me the way of salvation. I hate those who act against their conscience. I pardon all those who are inspired by truly religious motives, and I am ready to receive all into favour whom the love of peace, not the chagrin of ill-will, has disgusted with the war."

There was a great meeting of Leaguers at the Louvre, to listen to Mayenne, the cardinal-legate, Cardinal Pelleve, the Duke of Guise, and other chieftains. The Duke of Feria made a long speech in Latin, setting forth the Spanish policy, veiled as usual, but already sufficiently well known, and assuring the assembly that the King of Spain desired nothing so much as the peace of France and of all the world, together with the

supremacy of the Roman Church. Whether these objects could best be attained by the election of Philip or of his daughter, as sovereign, with the Archduke Ernest as king-consort, or with perhaps the Duke of Guise or some other eligible husband, were fair subjects for discussion. No selfish motive influenced the king, and he placed all his wealth and all his armies at the disposal of the League to carry out these great projects.

Then there was a conference at Surene between the chiefs the League and the "political" leaders; the Archbishop of Lyons, the cardinal-legate, Villars, Admiral of France and defender of Rouen, Belin, Governor of Paris, President Jeannin, and others upon one side; upon the other, the Archbishop of Bourges, Bellievre, Schomberg, Revol, and De Thou.

The Archbishop of Lyons said that their party would do nothing either to frustrate or to support the mission of Pisani, and that the pope would, as ever, do all that could be done to maintain the interests of the true religion.

The Archbishop of Bourges, knowing well the meaning of such fine phrases, replied that he had much respect for the holy father, but that popes had now, become the slaves and tools of the King of Spain, who, because he was powerful, held them subject to his caprice.

At an adjourned meeting at the same place, the Archbishop of Lyons said that all questions had been asked and answered. All now depended on the pope, whom the League would always obey. If the pope would accept the reconciliation of the Prince of Bearne it was well. He, hoped that his conversion would be sincere.

The political archbishop (of Bourges) replied to the League's archbishop, that there was no time for delays, and for journeys by land and sea to Rome. The least obstruction might prove fatal to both parties. Let the Leaguers now show that the serenity of their faces was but the mirror of their minds.

But the Leaguers' archbishop said that he could make no further advances. So ended the conference.'

The chiefs of the politicians now went to the king and informed him that the decisive moment had arrived.

Henry had preserved: his coolness throughout. Amid all the hubbub of learned doctors of law, archbishops-Leaguer and political-Sorbonne pedants, solemn grandees from Spain with Latin orations in their pockets, intriguing Guises, huckstering Mayennes, wrathful Huguenots, sanguinary cardinal-legates, threatening world-monarchs—heralded by Spanish musketeers, Italian lancers, and German reiters—shrill screams of warning from the English queen, grim denunciations from Dutch Calvinists, scornful repulses from the holy father; he kept his temper and his eye-sight, as perfectly as he had ever done through the smoke and din of the wildest battle-field. None knew better than he how to detect the weakness of the adversary, and to sound the charge upon his wavering line.

He blew the blast—sure that loyal Catholics and Protestants alike would now follow him pell-mell.

On the 16th, May, 1593, he gave notice that he consented to get himself instructed, and that he summoned an assembly at Mantes on the 15th July, of bishops, theologians, princes, lords, and courts of parliament to hold council, and to advise him what was best to do for religion and the State.

Meantime he returned to the siege of Dreux, made an assault on the place, was repulsed, and then hung nine prisoners of war in full sight of the garrison as a punishment for their temerity in resisting him. The place soon after capitulated (8th July, 1593).

The interval between the summons and the assembling of the clerical and lay notables at Mantes was employed by the Leaguers in frantic and contradictory efforts to retrieve a game which the most sagacious knew to be lost. But the politicians were equal to the occasion, and baffled them at every point.

The Leaguers' archbishop inveighed bitterly against the abominable edicts recently issued in favour of the Protestants.

The political archbishop (of Bourges) replied not by defending; but by warmly disapproving, those decrees of toleration, by excusing the king for having granted them for a temporary purpose, and by asserting positively that, so soon as the king should be converted, he would no longer countenance such measures.

It is superfluous to observe that very different language was held on the part of Henry to the English and Dutch Protestants, and to the Huguenots of his own kingdom.

And there were many meetings of the Leaguers in Paris, many belligerent speeches by the cardinal legate, proclaiming war to the knife rather than that the name of Henry the heretic should ever be heard of again as candidate for the throne, various propositions spasmodically made in full assembly by Feria, Ybarra, Tassis, the jurisconsult Mendoza, and other Spanish agents in favour of the Infanta as queen of France, with Archduke Ernest or the Duke of Guise, or any other eligible prince, for her husband.

The League issued a formal and furious invective in answer to Henry's announcement; proving by copious citations from Jeremiah, St. Epiphany; St. Jerome, St. Cyprian, and St. Bernard, that it was easier for a leopard to change his spots or for a blackamoor to be washed white; than for a heretic to be converted, and that the king was thinking rather of the crown of France than of a heavenly crown, in his approaching conversion—an opinion which there were few to gainsay.

And the Duke of Nemours wrote to his half-brother, the Duke of Mayenne; offering to use all his influence to bring about Mayenne's election as king on condition that if these efforts failed, Mayenne should do his best to procure the election of Nemours.

And the Parliament of Paris formally and prospectively proclaimed any election of a foreigner null and void, and sent deputies to Mayenne urging him never to consent to the election of the Infanta.

What help, said they, can the League expect from the old and broken Philip; from a king who in thirty years has not been able, with all the resources of his kingdoms, to subdue the revolted provinces of the Netherlands? How can he hope to conquer France? Pay no further heed to the legate, they said, who is laughing in his sleeve at the miseries and distractions of our country. So spake the deputies of the League-Parliament to the great captain of the League, the Duke of Mayenne. It was obvious that the "great and holy confederacy" was becoming less confident of its invincibility. Madame League was suddenly grown decrepit in the eyes of her adorers.

Mayenne was angry at the action of the Parliament, and vehemently swore that he would annul their

decree. Parliament met his threats with dignity, and resolved to stand by the decree, even if they all died in their places.

At the same time the Duke of Feria suddenly produced in full assembly of Leaguers a written order from Philip that the Duke of Guise and the Infanta should at once be elected king and queen. Taken by surprise, Mayenne dissembled his rage in masterly-fashion, promised Feria to support the election, and at once began to higgle for conditions. He stipulated that he should have for himself the governments of Champagne, Burgundy, and La Brie, and that they should be hereditary in his family: He furthermore demanded that Guise should cede to him the principality of Joinville, and that they should pay him on the spot in hard money two hundred thousand crowns in gold, six hundred thousand more in different payments, together with an annual payment of fifty thousand crowns.

It was obvious that the duke did not undervalue himself; but he had after all no intention of falling into the trap set for him. "He has made these promises (as above given) in writing," said the Duke of Savoy's envoy to his master, "but he will never keep them. The Duchess of Mayenne could not help telling me that her husband will never consent that the Duke of Guise should have the throne." From this resolve he had never wavered, and was not likely to do so now. Accordingly the man "of his word, of faith, and truth," whom even the astute Farnese had at times half believed in, and who had received millions of Philip's money, now thought it time to break with Philip. He issued a manifesto, in which he observed that the States-General of France had desired that Philip should be elected King of France, and carry out his design of a universal monarchy, as the only-means of ensuring the safety of the Catholic religion and the pacification of the world. It was feared, however, said Mayenne; that the king might come to the same misfortunes which befell his father, who, when it was supposed that he was inspired only by private ambition; and by the hope of placing a hereditary universal crown in his family, had excited the animosity of the princes of the empire. "If a mere suspicion had caused so great a misfortune in the empire," continued the man of his word, "what will the princes of all Europe do when they find his Majesty elected king of France, and grown by increase of power so formidable to the world? Can it be doubted that they will fly to arms at once, and give all their support to the King of Navarre, heretic though he be? What motive had so many princes to traverse Philip's designs in the Netherlands, but desire to destroy the enormous power which they feared? Therefore had the Queen, of England, although refusing the sovereignty, defended the independence of the Netherlands these fifteen years.

"However desirable," continued Mayenne, "that this universal monarchy, for which the house of Austria has so long been working, should be established, yet the king is too prudent not to see the difficulties in his way. Although he has conquered Portugal, he is prevented by the fleets of Holland and England from taking possession of the richest of the Portuguese possessions, the islands and the Indies. He will find in France insuperable objections to his election as king, for he could in this case well reproach the Leaguers with having been changed from Frenchmen into Spaniards. He must see that his case is hopeless in France, he who for thirty years has been in vain endeavouring to re-establish his authority in the Netherlands. It would be impossible in the present position of affairs to become either the king or the protector of France. The dignity of France allows it not."

Mayenne then insisted on the necessity of a truce with the royalists or politicians, and, assembling the estates at the Louvre on the 4th July, he read a written paper declining for the moment to hold an election for king.

John Baptist Tassis, next day, replied by declaring that in this case Philip would send no more succours of men or money; for that the only effectual counter-poison to the pretended conversion of the Prince of Bearne was the immediate election of a king.

Thus did Mayenne escape from the snare in which the Spaniards thought to catch the man who, as they now knew, was changing every day, and was true to nothing save his own interests.

And now the great day had come. The conversion of Henry to the Roman faith, fixed long before for—the 23rd July,—1593, formally took place at the time appointed.

From six in the morning till the stroke of noon did Henry listen to the exhortations and expoundings of the learned prelates and doctors whom he had convoked, the politic Archbishop of Bourges taking the lead in this long-expected instruction. After six mortal hours had come to an end, the king rose from his knees, somewhat wearied, but entirely instructed and convinced. He thanked the bishops for having taught him that of which he was before quite ignorant, and assured them that; after having invoked the light, of the Holy Ghost upon his musings, he should think seriously over what they had just taught him, in order to come to a resolution salutary to himself and to the State.

Nothing could be more candid. Next day, at eight in the morning, there was a great show in the cathedral of Saint Denis, and the population of Paris, notwithstanding the prohibition of the League authorities, rushed thither in immense crowds to witness the ceremony of the reconciliation of the king. Henry went to the church, clothed as became a freshly purified heretic, in white satin doublet and hose, white silk stockings, and white silk shoes with white roses in them; but with a black hat and a black mantle. There was a great procession with blare of trumpet and beat of drum. The streets were strewn with flowers.

As Henry entered the great portal of the church, he found the Archbishop of Bourges, seated in state, effulgent in mitre and chasuble, and surrounded by other magnificent prelates in gorgeous attire.

"Who are you, and what do you want?" said the arch-bishop.

"I am the king," meekly replied Henry, "and I demand to be received into the bosom of the Roman Catholic Church."

"Do you wish it sincerely?" asked the prelate.

"I wish it with all my heart," said the king.

Then throwing himself on his knees, the Bearne—great champion of the Huguenots—protested before God that he would live and die in the Catholic faith, and that he renounced all heresy. A passage was with difficulty opened through the crowd, and he was then led to the high altar, amid the acclamations of the

people. Here he knelt devoutly and repeated his protestations. His unction and contrition were most impressive, and the people, of course, wept piteously. The king, during the progress of the ceremony, with hands clasped together and adoring the Eucharist with his eyes, or, as the Host was elevated, smiting himself thrice upon the breast, was a model of passionate devotion.

Afterwards he retired to a pavilion behind the altar, where the archbishop confessed and absolved him. Then the Te Deum sounded, and high mass was celebrated by the Bishop of Nantes. Then, amid acclamations and blessings, and with largess to the crowd, the king returned to the monastery of Saint Denis, where he dined amid a multitude of spectators, who thronged so thickly around him that his dinner-table was nearly overset. These were the very Parisians, who, but three years before, had been feeding on rats and dogs and dead men's bones, and the bodies of their own children, rather than open their gates to this same Prince of Bearne.

Now, although Mayenne had set strong guards at those gates, and had most strictly prohibited all egress, the city was emptied of its populace, which pressed in transports of adoration around the man so lately the object of their hate. Yet few could seriously believe that much change had been effected in the inner soul of him, whom the legate, and the Spaniard, and the holy father at Rome still continued to denounce as the vilest of heretics and the most infamous of impostors.

The comedy was admirably played out and was entirely successful. It may be supposed that the chief actor was, however, somewhat wearied. In private, he mocked at all this ecclesiastical mummery, and described himself as heartily sick of the business. "I arrived here last evening," he wrote to the beautiful Gabrielle, "and was importuned with 'God save you' till bed-time. In regard to the Leaguers I am of the order of St. Thomas. I am beginning to-morrow morning to talk to the bishops, besides those I told you about yesterday. At this moment of writing I have a hundred of these importunates on my shoulders, who will make me hate Saint Denis as much as you hate Mantes. 'Tis to-morrow that I take the perilous leap. I kiss a million times the beautiful hands of my angel and the mouth of my dear mistress."

A truce—renewed at intervals—with the Leaguers lasted till the end of the year. The Duke of Nevers was sent on special mission to Rome to procure the holy father's consent to the great heretic's reconciliation to the Church, and he was instructed to make the king's submission in terms so wholesale and so abject that even some of the life-long papists of France were disgusted, while every honest Protestant in Europe shrank into himself for shame. But Clement, overawed by Philip and his ambassador, was deaf to all the representations of the French envoy. He protested that he would not believe in the sincerity of the Bearne's conversion unless an angel from Heaven should reveal it to him. So Nevers left Rome, highly exasperated, and professing that he would rather have lost a leg, that he would rather have been sewn in a sack and tossed into the Tiber, than bear back such a message. The pope ordered the prelates who had accompanied Nevers to remain in Rome and be tried by the Inquisition for misprision of heresy, but the duke placed them by his side and marched out of the Porta del Popolo with them, threatening to kill any man who should attempt to enforce the command.

Meantime it became necessary to follow up the St. Denis comedy with a still more exhilarating popular spectacle. The heretic had been purified, confessed, absolved. It was time for a consecration. But there was a difficulty. Although the fever of loyalty to the ancient house of Bourbon, now redeemed from its worship of the false gods, was spreading contagiously through the provinces; although all the white silk in Lyons had been cut into scarves and banners to celebrate the reconciliation of the candid king with mother Church; although that ancient city was ablaze with bonfires and illuminations, while its streets ran red, with blood no longer, but with wine; and although Madam League, so lately the object of fondest adoration, was now publicly burned in the effigy of a grizzly hag; yet Paris still held for that decrepit beldame, and closed its gates to the Bearnese.

The city of Rheims, too, had not acknowledged the former Huguenot, and it was at Rheims, in the church of St. Remy, that the Holy Bottle was preserved. With what chrism, by what prelate, should the consecration of Henry be performed? Five years before, the League had proposed in the estates of Blois to place among the fundamental laws of the kingdom that no king should be considered a legitimate sovereign whose head had not been anointed by the bishop at Rheims with oil from that holy bottle. But it was now decided that to ascribe a monopoly of sanctity to that prelate and to that bottle would be to make a schism in the Church.

Moreover it was discovered that there was a chrism in existence still more efficacious than the famous oil of St. Remy. One hundred and twelve years before the baptism of Clovis, St. Martin had accidentally tumbled down stairs, and lay desperately bruised and at the point of death. But, according to Sulpicius Severus, an angel had straightway descended from heaven, and with a miraculous balsam had anointed the contusions of the saint, who next day felt no farther inconveniences from his fall. The balsam had ever since been preserved in the church of Marmoutier near Tours. Here, then, was the most potent of unguents brought directly from heaven. To mix a portion thereof with the chrism of consecration was clearly more judicious than to make use of the holy bottle, especially as the holy bottle was not within reach. The monks of Marmoutier consented to lend the sacred phial containing the famous oil of St. Martin for the grand occasion of the royal consecration.

Accompanied by a strong military escort provided by Giles de Souvri, governor of Touraine, a deputation of friars brought the phial to Chartres, where the consecration was to take place. Prayers were offered up, without ceasing, in the monastery during their absence that no mishap should befal the sacred treasure. When the monks arrived at Chartres, four young barons of the first nobility were assigned to them as hostages for the safe restoration of the phial, which was then borne in triumph to the cathedral, the streets through which it was carried being covered with tapestry. There was a great ceremony, a splendid consecration; six bishops, with mitres on their heads and in gala robes, officiating; after which the king knelt before the altar and took the customary oath.

Thus the champion of the fierce Huguenots, the well-beloved of the dead La Noue and the living Duplessis Mornay, the devoted knight of the heretic Queen Elizabeth, the sworn ally of the stout Dutch Calvinists, was pompously reconciled to that Rome which was the object of their hatred and their fear.

The admirably arranged spectacles of the instruction at St. Denis and the consecration at Chartres were followed on the day of the vernal equinox by a third and most conclusive ceremony:

A secret arrangement had been made with De Cosse-Brissac, governor of Paris, by the king, according to which the gates of Paris were at last to be opened to him. The governor obtained a high price for his services —three hundred thousand livres in hard cash, thirty thousand a year for his life, and the truncheon of marshal of France. Thus purchased, Brissac made his preparations with remarkable secrecy and skill. Envoy Ybarra, who had scented something suspicious in the air, had gone straight to the governor for information, but the keen Spaniard was thrown out by the governor's ingenuous protestations of ignorance. The next morning, March 22nd, was stormy and rainy, and long before daylight Ybarra, still uneasy despite the statements of Brissac, was wandering about the streets of Paris when he became the involuntary witness of an extraordinary spectacle.

Through the wind and the rain came trampling along the dark streets of the capital a body of four thousand troopers and lansquenettes. Many torch-bearers attended on the procession, whose flambeaux threw a lurid light upon the scene.

There, surrounded by the swart and grizzly bearded visages of these strange men-at-arms, who were discharging their arquebuses, as they advanced upon any bystanders likely to oppose their progress; in the very midst of this sea of helmed heads, the envoy was enabled to recognise the martial figure of the Prince of Bearne. Armed to the teeth, with sword in hand and dagger at side, the hero of Ivry rode at last through the barriers which had so long kept him from his capital. "'Twas like enchantment," said Ybarra. The first Bourbon entered the city through the same gate out of which the last Valois had, five years before, so ignominiously fled. It was a midnight surprise, although not fully accomplished until near the dawn of day. It was not a triumphal entrance; nor did Henry come as the victorious standard-bearer of a great principle. He had defeated the League in many battle-fields, but the League still hissed defiance at him from the very hearthstone of his ancestral palace. He had now crept, in order to conquer, even lower than the League itself; and casting off his Huguenot skin at last, he had soared over the heads of all men, the presiding genius of the holy Catholic Church.

Twenty-one years before, he had entered the same city on the conclusion of one of the truces which had varied the long monotony of the religious wars of France. The youthful son of Antony Bourbon and Joan of Albret had then appeared as the champion and the idol of the Huguenots. In the same year had come the fatal nuptials with the bride of St. Bartholomew, the first Catholic conversion of Henry and the massacre at which the world still shudders.

Now he was chief of the "Politicians," and sworn supporter of the Council of Trent. Earnest Huguenots were hanging their heads in despair.

He represented the principle of national unity against national dismemberment by domestic treason and foreign violence. Had that principle been his real inspiration, as it was in truth his sole support, history might judge him more leniently. Had he relied upon it entirely it might have been strong enough to restore him to the throne of his ancestors, without the famous religious apostacy with which his name is for ever associated. It is by no means certain that permanent religious toleration might not have been the result of his mounting the throne, only when he could do so without renouncing the faith of his fathers. A day of civilization may come perhaps, sooner or later, when it will be of no earthly consequence to their fellow creatures to what creed, what Christian church, what religious dogma kings or humbler individuals may be partial; when the relations between man and his Maker shall be undefiled by political or social intrusion. But the day will never come when it will be otherwise than damaging to public morality and humiliating to human dignity to forswear principle for a price, and to make the most awful of mysteries the subject of political legerdemain and theatrical buffoonery.

The so-called conversion of the king marks an epoch in human history. It strengthened the Roman Church and gave it an indefinite renewal of life; but it sapped the foundations of religious faith. The appearance of Henry the Huguenot as the champion of the Council of Trent was of itself too biting an epigram not to be extensively destructive. Whether for good or ill, religion was fast ceasing to be the mainspring of political combinations, the motive of great wars and national convulsions. The age of religion was to be succeeded by the age of commerce.

But the king was now on his throne. All Paris was in rapture. There was Te Deum with high mass in Notre Dame, and the populace was howling itself hoarse with rapture in honour of him so lately the object of the general curse. Even the Sorbonne declared in favour of the reclaimed heretic, and the decision of those sages had vast influence with less enlightened mortals. There was nothing left for the Duke of Feria but to take himself off and make Latin orations in favour of the Infanta elsewhere, if fit audience elsewhere could be found. A week after the entrance of Henry, the Spanish garrison accordingly was allowed to leave Paris with the honours of war.

"We marched out at 2 P.M.," wrote the duke to his master, "with closed ranks, colours displayed, and drums beating. First came the Italians and then the Spaniards, in the midst of whom was myself on horseback, with the Walloons marching near me. The Prince of Bearne"—it was a solace to the duke's heart, of which he never could be deprived, to call the king by that title—"was at a window over the gate of St. Denis through which we took our departure. He was dressed in light grey, with a black hat surmounted by a great white feather. Our displayed standards rendered him no courteous salute as we passed."

Here was another solace!

Thus had the game been lost and won, but Philip as usual did not acknowledge himself beaten. Mayenne, too, continued to make the most fervent promises to all that was left of the confederates. He betook himself to Brussels, and by the king's orders was courteously received by the Spanish authorities in the Netherlands. In the midst of the tempest now rapidly destroying all rational hopes, Philip still clung to Mayenne as to a spar in the shipwreck. For the king ever possessed the virtue, if it be one, of continuing to believe himself invincible and infallible, when he had been defeated in every quarter, and when his calculations had all proved ridiculous mistakes.

When his famous Armada had been shattered and sunk, have we not seen him peevishly requiring Alexander Farnese to construct a new one immediately and to proceed therewith to conquer England out of hand? Was it to be expected that he would renounce his conquest of France, although the legitimate king had entered his capital, had reconciled himself to the Church, and was on the point of obtaining forgiveness of the pope? If the Prince of Bearne had already destroyed the Holy League, why should not the Duke of Mayenne and Archduke Ernest make another for him, and so conquer France without further delay?

But although it was still possible to deceive the king, who in the universality of his deceptive powers was so prone to delude himself, it was difficult even for so accomplished an intriguer as Mayenne to hoodwink much longer the shrewd Spaniards who were playing so losing a game against him.

"Our affairs in France," said Ybarra, "are in such condition that we are losing money and character there, and are likely to lose all the provinces here, if things are not soon taken up in a large and energetic manner. Money and troops are what is wanted on a great scale for France. The king's agents are mightily discontented with Mayenne, and with reason; but they are obliged to dissimulate and to hold their tongues. We can send them no assistance from these regions, unless from down yonder you send us the cloth and the scissors to cut it with."

And the Archduke Ernest, although he invited Mayenne to confer with him at Brussels, under the impression that he could still keep him and the Duke of Guise from coming to an arrangement with Bearne, hardly felt more confidence in the man than did Feria or Ybarra. "Since the loss of Paris," said Ernest, "I have had a letter from Mayenne, in which, deeply affected by that event, he makes me great offers, even to the last drop of his blood, vowing never to abandon the cause of the League. But of the intentions and inner mind of this man I find such vague information, that I don't dare to expect more stability from him than may be founded upon his own interest."

And so Mayenne came to Brussels and passed three days with the archduke. "He avows himself ready to die in our cause," said Ernest. "If your Majesty will give men and money enough, he will undertake so to deal with Bearne that he shall not think himself safe in his own house." The archduke expressed his dissatisfaction to Mayenne that with the money he had already received, so little had been accomplished, but he still affected a confidence which he was far from feeling, "because," said he, "it is known that Mayenne is already treating with Bearne. If he has not concluded those arrangements, it is because Bearne now offers him less money than before." The amount of dissimulation, politely so-called, practised by the grandees of that age, to say nothing of their infinite capacity for pecuniary absorption, makes the brain reel and enlarges one's ideas of the human faculties as exerted in certain directions. It is doubtful whether plain Hans Miller or Hans Baker could have risen to such level.

Feria wrote a despatch to the king, denouncing Mayenne as false, pernicious to the cause of Spain and of catholicism, thoroughly self-seeking and vile, and as now most traitorous to the cause of the confederacy, engaged in surrendering its strong places to the enemy, and preparing to go over to the Prince of Bearne.

"If," said he, "I were to recount all his base tricks, I should go on till midnight, and perhaps till to-morrow morning."

This letter, being intercepted, was sent with great glee by Henry IV., not to the royal hands for which it was destined, but to the Duke of Mayenne. Great was the wrath of that injured personage as he read such libellous truths. He forthwith fulminated a scathing reply, addressed to Philip II., in which he denounced the Duke of Feria as "a dirty ignoramus, an impudent coward, an impostor, and a blind thief;" adding, after many other unsavoury epithets, "but I will do him an honour which he has not merited, proving him a liar with my sword; and I humbly pray your Majesty to grant me this favour and to pardon my just grief, which causes me to depart from the respect due to your Majesty, when I speak of this impostor who has thus wickedly torn my reputation."

His invectives were, however, much stronger than his arguments in defence of that tattered reputation. The defiance to mortal combat went for nothing; and, in the course of the next year, the injured Mayenne turned his back on Philip and his Spaniards, and concluded his bargain with the Prince of Bearne. He obtained good terms: the government of Burgundy, payment of his debts, and a hundred and twenty thousand crowns in hard cash. It is not on record that the man of his word, of credit, and of truth, ever restored a penny of the vast sums which he had received from Philip to carry on the business of the League.

Subsequently the duke came one very hot summer's-day to Monceaux to thank the king, as he expressed it, for "delivering him from Spanish arrogance and Italian wiles;" and having got with much difficulty upon his knees, was allowed to kiss the royal hand. Henry then insisted upon walking about with him through the park at a prodigious rate, to show him all the improvements, while the duke panted, groaned, and perspired in his vain efforts to keep pace with his new sovereign.

"If I keep this fat fellow walking about in the sun much longer," whispered the king to De Bethune, who was third in the party, "I shall be sufficiently avenged for all the mischief he has done us."

At last, when the duke was forced to admit himself to be on the point of expiring with fatigue, he was dismissed to the palace with orders to solace himself with a couple of bottles of excellent wine of Arbois, expressly provided for him by the king's direction. And this was all the punishment ever inflicted by the good-humoured monarch on the corpulent conspirator.

The Duke of Guise made his arrangements with the ex-Huguenot on even better terms and at a still earlier day; while Joyeuse and Mercoeur stood out a good while and higgled hard for conditions. "These people put such a high price on themselves," said one of Henry's diplomatists, "that one loses almost more than one gains in buying them. They strip and plunder us even in our nakedness, and we are obliged, in order to conciliate such harpies, to employ all that we can scrape out of our substance and our blood. I think, however, that we ought to gain them by whatever means and at whatever price."

Thus Henry IV., the man whom so many contemporary sages had for years been rebuking or ridiculing for his persistency in a hopeless attempt to save his country from dismemberment, to restore legitimate authority, and to resist the "holy confederacy" of domestic traitors, aided by foreign despots and sympathizers, was at last successful, and the fratricidal war in France was approaching its only possible

conclusion.

But, alas! the hopes of those who loved the reformed Church as well as they loved their country were sadly blasted by the apostasy of their leader. From the most eminent leaders of the Huguenots there came a wail, which must have penetrated even to the well-steeled heart of the cheerful Gascon. "It will be difficult," they said, "to efface very soon from your memory the names of the men whom the sentiment of a common religion, association in the same perils and persecutions, a common joy in the same deliverance, and the long experience of so many faithful services, have engraved there with a pencil of diamond. The remembrance of these things pursues you and accompanies you everywhere; it interrupts your most important affairs, your most ardent pleasures, your most profound slumber, to represent to you, as in a picture, yourself to yourself: yourself not as you are to-day, but such as you were when, pursued to the death by the greatest princes of Europe, you went on conducting to the harbour of safety the little vessel against which so many tempests were beating."

The States of the Dutch republic, where the affair of Henry's conversion was as much a matter of domestic personal interest as it could be in France—for religion up to that epoch was the true frontier between nation and nation—debated the question most earnestly while it was yet doubtful. It was proposed to send a formal deputation to the king, in order to divert him, if possible, from the fatal step which he was about to take. After ripe deliberation however, it was decided to leave the matter "in the hands of God Almighty, and to pray Him earnestly to guide the issue to His glory and the welfare of the Churches."

The Queen of England was, as might be supposed, beside herself with indignation, and, in consequence of the great apostasy, and of her chronic dissatisfaction with the manner in which her contingent of troops had been handled in France, she determined to withdraw every English soldier from the support of Henry's cause. The unfortunate French ambassador in London was at his wits' ends. He vowed that he could not sleep of nights, and that the gout and the cholic, to which he was always a martyr, were nothing to the anguish which had now come upon his soul and brain, such as he had never suffered since the bloody day of St. Bartholomew.

"Ah, my God!" said he to Burghley, "is it possible that her just choler has so suddenly passed over the great glory which she has acquired by so many benefits and liberalities?" But he persuaded himself that her majesty would after all not persist in her fell resolution. To do so, he vowed, would only be boiling milk for the French papists, who would be sure to make the most of the occasion in order to precipitate the king into the abyss, to the border of which they had already brought him. He so dreaded the ire of the queen that he protested he was trembling all over merely to see the pen of his secretary wagging as he dictated his despatches. Nevertheless it was his terrible duty to face her in her wrath, and he implored the lord treasurer to accompany him and to shield him at the approaching interview. "Protect me," he cried, "by your wisdom from the ire of this great princess; for by the living God, when I see her enraged against any person whatever I wish myself in Calcutta, fearing her anger like death itself."

When all was over, Henry sent De Morlans as special envoy to communicate the issue to the Governments of England and of Holland. But the queen, although no longer so violent, was less phlegmatic than the States-General, and refused to be comforted. She subsequently receded, however, from her determination to withdraw her troops from France.

"Ah! what grief; ah! what regrets; ah! what groans, have I felt in my soul," she wrote, "at the sound of the news brought to me by Morlans! My God! Is it possible that any worldly respect can efface the terror of Divine wrath? Can we by reason even expect a good sequel to such iniquitous acts? He who has maintained and preserved you by His mercy, can you imagine that he permits you to walk alone in your utmost need? 'Tis bad to do evil that good may come of it. Meantime I shall not cease to put you in the first rank of my devotions, in order that the hands of Esau may not spoil the blessings of Jacob. As to your promises to me of friendship and fidelity, I confess to have dearly deserved them, nor do I repent, provided you do not change your Father—otherwise I shall be your bastard sister by the father's side—for I shall ever love a natural better than an adopted one. I desire that God may guide you in a straight road and a better path. Your most sincere sister in the old fashion. As to the new, I have nothing to do with it. ELIZABETH R."

ETEXT EDITOR'S BOOKMARKS:

All fellow-worms together
Continuing to believe himself invincible and infallible
He spent more time at table than the Bearnese in sleep
Henry the Huguenot as the champion of the Council of Trent
Highest were not necessarily the least slimy
His invectives were, however, much stronger than his arguments
History is a continuous whole of which we see only fragments
Infinite capacity for pecuniary absorption
Leading motive with all was supposed to be religion
Past was once the Present, and once the Future
Sages of every generation, read the future like a printed scroll
Sewers which have ever run beneath decorous Christendom
Wrath of that injured personage as he read such libellous truths

CHAPTER XXX. 1594

Prince Maurice lays siege to Gertruydenberg—Advantages of the new system of warfare—Progress of the besieging operations—Superiority of Maurice's manoeuvres—Adventure of Count Philip of Nassau—Capitulation of Gertruydenberg—Mutiny among the Spanish troops—Attempt of Verdugo to retake Coeworden—Suspicions of treason in the

English garrison at Ostend—Letter of Queen Elizabeth to Sir Edward Norris on the subject—Second attempt on Coeworden—Assault on Groningen by Maurice—Second adventure of Philip of Nassau—Narrow escape of Prince Maurice—Surrender of Groningen—Particulars of the siege—Question of religious toleration—Progress of the United Netherlands—Condition of the "obedient" Netherlands—Incompetency of Peter Mansfeld as Governor—Archduke Ernest, the successor of Farnese—Difficulties of his position—His unpopularity—Great achievements of the republicans—Triumphal entry of Ernest into Brussels and Antwerp—Magnificence of the spectacle—Disaffection of the Spanish troops—Great military rebellion—Philip's proposal to destroy the English fleet—His assassination plans—Plot to poison Queen Elizabeth—Conspiracies against Prince Maurice—Futile attempts at negotiation—Proposal of a marriage between Henry and the Infanta—Secret mission from Henry to the King of Spain—Special dispatch to England and the Staten—Henry obtains further aid from Queen Elizabeth and the States—Council—Anxiety of the Protestant countries to bring about a war with Spain—Aspect of affairs at the close of the year 1594.

While Philip's world-empire seemed in one direction to be so rapidly fading into cloudland there were substantial possessions of the Spanish crown which had been neglected in Brabant and Friesland.

Two very important cities still held for the King of Spain within the territories of what could now be fairly considered the United Dutch Republic—St. Gertruydenberg and Groningen.

Early in the spring of 1593, Maurice had completed his preparations for a siege, and on the 24th March appeared before Gertruydenberg.

It was a stately, ancient city, important for its wealth, its strength, and especially for its position. For without its possession even the province of Holland could hardly consider itself mistress of its own little domains. It was seated on the ancient Meuse, swollen as it approached the sea almost to the dimension of a gulf, while from the south another stream, called the Donge, very brief in its course, but with considerable depth of water, came to mingle itself with the Meuse, exactly under the walls of the city.

The site of the place was so low that it was almost hidden and protected by its surrounding dykes. These afforded means of fortification, which had been well improved. Both by nature and art the city was one of the strongholds of the Netherlands.

Maurice had given the world a lesson in the beleaguering science at the siege of Steenwyk, such as had never before been dreamt of; but he was resolved that the operations before Gertruydenberg should constitute a masterpiece.

Nothing could be more beautiful as a production of military art, nothing, to the general reader, more insipid than its details.

On the land side, Hohenlo's headquarters were at Ramsdonck, a village about a German mile to the east of Gertruydenberg. Maurice himself was established on the west side of the city. Two bridges constructed across the Donge facilitated the communications between the two camps, while great quantities of planks and brush were laid down across the swampy roads to make them passable for waggon-trains and artillery. The first care of the young general, whose force was not more than twenty thousand men, was to protect himself rather than to assail the town.

His lines extended many miles in a circuit around the place, and his forts, breastworks, and trenches were very numerous.

The river was made use of as a natural and almost impassable ditch of defence, and windmills were freely employed to pump water into the shallows in one direction, while in others the outer fields, in quarters whence a relieving force might be expected, were turned into lakes by the same machinery. Farther outside, a system of palisade work of caltrops and man-traps—sometimes in the slang of the day called Turkish ambassadors—made the country for miles around impenetrable or very disagreeable to cavally. In a shorter interval than would have seemed possible, the battlements and fortifications of the besieging army had risen like an exhalation out of the morass. The city of Gertruydenberg was encompassed by another city as extensive and apparently as impregnable as itself. Then, for the first time in that age, men thoroughly learned the meaning of that potent implement the spade.

Three thousand pioneers worked night and day with pickaxe and shovel. The soldiers liked the business; for every man so employed received his ten stivers a day additional wages, punctually paid, and felt moreover that every stroke was bringing the work nearer to its conclusion.

The Spaniards no longer railed at Maurice as a hedger and ditcher. When he had succeeded in bringing a hundred great guns to bear upon the beleaguered city they likewise ceased to sneer at heavy artillery.

The Kartowen and half Kartowen were no longer considered "espanta vellacos."

Meantime, from all the country round, the peasants flocked within the lines. Nowhere in Europe were provisions so plentiful and cheap as in the Dutch camp. Nowhere was a readier market for agricultural products, prompter payment, or more perfect security for the life and property of non-combatants. Not so much as a hen's egg was taken unlawfully. The country people found themselves more at ease within Maurice's lines than within any other part of the provinces, obedient or revolted. They ploughed and sowed and reaped at their pleasure, and no more striking example was ever afforded of the humanizing effect of science upon the barbarism of war, than in this siege of Gertruydenberg.

Certainly it was the intention of the prince to take his city, and when he fought the enemy it was his object to kill; but, as compared with the bloody work which Alva, and Romero, and Requesens, and so many others had done in those doomed provinces, such war-making as this seemed almost like an institution for beneficent and charitable purposes.

Visitors from the neighbourhood, from other provinces, from foreign countries, came to witness the extraordinary spectacle, and foreign generals repaired to the camp of Maurice to take practical lessons in the new art of war.

Old Peter Ernest Mansfeld, who was nominal governor of the Spanish Netherlands since the death of Farnese, rubbed his eyes and stared aghast when the completeness of the preparations for reducing the city at last broke in upon his mind. Count Fuentes was the true and confidential regent however until the destined successor to Parma should arrive; but Fuentes, although he had considerable genius for assassination, as will hereafter appear, and was an experienced and able commander of the old-fashioned school, was no match for Maurice in the scientific combinations on which the new system was founded.

In vain did the superannuated Peter call aloud upon his sofa and governor, Count Charles, to assist him in this dire dilemma. That artillery general had gone with a handful of Germans, Walloons; and other obedient Netherlanders—too few to accomplish anything abroad, too many to be spared from the provinces—to besiege Noyon in France. But what signified the winning or losing of such a place as Noyon at exactly the moment when the Prince of Bearne, assisted by the able generalship of the Archbishop of Bourges, had just executed those famous flanking movements in the churches of St. Denis and Chartres, by which the world-empire had been effectually shattered, and Philip and the Pope completely out-manoeuvred.

Better that the five thousand fighters under Charles Mansfeld had been around Gertruydenberg. His aged father did what he could. As many men as could be spared from the garrison of Antwerp and its neighbourhood were collected; but the Spaniards were reluctant to march, except under old Mondragon. That hero, who had done much of the hardest work, and had fought in most of the battles of the century, was nearly as old as the century. Being now turned of ninety, he thought best to keep house in Antwerp Castle: Accordingly twelve thousand foot and three thousand horse took the field under the more youthful Peter Ernest? But Peter Ernest, when his son was not there to superintend his operations, was nothing but a testy octogenarian, while the two together were not equal to the little finger of Farnese, whom Philip would have displaced, had he not fortunately died.

"Nothing is to be expected out of this place but toads and poison," wrote Ybarra in infinite disgust to the two secretaries of state at Madrid. "I have done my best to induce Fuentes to accept that which the patent secured him, and Count Peter is complaining that Fuentes showed him the patent so late only to play him a trick. There is a rascally pack of meddlers here, and the worst of them all are the women, whom I particularly give to the devil. There is no end to the squabbles as to who shall take the lead in relieving Gertruydenberg."

Mansfeld at last came ponderously up in the neighbourhood of Turnhout. There was a brilliant little skirmish, in the neighbourhood of this place, in which a hundred and fifty Dutch cavalry under the famous brothers Bax defeated four hundred picked lancers of Spain and Italy. But Mansfeld could get nothing but skirmishes. In vain he plunged about among the caltrops and man-traps. In vain he knocked at the fortifications of Hohenlo on the east and of Maurice on the west. He found them impracticable, impregnable, obdurate. It was Maurice's intention to take his town at as small sacrifice of life as possible. A trumpet was sent on some trifling business to Mansfeld, in reply to a communication made by the general to Maurice.

"Why does your master," said the choleric veteran to the trumpeter, "why does Prince Maurice, being a lusty young commander as he is, not come out of his trenches into the open field and fight me like a man, where honour and fame await him?"

"Because my master," answered the trumpeter, "means to live to be a lusty old commander like your excellency, and sees no reason to-day to give you an advantage."

At this the bystanders laughed, rather at the expense of the veteran.

Meantime there were not many incidents within the lines or within the city to vary the monotony of the scientific siege.

On the land side, as has been seen, the city was enclosed and built out of human sight by another Gertruydenberg. On the wide estuary of the Meuse, a chain of war ships encircled the sea-front, in shape of a half moon, lying so close to each other that it was scarcely possible even for a messenger to swim out of a dark night.

The hardy adventurers who attempted that feat with tidings of despair were almost invariably captured.

This blockading fleet took regular part in the daily cannonade; while, on the other hand, the artillery practice from the landbatteries of Maurice and Hohenlo was more perfect than anything ever known before in the Netherlands or France.

And the result was that in the course of the cannonade which lasted nearly ninety days, not more than four houses in the city escaped injury. The approaches were brought, every hour, nearer and nearer to the walls. With subterranean lines converging in the form of the letter Y, the prince had gradually burrowed his way beneath the principal bastion.

Hohenlo, representative of the older school of strategy, had on one occasion ventured to resist the authority of the commander-in-chief. He had constructed a fort at Ramsdonck. Maurice then commanded the erection of another, fifteen hundred yards farther back. It was as much a part of his purpose to defend himself against the attempts of Mansfeld's relieving force, as to go forward against the city. Hohenlo objected that it would be impossible to sustain himself against a sudden attack in so isolated a position. Maurice insisted. In the midst of the altercation Hohenlo called to the men engaged in throwing up the new fortifications: "Here, you captains and soldiers," he cried, "you are delivered up here to be butchered. You may drop work and follow me to the old fort."

"And I swear to you," said Maurice quietly, "that the first man who moves from this spot shall be hanged."

No one moved. The fort was completed and held to the and; Hohenlo sulkily acquiescing in the superiority which this stripling—his former pupil—had at last vindicated over all old-fashioned men-at-arms.

From the same cause which was apt to render Hohenlo's services inefficient, the prince was apt to suffer inconvenience in the persons placed in still nearer relation to himself. Count Philip of Nassau, brother of the wise and valiant Lewis William, had already done much brilliant campaigning against the Spaniards both in France and the provinces. Unluckily, he was not only a desperate fighter but a mighty drinker, and one day, after a dinner-party and potent carouse at Colonel Brederode's quarters, he thought proper, in doublet and hose, without armour of any kind, to mount his horse, in order to take a solitary survey of the enemy's works.

Not satisfied with this piece of reconnoitering—which he effected with much tipsy gravity, but probably without deriving any information likely to be of value to the commanding general—he then proceeded to charge in person a distant battery. The deed was not commendable in a military point of view. A fire was opened upon him at long range so soon as he was discovered, and at the same time the sergeant-major of his regiment and an equerry of Prince Maurice started in pursuit, determined to bring him off if possible, before his life had been thus absurdly sacrificed. Fortunately for him they came to the rescue in time, pulled him from his horse, and succeeded in bringing him away unharmed. The sergeant-major, however, Sinisky by name, while thus occupied in preserving the count's life, was badly wounded in the leg by a musket-shot from the fort; which casualty was the only result of this after-dinner assault.

As the siege proceeded, and as the hopes of relief died away, great confusion began to reign within the city. The garrison, originally of a thousand veterans, besides burgher militia, had been much diminished. Two commandants of the place, one after another, had lost their lives. On the 1st of June, Governor De Masieres, Captain Mongyn, the father-confessor of the garrison, and two soldiers, being on the top of the great church tower taking observations, were all brought down with one cannon-shot. Thus the uses of artillery were again proved to be something more than to scare cowards.

The final result seemed to have been brought about almost by accident, if accident could be admitted as a factor in such accurate calculations as those of Maurice. On the 24th June Captains Haen and Bievry were relieving watch in the trenches near the great north ravelin of the town—a bulwark which had already been much undermined from below and weakened above. Being adventurous officers, it occurred to them suddenly to scale the wall of the fort and reconnoitre what was going on in the town. It was hardly probable that they would come back alive from the expedition, but they nevertheless threw some planks across the ditch, and taking a few soldiers with them, climbed cautiously up. Somewhat to his own surprise, still more to that of the Spanish sentinels, Bievry in a few minutes found himself within the ravelin. He was closely followed by Captain Haen, Captain Kalf, and by half a company of soldiers. The alarm was given. There was a fierce hand-to-hand struggle. Sixteen of the bold stormers fell, and nine of the garrison of the fort. The rest fled into the city. The governor of the place, Captain Gysant, rushing to the rescue without staying to put on his armour, was killed. Count Solms, on the other hand, came from the besieging camp into the ravelin to investigate the sudden uproar. To his profound astonishment he was met there, after a brief interval, by a deputation from the city, asking for terms of surrender. The envoys had already been for some little time looking in vain for a responsible person with whom to treat. When Maurice was informed of the propositions he thought it at first a trick; for he had known nothing of the little adventure of the three captains. Soon afterwards he came into a battery whither the deputies had been brought, and the terms of capitulation were soon agreed upon.

Next day the garrison were allowed to go out with sidearms and personal baggage, and fifty waggons were lent them by the victor to bring their wounded men to Antwerp.

Thus was Gertruydenberg surrendered in the very face of Peter Mansfeld, who only became aware of the fact by the salvos of artillery fired in honour of the triumph, and by the blaze of illumination which broke forth over camp and city.

The sudden result was an illustration of the prince's perfect arrangements. When Maurice rode into the town, he found it strong enough and sufficiently well provisioned to have held out many a long day. But it had been demonstrated to the besieged that relief was impossible, and that the surrender on one day or another, after the siege operations should be brought to their close, was certain. The inexorable genius of the commander—skilled in a science which to the coarser war-makers of that age seemed almost superhuman—hovered above them like a fate. It was as well to succumb on the 24th June as to wait till the 24th July.

Moreover the great sustaining principle—resistance to the foreigner—which had inspired the deeds of daring, the wonders of endurance, in the Dutch cities beleaguered so remorselessly by the Spaniard twenty years earlier in the century, was wanting.

In surrendering to the born Netherlander—the heroic chieftain of the illustrious house of Nassau—these Netherlanders were neither sullying their flag nor injuring their country. Enough had been done for military honour in the gallant resistance, in which a large portion of the garrison had fallen. Nor was that religious superstition so active within the city, which three years before had made miracles possible in Paris when a heretic sovereign was to be defied by his own subjects. It was known that even if the public ceremonies of the Catholic Church were likely to be suspended for a time after the surrender, at least the rights of individual conscience and private worship within individual households would be tolerated, and there was no papal legate with fiery eloquence persuading a city full of heroic dupes that it was more virtuous for men or women to eat their own children than to forego one high mass, or to wink at a single conventicle.

After all, it was no such bitter hardship for the citizens of Gertruydenberg to participate in the prosperity of the rising and thriving young republic, and to enjoy those municipal and national liberties which her sister cities had found so sweet.

Nothing could be calmer or more reasonable than such a triumph, nothing less humiliating or less disastrous than such a surrender.

The problem was solved, the demonstration was made. To open their gates to the soldiers of the Union was not to admit the hordes of a Spanish commander with the avenging furies of murder, pillage, rape, which ever followed in their train over the breach of a captured city.

To an enemy bated or dreaded to the uttermost mortal capacity, that well-fortified and opulent city might have held out for months, and only when the arms and the fraud of the foe without, and of famine within, had done their work, could it have bowed its head to the conqueror, and submitted to the ineffable tortures which would be the necessary punishment of its courage.

Four thousand shots had been fired from the siege-guns upon the city, and three hundred upon the relieving force.

The besieging army numbered in all nine thousand one hundred and fifty men of all arms, and they lost during the eighty-five days' siege three hundred killed and four hundred wounded.

After the conclusion of these operations, and the thorough remodelling of the municipal government of the

important city thus regained to the republic, Maurice occupied himself with recruiting and refreshing his somewhat exhausted little army. On the other hand, old Count Mansfeld, dissatisfied with the impotent conclusion to his attempts, retired to Brussels to be much taunted by the insolent Fuentes. He at least escaped very violent censure on the part of his son Charles, for that general, after his superfluous conquest of Noyon, while returning towards the Netherlands, far too tardily to succour Gertruydenberg, had been paralyzed in all his movements by a very extensive mutiny which broke out among the Spanish troops in the province of Artois. The disorder went through all its regular forms. A town was taken, an Eletto was appointed. The country-side was black-mailed or plundered, and the rebellion lasted some thirteen months. Before it was concluded there was another similar outbreak among the Italians, together with the Walloons and other obedient Netherlanders in Hainault, who obliged the city of Mons to collect nine hundred florins a day for them. The consequence of these military rebellions was to render the Spanish crown almost powerless during the whole year, within the provinces nominally subject to its sway. The cause—as always—was the non-payment of these veterans' wages, year after year. It was impossible for Philip, with all the wealth of the Indies and Mexico pouring through the Danaid sieve of the Holy League in France, to find the necessary funds to save the bronzed and war-worn instruments of his crimes in the Netherlands from starving and from revolt.

Meantime there was much desultory campaigning in Friesland. Verdugo and Frederic van den Berg picked up a few cities, and strong places which had thrown off their allegiance September, to the king—Auerzyl, Schlochteren, Winschoten, Wedde, Ootmarzum—and invested the much more important town of Coeworden, which Maurice had so recently reduced to the authority of the Union. Verdugo's force was insufficient, however, and he had neither munitions nor provisions for a long siege. Winter was coming on; and the States, aware that he would soon be obliged to retire from before the well-garrisoned and fortified place, thought it unnecessary to interfere with him. After a very brief demonstration the Portuguese veteran was obliged to raise the siege.

There were also certain vague attempts made by the enemy to re-possess himself of those most important seaports which had been pledged to the English queen. On a previous page the anxiety has been indicated with which Sir Robert Sydney regarded the withdrawal of the English troops in the Netherlands for the sake of assisting the French king. This palpable breach of the treaty had necessarily weakened England's hold on the affections of the Netherlanders, and awakened dark suspicions that treason might be impending at Flushing or Ostend. The suspicions were unjust—so far as the governors of those places were concerned—for Sydney and Norris were as loyal as they were intelligent and brave; but the trust in their characters was not more implicit than it had been in that of Sir William Stanley before the commission of his crime. It was now believed that the enemy was preparing for a sudden assault upon Ostend, with the connivance, it was feared, of a certain portion of the English garrison. The intelligence was at once conveyed to her Majesty's Government by Sir Edward Norris, and they determined to take a lesson from past experience. Norris was at once informed that in view of the attack which he apprehended, his garrison should be strengthened by five hundred men under Sir Conyers Clifford from certain companies in Flushing, and that other reinforcements should be sent from the English troops in Normandy. The governor was ordered to look well after his captains and soldiers, to remind them, in the queen's name, of their duty to herself and to the States, to bid all beware of sullying the English name, to make close investigations into any possible intrigues of the garrison with the enemy, and, should any culprits be found, to bring them at once to condign punishment.

The queen, too, determined that there should be no blighting of English honour, if she could prevent it by her warnings, indited with her own hand a characteristic letter to Sir Edward Norris, to accompany the more formal despatch of Lord Burghley. Thus it ran "Ned!—

"Though you have some tainted sheep among your flock, let not that serve for excuse for the rest. We trust you are so carefully regarded as nought shall be left for your excuses, but either ye lack heart or want will; for of fear we will not make mention, as that our soul abhors, and we assure ourselves you will never discern suspicion of it. Now or never let for the honour of us and our nation, each man be so much of bolder heart as their cause is good, and their honour must be according, remembering the old goodness of our God, who never yet made us fail His needful help, who ever bless you as I with my prince's hand beseech Him."

The warnings and preparations proved sufficiently effective, and the great schemes with which the new royal governor of the Netherlands was supposed to be full—a mere episode in which was the conquest of Ostend—seemed not so formidable as their shadows had indicated. There was, in the not very distant future, to be a siege of Ostend, which the world would not soon forget, but perhaps the place would not yield to a sudden assault. Its resistance, on the contrary, might prove more protracted than was then thought possible. But the chronicle of events must not be anticipated. For the present, Ostend was safe.

Early in the following spring, Verdugo again appeared before Coeworden in force. It was obvious that the great city of Groningen, the mistress of all the north-eastern provinces, would soon be attacked, and Coeworden was the necessary base of any operations against the place. Fortunately for the States, William Lewis had in the preceding autumn occupied and fortified the only avenue through the Bourtange morass, so that when Verdugo sat down before Coeworden, it was possible for Maurice, by moving rapidly, to take the royal governor at a disadvantage.

Verdugo had eight thousand picked troops, including two thousand Walloon cavalry, troopers who must have been very formidable, if they were to be judged by the prowess of one of their captains, Gaucier by name. This obedient Netherlander was in the habit of boasting that he had slain four hundred and ten men with his own hand, including several prisoners and three preachers; but the rest of those warriors were not so famed for their martial achievements.

The peril, however, was great, and Prince Maurice, trifling not a moment, threw himself with twelve thousand infantry, Germans, Frisians, Scotch, English, and Hollanders, and nearly two thousand horse, at once upon the road between the Vecht and the Bourtange morass. On the 6th of May, Verdugo found the States' commander-in-chief trenched and impregnable, squarely established upon his line of communications. He reconnoitred, called a council of war, and decided that to assail him were madness; to remain, destruction. On the night of the 6th of May, he broke up his camp and stole away in the darkness, without

sound of drum or trumpet, leaving all his fortifications and burning all his huts.

Thus had Maurice, after showing the world how strong places were to be reduced, given a striking exhibition of the manner in which they were to be saved.

Coeworden, after thirty-one weeks' investment, was relieved.

The stadholder now marched upon Groningen. This city was one of the most splendid and opulent of all the Netherland towns. Certainly it should have been one of the most ancient in Europe, since it derived its name —according to that pains-taking banker, Francis Guicciardini—"from Grun, a Trojan gentleman," who, nevertheless, according to Munster, was "a Frenchman by birth."—"Both theories, however, might be true," added the conscientious Florentine, "as the French have always claimed to be descended from the relics of Troy." A simpler-minded antiquary might have babbled of green fields, since 'groenighe,' or greenness, was a sufficiently natural appellation for a town surrounded as was Groningen on the east and west by the greenest and fattest of pastures. In population it was only exceeded by Antwerp and Amsterdam. Situate on the line where upper and nether Germany blend into one, the capital of a great province whose very name was synonymous with liberty, and whose hardy sons had clone fierce battle with despotism in every age, so long as there had been human record of despotism and of battles, Groningen had fallen into the hands of the foreign foe, not through the prowess of the Spaniard but the treason of the Netherlander. The baseness of the brilliant, trusted, valiant, treacherous young Renneberg has been recorded on a previous page of these volumes. For thirteen years long the republic had chafed at this acquisition of the hated enemy within its very heart. And now the day had come when a blow should be struck for its deliverance by the ablest soldier that had ever shown himself in those regions, one whom the commonwealth had watched over from his cradle.

For in Groningen there was still a considerable party in favour of the Union, although the treason of Renneberg had hitherto prevented both city and province from incorporating themselves in the body politic of the United Netherlands. Within the precincts were five hundred of Verdugo's veterans under George Lanckema, stationed at a faubourg called Schuytendiess. In the city there was, properly speaking, no garrison, for the citizens in the last few years had come to value themselves on their fidelity to church and king, and to take a sorry pride in being false to all that was noble in their past. Their ancestors had wrested privilege after privilege at the sword's point from the mailed hands of dukes and emperors, until they were almost a self-governing republic; their courts of justice recognizing no appeal to higher powers, even under the despotic sway of Charles V. And now, under the reign of his son, and in the feebler days of that reign, the capital of the free Frisians—the men whom their ancient pagan statutes had once declared to be "free so long as the wind blew out of the clouds"—relied upon the trained bands of her burghers enured to arms and well-provided with all munitions of war to protect her, not against foreign tyranny nor domestic sedition, but against liberty and against law.

For the representative of the most ancient of the princely houses of Europe, a youth whose ancestors had been emperors when the forefathers of Philip, long-descended as he was, were but country squires, was now knocking at their gates. Not as a conqueror and a despot, but as the elected first magistrate and commander-in-chief of the freest commonwealth in the world, Maurice of Nassau, at the head of fifteen thousand Netherlanders, countrymen of their own, now summoned the inhabitants of the town and province to participate with their fellow citizens in all the privileges and duties of the prosperous republic.

It seemed impossible that such an appeal could be resisted by force of arms. Rather it would seem that the very walls should have fallen at his feet at the first blast of the trumpet; but there was military honour, there was religious hatred, there was the obstinacy of party. More than all, there were half a dozen Jesuits within the town, and to those ablest of generals in times of civil war it was mainly owing that the siege of Groningen was protracted longer than under other circumstances would have been possible.

It is not my purpose to describe in detail the scientific operations during the sixty-five days between the 20th May and the 24th July. Again the commander-in-chief enlightened the world by an exhibition of a more artistic and humane style of warfare than previously to his appearance on the military stage had been known. But the daily phenomena of the Leaguer—although they have been minutely preserved by most competent eyewitnesses—are hardly entitled to a place except in special military histories where, however, they should claim the foremost rank.

The fortifications of the city were of the most splendid and substantial character known to the age. The ditches, the ravelins, the curtains, the towers were as thoroughly constructed as the defences of any place in Europe. It was therefore necessary that Maurice and his cousin Lewis should employ all their learning, all their skill, and their best artillery to reduce this great capital of the Eastern Netherlands. Again the scientific coil of approaches wound itself around and around the doomed stronghold; again were constructed the galleries, the covered ways, the hidden mines, where soldiers, transformed to gnomes, burrowed and fought within the bowels of the earth; again that fatal letter Y advanced slowly under ground, stretching its deadly prongs nearer and nearer up to the walls; and again the system of defences against a relieving force was so perfectly established that Verdugo or Mansfield, with what troops they could muster, seemed as powerless as the pewter soldiers with which Maurice in his boyhood—not yet so long passed away—was wont to puzzle over the problems which now practically engaged his early manhood. Again, too, strangely enough, it is recorded that Philip Nassau, at almost the same period of the siege as in that of Gertruydenberg, signalized himself by a deed of drunken and superfluous daring. This time the dinner party was at the quarters of Count Solms, in honour of the Prince of Anhalt, where, after potations pottle deep, Count Philip rushed from the dinner-table to the breach, not yet thoroughly practicable, of the north ravelin, and, entirely without armour, mounted pike in hand to the assault, proposing to carry the fort by his own unaided exertions. Another officer, one Captain Vaillant, still more beside himself than was the count, inspired him to these deeds of valour by assuring him that the mine was to be sprung under the ravelin that afternoon, and that it was a plot on the part of the Holland boatmen to prevent the soldiers who had been working so hard and so long in the mines from taking part in the honours of the assault. The count was with difficulty brought off with a whole skin and put to bed. Yet despite these disgraceful pranks there is no doubt that a better and braver officer than he was hardly to be found even among the ten noble Nassaus who at that moment were fighting for the cause of Dutch liberty—fortunately with more sobriety than he at all times displayed. On the following day,

Prince Maurice, making a reconnoissance of the works with his usual calmness, yet with the habitual contempt of personal danger which made so singular a contrast with the cautious and painstaking characteristics of his strategy, very narrowly escaped death. A shot from the fort struck so hard upon the buckler under cover of which he was taking his observations as to fell him to the ground. Sir Francis Vere, who was with the prince under the same buckler, likewise measured his length in the trench, but both escaped serious injury.

Pauli, one of the States commissioners present in the camp, wrote to Barneveld that it was to be hoped that the accident might prove a warning to his Excellency. He had repeatedly remonstrated with him, he said, against his reckless exposure of himself to unnecessary danger, but he was so energetic and so full of courage that it was impossible to restrain him from being everywhere every day.

Three days later, the letter Y did its work. At ten o'clock 15 July, of the night of the 15th July, Prince Maurice ordered the mines to be sprung, when the north ravelin was blown into the air, and some forty of the garrison with it. Two of them came flying into the besiegers' camp, and, strange to say, one was alive and sound. The catastrophe finished the sixty-five days' siege, the breach was no longer defensible, the obstinacy of the burghers was exhausted, and capitulation followed. In truth, there had been a subterranean intrigue going on for many weeks, which was almost as effective as the mine. A certain Jan to Boer had been going back and forth between camp and city, under various pretexts and safe-conducts, and it had at last appeared that the Jesuits and the five hundred of Verdugo's veterans were all that prevented Groningen from returning to the Union. There had been severe fighting within the city itself, for the Jesuits had procured the transfer of the veterans from the faubourg to the town itself, and the result of all these operations, political, military, and jesuitical, was that on 22nd July articles of surrender were finally agreed upon between Maurice and a deputation from the magistrates, the guilds, and commander Lanckema.

The city was to take its place thenceforth as a member of the Union. William Lewis, already stadholder of Friesland for the united States, was to be recognised as chief magistrate of the whole province, which was thus to retain all its ancient privileges, laws, and rights of self-government, while it exchanged its dependence on a distant, foreign, and decaying despotism for incorporation with a young and vigorous commonwealth.

It was arranged that no religion but the reformed religion, as then practised in the united republic, should be publicly exercised in the province, but that no man should be questioned as to his faith, or troubled in his conscience: Cloisters and ecclesiastical property were to remain 'in statu quo,' until the States-General should come to a definite conclusion on these subjects.

Universal amnesty was proclaimed for all offences and quarrels. Every citizen or resident foreigner was free to remain in or to retire from the town or province, with full protection to his person and property, and it was expressly provided in the articles granted to Lanckema that his soldiers should depart with arms and baggage, leaving to Prince Maurice their colours only, while the prince furnished sufficient transportation for their women and their wounded. The property of Verdugo, royal stadholder of the province, was to be respected, and to remain in the city, or to be taken thence under safe conduct, as might be preferred.

Ten thousand cannon-shot had been fired against the city. The cost of powder and shot consumed was estimated at a hundred thousand florins. Four hundred of the besiegers had been killed, and a much larger number wounded. The army had been further weakened by sickness and numerous desertions. Of the besieged, three hundred soldiers in all were killed, and a few citizens.

Thirty-six cannon were taken, besides mortars, and it was said that eight hundred tons of powder, and plenty of other ammunition and provisions were found in the place.

On the 23rd July Maurice and William Lewis entered the city. Some of the soldiers were disappointed at the inexorable prohibition of pillage; but it was the purpose of Maurice, as of the States-General, to place the sister province at once in the unsullied possession of the liberty and the order for which the struggle with Spain had, been carried on so long. If the limitation of public religious worship seemed harsh, it should be remembered that Romanism in a city occupied by Spanish troops had come to mean unmitigated hostility to the republic. In the midst of civil war, the hour for that religious liberty which was the necessary issue of the great conflict had not yet struck. It was surely something gained for humanity that no man should be questioned at all as to his creed in countries where it was so recently the time-honoured practice to question him on the rack, and to burn him if the answer was objectionable to the inquirer.

It was something that the holy Inquisition had been for ever suppressed in the land. It must be admitted, likewise, that the terms of surrender and the spectacle of re-established law and order which succeeded the capture of Groningen furnished a wholesome contrast to the scenes of ineffable horror that had been displayed whenever a Dutch town had fallen into the hands of Philip.

And thus the commonwealth of the United Netherlands, through the practical military genius and perseverance of Maurice and Lewis William, and the substantial statesmanship of Barneveld and his colleagues, had at last rounded itself into definite shape; while in all directions toward which men turned their eyes, world-empire, imposing and gorgeous as it had seemed for an interval, was vanishing before its votaries like a mirage. The republic, placed on the solid foundations of civil liberty, self-government, and reasonable law, was steadily consolidating itself.

No very prominent movements were undertaken by the forces of the Union during the remainder of the year. According to the agreements with Henry IV. it had been necessary to provide that monarch with considerable assistance to carry on his new campaigns, and it was therefore difficult for Maurice to begin for the moment upon the larger schemes which he had contemplated.

Meantime the condition of the obedient Netherlands demands a hasty glance.

On the death of brother Alexander the Capuchin, Fuentes produced a patent by which Peter Ernest Mansfeld was provisionally appointed governor, in case the post should become vacant. During the year which followed, that testy old campaigner had indulged himself in many petty feuds with all around him, but had effected, as we have seen, very little to maintain the king's authority either in the obedient or disobedient provinces.

His utter incompetency soon became most painfully apparent. His more than puerile dependence upon his son, and the more than paternal severity exercised over him by Count Charles, were made manifest to all the world. The son ruled the trembling but peevish old warrior with an iron rod, and endless was their wrangling with Fuentes and all the other Spaniards. Between the querulousness of the one and the ferocity of the other, poor Fuentes became sick of his life.

"'Tis a diabolical genius, this count Charles," said Ybarra, "and so full of ambition that he insists on governing everybody just as he rules his father. As for me, until the archduke comes I am a fish out of water."

The true successor to Farnese was to be, the Archduke Ernest, one of the many candidates for the hand of the Infanta, and for the throne of that department of the Spanish dominions which was commonly called France. Should Philip not appropriate the throne without further scruple, in person, it was on the whole decided that his favorite nephew should be the satrap of that outlying district of the Spanish empire. In such case obedient France might be annexed to obedient Netherlands, and united under the sway of Archduke Ernest.

But these dreams had proved in the cold air of reality but midsummer madness. When the name of the archduke was presented to the estates as King Ernest I. of France, even the most unscrupulous and impassioned Leaguers of that country fairly hung their heads. That a foreign prince, whose very name had never been before heard of by the vast bulk of the French population, should be deliberately placed upon the throne of St. Louis and Hugh Capet, was a humiliation hard to defend, profusely as Philip had scattered the Peruvian and Mexican dollars among the great ones of the nation, in order to accomplish his purpose.

So Archduke Ernest, early in the year 1594, came to Brussels, but he came as a gloomy, disappointed man. To be a bachelor-governor of the impoverished, exhausted, half-rebellious, and utterly forlorn little remnant of the Spanish Netherlands, was a different position from that of husband of Clara Isabella and king of France, on which his imagination had been feeding so long.

For nearly the whole twelvemonth subsequent to the death of Farnese, the Spanish envoy to the Imperial court had been endeavouring to arrange for the departure of the archduke to his seat of government in the Netherlands. The prince himself was willing enough, but there were many obstacles on the part of the emperor and his advisers. "Especially there is one very great impossibility," said San Clemente, "and that is the poverty of his Highness, which is so great that my own is not greater in my estate. So I don't see how he can stir a step without money. Here they'll not furnish him with a penny, and for himself he possesses nothing but debts." The emperor was so little pleased with the adventure that in truth, according to the same authority, he looked upon the new viceroy's embarrassments with considerable satisfaction, so that it was necessary for Philip to provide for his travelling expenses.

Ernest was next brother of the Emperor Rudolph, and as intensely devoted to the interests of the Roman Church as was that potentate himself, or even his uncle Philip.

He was gentle, weak, melancholy, addicted to pleasure, a martyr to the gout. He brought no soldiers to the provinces, for the emperor, threatened with another world-empire on his pagan flank, had no funds nor troops to send to the assistance of his Christian brother-in-law and uncle. Moreover, it may be imagined that Rudolph, despite the bonds of religion and consanguinity, was disposed to look coldly on the colossal projects of Philip.

So Ernest brought no troops, but he brought six hundred and seventy gentlemen, pages, and cooks, and five hundred and thirty-four horses, not to charge upon the rebellious Dutchmen withal, but to draw coaches and six.

There was trouble enough prepared for the new governor at his arrival. The great Flemish and Walloon nobles were quarrelling fiercely with the Spaniards and among themselves for office and for precedence. Arschot and his brother Havre both desired the government of Flanders; so did Arenberg. All three, as well as other gentlemen, were scrambling for the majordomo's office in Ernest's palace. Havre wanted the finance department as well, but Ybarra, who was a financier, thought the public funds in his hands would be in a perilous condition, inasmuch as he was provinces was accounted the most covetous man in all the provinces.

So soon as the archduke was known to be approaching the capital there was a most ludicrous race run by all these grandees, in order to be the first to greet his Highness. While Mansfeld and Fuentes were squabbling, as usual, Arschot got the start of both, and arrived at Treves. Then the decrepit Peter Ernest struggled as far as Luxembourg, while Fuentes posted on to Namur. The archduke was much perplexed as to the arranging of all these personages on the day of his entrance into Brussels. In the council of state it was still worse. Arschot claimed the first place as duke and as senior member, Peter Ernest demanded it as late governor-general and because of his grey hairs. Never was imperial highness more disturbed, never was clamour for loaves and fishes more deafening. The caustic financier—whose mind was just then occupied with the graver matter of assassination on a considerable scale—looked with profound contempt at the spectacle thus presented to him. "There has been the devil's own row," said he, "between these counts about offices, and also about going out to receive the most serene archduke. I have had such work with them that by the salvation of my soul I swear if it were to last a fortnight longer I would go off afoot to Spain, even if I were sure of dying in jail after I got there. I have reconciled the two counts (Fuentes and Mansfeld) with each other a hundred times, and another hundred times they have fallen out again, and behaved themselves with such vulgarity that I blushed for them. They are both to blame, but at any rate we have now got the archduke housed, and he will get us out of this embarrassment."

The archduke came with rather a prejudice against the Spaniards—the result doubtless of his disappointment in regard to France—and he manifested at first an extreme haughtiness to those of that nation with whom he came in contact. A Castilian noble of high rank, having audience with him on one occasion, replaced his hat after salutation, as he had been accustomed to do—according to the manner of grandees of Spain—during the government of Farnese. The hat was rudely struck from his head by the archduke's chamberlain, and he was himself ignominiously thrust out of the presence. At another time an interview was granted to two Spanish gentlemen who had business to transact. They made their appearance in magnificent national costume, splendidly embroidered in gold. After a brief hearing they were dismissed,

with appointment of another audience for a few days later. When they again presented themselves they found the archduke with his court jester standing at his side, the buffoon being attired in a suit precisely similar to their own, which in the interval had been prepared by the court tailor.

Such amenities as these did not increase the popularity of Ernest with the high-spirited Spaniards, nor was it palatable to them that it should be proposed to supersede the old fighting Portuguese, Verdugo, as governor and commander-in-chief for the king in Friesland, by Frederic van den Berg, a renegade Netherlander, unworthy cousin of the Nassaus, who had never shown either military or administrative genius.

Nor did he succeed in conciliating the Flemings or the Germans by these measures. In truth he was, almost without his own knowledge, under the controlling influence of Fuentes, the most unscrupulous and dangerous Spaniard of them all, while his every proceeding was closely watched not only by Diego and Stephen Ybarra, but even by Christoval de Moura, one of Philip's two secretaries of state who at this crisis made a visit to Brussels.

These men were indignant at the imbecility of the course pursued in the obedient provinces. They knew that the incapacity of the Government to relieve the sieges of Gertruydenberg and Groningen had excited the contempt of Europe, and was producing a most damaging effect an Spanish authority throughout Christendom. They were especially irritated by the presence of the arch-intrigues, Mayenne, in Brussels, even after all his double dealings had been so completely exposed that a blind man could have read them. Yet there was Mayenne, consorting with the archduke, and running up a great bill of sixteen thousand florins at the hotel, which the royal paymaster declined to settle for want of funds, notwithstanding Ernest's order to that effect, and there was no possibility of inducing the viceroy to arrest him, much as he had injured and defrauded the king.

How severely Ybarra and Feria denounced Mayenne has been seen; but remonstrances about this and other grave mistakes of administration were lost upon Ernest, or made almost impossible by his peculiar temper. "If I speak of these things to his Highness," said Ybarra, "he will begin to cry, as he always does."

Ybarra, however, thought it his duty secretly to give the king frequent information as to the blasted and forlorn condition of the provinces. "This sick man will die in our arms," he said, "without our wishing to kill him." He also left no doubt in the royal mind as to the utter incompetency of the archduke for his office. Although he had much Christianity, amiability, and good intentions, he was so unused to business, so slow and so lazy, so easily persuaded by those around him, as to be always falling into errors. He was the servant of his own servants, particularly of those least disposed to the king's service and most attentive to their own interests. He had endeavoured to make himself beloved by the natives of the country, while the very reverse of this had been the result.

"As to his agility and the strength of his body," said the Spaniard, as if he were thinking of certain allegories which were to mark the archduke's triumphal entry, "they are so deficient as to leave him unfit for arms. I consider him incapable of accompanying an army to the field, and we find him so new to all such affairs as constitute government and the conduct of warlike business, that he could not steer his way without some one to enlighten and direct him."

It was sometimes complained of in those days—and the thought has even prolonged itself until later times—that those republicans of the United Netherlands had done and could do great things; but that, after all, there was no grandeur about them. Certainly they had done great things. It was something to fight the Ocean for ages, and patiently and firmly to shut him out from his own domain. It was something to extinguish the Spanish Inquisition—a still more cruel and devouring enemy than the sea. It was something that the fugitive spirit of civil and religious liberty had found at last its most substantial and steadfast home upon those storm-washed shoals and shifting sandbanks.

It was something to come to the rescue of England in her great agony, and help to save her from invasion. It was something to do more than any nation but England, and as much as she, to assist Henry the Huguenot to the throne of his ancestors and to preserve the national unity of France which its own great ones had imperilled. It was something to found two magnificent universities, cherished abodes of science and of antique lore, in the midst of civil commotions and of resistance to foreign oppression. It was something, at the same period, to lay the foundation of a system of common schools—so cheap as to be nearly free—for rich and poor alike, which, in the words of one of the greatest benefactors to the young republic, "would be worth all the soldiers, arsenals, armouries, munitions, and alliances in the world." It was something to make a revolution, as humane as it was effective, in military affairs, and to create an army whose camps were European academies. It was something to organize, at the same critical period, on the most skilful and liberal scale, to carry out with unexampled daring, sagacity, and fortitude, great voyages of discovery to the polar regions, and to open new highways for commerce, new treasures for science. Many things of this nature had been done by the new commonwealth; but, alas! she did not drape herself melodramatically, nor stalk about with heroic wreath and cothurn. She was altogether without grandeur.

When Alva had gained his signal victories, and followed them up by those prodigious massacres which, but for his own and other irrefragable testimony, would seem too monstrous for belief, he had erected a colossal statue to himself, attired in the most classical of costumes, and surrounded with the most mythological of attributes. Here was grandeur. But William the Silent, after he had saved the republic, for which he had laboured during his whole lifetime and was destined to pour out his heart's blood, went about among the brewers and burghers with unbuttoned doublet and woollen bargeman's waistcoat. It was justly objected to his clothes, by the euphuistic Fulke Greville, that a meanborn student of the Inns of Court would have been ashamed to walk about London streets in them.

And now the engineering son of that shabbily-dressed personage had been giving the whole world lessons in the science of war, and was fairly perfecting the work which William and his great contemporaries had so well begun. But if all this had been merely doing great things without greatness, there was one man in the Netherlands who knew what grandeur was. He was not a citizen of the disobedient republic, however, but a loyal subject of the obedient provinces, and his name was John Baptist Houwaerts, an eminent schoolmaster of Brussels. He was still more eminent as a votary of what was called "Rhetoric" and as an arranger of

triumphal processions and living pictures.

The arrival of Archduke Ernest at the seat of the provincial Government offered an opportunity, which had long been wanting, for a display of John Baptist's genius. The new viceroy was in so shattered a condition of health, so crippled with the gout, as to be quite unable to stand, and it required the services of several lackeys to lift him into and out of his carriage. A few days of repose therefore were indispensable to him before he could make his "joyous entrance" into the capital. But the day came at last, and the exhibition was a masterpiece.

It might have seemed that the abject condition of the Spanish provinces—desolate, mendicant, despairing—would render holiday making impossible. But although almost every vestige of the ancient institutions had vanished from the obedient Netherlands as a reward for their obedience; although to civil and religious liberty, law, order, and a thriving commercial and manufacturing existence, such as had been rarely witnessed in the world, had succeeded the absolute tyranny of Jesuits, universal beggary, and a perennial military mutiny—setting Government at defiance and plundering the people—there was one faithful never deserted Belgica, and that was Rhetoric.

Neither the magnificence nor the pedantry of the spectacles by which the entry of the mild and inefficient Ernest into Brussels and Antwerp was now solemnized had ever been surpassed. The town councils, stimulated by hopes absolutely without foundation as to great results to follow the advent of the emperor's brother, had voted large sums and consumed many days in anxious deliberation upon the manner in which they should be expended so as most to redound to the honour of Ernest and the reputation of the country.

In place of the "bloody tragedies of burning, murdering, and ravishing," of which the provinces had so long been the theatre, it was resolved that, "Rhetoric's sweet comedies, amorous jests, and farces," should gladden all eyes and hearts. A stately procession of knights and burghers in historical and mythological costumes, followed by ships, dromedaries, elephants, whales, giants, dragons, and other wonders of the sea and shore, escorted the archduke into the city. Every street and square was filled with triumphal arches, statues and platforms, on which the most ingenious and thoroughly classical living pictures were exhibited. There was hardly an eminent deity of Olympus, or hero of ancient history, that was not revived and made visible to mortal eyes in the person of Ernestus of Austria.

On a framework fifty-five feet high and thirty-three feet in breadth he was represented as Apollo hurling his darts at an enormous Python, under one of whose fore-paws struggled an unfortunate burgher, while the other clutched a whole city; Tellus, meantime, with her tower on her head, kneeling anxious and imploring at the feet of her deliverer. On another stage Ernest assumed the shape of Perseus; Belgica that of the bound and despairing Andromeda. On a third, the interior of Etna was revealed, when Vulcan was seen urging his Cyclops to forge for Ernest their most tremendous thunderbolts with which to smite the foes of the provinces, those enemies being of course the English and the Hollanders. Venus, the while, timidly presented an arrow to her husband, which he was requested to sharpen, in order that when the wars were over Cupid, therewith might pierce the heart of some beautiful virgin, whose charms should reward Ernest—fortunately for the female world, still a bachelor—for his victories and his toils.

The walls of every house were hung with classic emblems and inscribed with Latin verses. All the pedagogues of Brussels and Antwerp had been at work for months, determined to amaze the world with their dithyrambics and acrostics, and they had outdone themselves.

Moreover, in addition to all these theatrical spectacles and pompous processions—accompanied as they were by blazing tar-barrels, flying dragons, and leagues of flaring torches—John Baptist, who had been director-in-chief of all the shows successively arranged to welcome Don John of Austria, Archduke Matthias, Francis of Alengon, and even William of Orange, into the capital, had prepared a feast of a specially intellectual character for the new governor-general.

The pedant, according to his own account, so soon as the approach of Ernest had been announced, fell straightway into a trance. While he was in that condition, a beautiful female apparition floated before his eyes, and, on being questioned, announced her name to be Moralization. John Baptist begged her to inform him whether it were true, as had been stated, that Jupiter had just sent Mercury to the Netherlands. The phantom, correcting his mistake, observed that the king of gods and men had not sent Hermes but the Archduke Ernestus, beloved of the three Graces, favourite of the nine Muses, and, in addition to these advantages, nephew and brother-in-law of the King of Spain, to the relief of the suffering provinces. The Netherlands, it was true, for their religious infidelity, had justly incurred great disasters and misery; but benignant Jove, who, to the imagination of this excited Fleming, seemed to have been converted to Catholicism while still governing the universe, had now sent them in mercy a deliverer. The archduke would speedily relieve "bleeding Belgica" from her sufferings, bind up her wounds, and annihilate her enemies. The spirit further informed the poet that the forests of the Low Countries—so long infested by brigands, wood-beggars, and malefactors of all kinds—would thenceforth swarm with "nymphs, rabbits, hares, and animals of that nature."

A vision of the conquering Ernest, attended by "eight-and-twenty noble and pleasant females, marching two and two, half naked, each holding a torch in one hand and a laurel-wreath in the other," now swept before the dreamer's eyes. He naturally requested the "discreet spirit" to mention the names of this bevy of imperfectly attired ladies thronging so lovingly around the fortunate archduke, and was told that "they were the eight-and-twenty virtues which chiefly characterized his serene Highness." Prominent in this long list, and they were all faithfully enumerated, were "Philosophy, Audacity, Acrimony, Virility, Equity, Piety, Velocity, and Alacrity." The two last-mentioned qualities could hardly be attributed to the archduke in his decrepit condition, except in an intensely mythological sense. Certainly, they would have been highly useful virtues to him at that moment. The prince who had just taken Gertruydenberg, and was then besieging Groningen, was manifesting his share of audacity, velocity, and other good gifts on even a wider platform than that erected for Ernest by John Baptist Houwaerts; and there was an admirable opportunity for both to develope their respective characteristics for the world's judgment.

Meantime the impersonation of the gentle and very gouty invalid as Apollo, as Perseus, as the feather-

heeled Mercury, was highly applauded by the burghers of Brussels.

And so the dreamer dreamed on, and the discreet nymph continued to discourse, until John Baptist, starting suddenly from his trance beheld that it was all a truth and no vision. Ernest was really about to enter the Netherlands, and with him the millennium. The pedant therefore proceeded to his desk, and straightway composed the very worst poem that had ever been written in any language, even Flemish.

There were thousands of lines in it, and not a line without a god or a goddess.

Mars, Nemesis, and Ate, Pluto, Rhadamanthus, and Minos, the Fates and the Furies, together with Charon, Calumnia, Bellona, and all such objectionable divinities, were requested to disappear for ever from the Low Countries; while in their stead were confidently invoked Jupiter, Apollo, Triptolemus, and last, though not least, Rhetorica.

Enough has been said of this raree-show to weary the reader's patience, but not more than enough to show the docile and enervated nature of this portion of a people who had lost everything for which men cherish their fatherland, but who could still find relief—after thirty years of horrible civil war in painted pageantry, Latin versification, and the classical dictionary.

Yet there was nothing much more important achieved by the archduke in the brief period for which his administration was destined to endure. Three phenomena chiefly marked his reign, but his own part in the three was rather a passive than an active one—mutiny, assassination, and negotiation—the two last attempted on a considerable scale but ending abortively.

It is impossible to exaggerate the misery of the obedient provinces at this epoch. The insane attempt of the King of Spain, with such utterly inadequate machinery, to conquer the world has been sufficiently dilated upon. The Spanish and Italian and Walloon soldiers were starving in Brabant and Flanders in order that Spanish gold might be poured into the bottomless pit of the Holy League in France.

The mutiny that had broken forth the preceding year in Artois and Hamault was now continued on a vast scale in Brabant. Never had that national institution—a Spanish mutiny—been more thoroughly organized, more completely carried out in all its details. All that was left of the famous Spanish discipline and military science in this their period of rapid decay, seemed monopolized by the mutineers. Some two thousand choice troops (horse and foot), Italians and Spanish, took possession of two considerable cities, Sichem and Arschot, and ultimately concentrated themselves at Sichem, which they thoroughly fortified. Having chosen their Eletto and other officers they proceeded regularly to business. To the rallying point came disaffected troops of all nations from far and near. Never since the beginning of the great war had there been so extensive a military rebellion, nor one in which so many veteran officers, colonels, captains, and subalterns took part. The army of Philip had at last grown more dangerous to himself than to the Hollanders.

The council at Brussels deliberated anxiously upon the course to be pursued, and it was decided at last to negotiate with instead of attacking them. But it was soon found that the mutineers were as hard to deal with as were the republicans on the other side the border. They refused to hear of anything short of complete payment of the enormous arrears due to them, with thorough guarantees and hostages that any agreement made between themselves and the archduke should be punctually carried out. Meanwhile they ravaged the country far and near, and levied their contributions on towns and villages, up to the very walls of Brussels, and before the very eyes of the viceroy.

Moreover they entered into negotiation with Prince Maurice of Nassau, not offering to enlist under his flag, but asking for protection against the king in exchange for a pledge meanwhile not to serve his cause. At last the archduke plucked up a heart and sent some troops against the rebels, who had constructed two forts on the river Demer near the city of Sichem. In vain Velasco, commander of the expedition, endeavoured to cut off the supplies for these redoubts. The vigour and audacity of the rebel cavalry made the process impossible. Velasco then attempted to storm the lesser stronghold of the two, but was repulsed with the loss of two hundred killed. Among these were many officers, one of whom, Captain Porto Carrero, was a near relative of Fuentes. After a siege, Velasco, who was a marshal of the camp of considerable distinction, succeeded in driving the mutineers out of the forts; who, finding their position thus weakened, renewed their negotiations with Maurice. They at last obtained permission from the prince to remain under the protection of Gertruydenberg and Breda until they could ascertain what decision the archduke would take. More they did not ask of Maurice, nor did he require more of them.

The mutiny, thus described in a few lines, had occupied nearly a year, and had done much to paralyze for that period all the royal operations in the Netherlands. In December the rebellious troops marched out of Sichem in perfect order, and came to Langstraet within the territory of the republic.

The archduke now finding himself fairly obliged to treat with them sent an offer of the same terms which had been proposed to mutineers on previous occasions. At first they flatly refused to negotiate at all, but at last, with the permission of Maurice, who conducted himself throughout with scrupulous delicacy, and made no attempts to induce them to violate their allegiance to the king, they received Count Belgioso, the envoy of the archduke. They held out for payment of all their arrears up to the last farthing, and insisted on a hostage of rank until the debt should be discharged. Full forgiveness of their rebellious proceedings was added as a matter of course. Their terms were accepted, and Francisco Padiglia was assigned as a hostage. They then established themselves, according to agreement, at Tirlemont, which they were allowed to fortify at the expense of the province and to hold until the money for their back wages could be scraped together. Meantime they received daily wages and rations from the Government at Brussels, including thirty stivers a day for each horseman, thirteen crowns a day for the Eletto, and ten crowns a day for each counsellor, making in all five hundred crowns a day. And here they remained, living exceedingly at their ease and enjoying a life of leisure for eighteen months, and until long after the death of the archduke, for it was not until the administration of Cardinal Albert that the funds, amounting to three hundred and sixty thousand crowns, could be collected.

These were the chief military exploits of the podagric Perseus in behalf of the Flemish Andromeda.

A very daring adventure was however proposed to the archduke. Philip calmly suggested that an expedition should be rapidly fitted out in Dunkirk, which should cross the channel, ascend the Thames as far as

Rochester, and burn the English fleet. "I am informed by persons well acquainted with the English coast," said the king, "that it would be an easy matter for a few quick-sailing vessels to accomplish this. Two or three thousand soldiers might be landed at Rochester who might burn or sink all the unarmed vessels they could find there, and the expedition could return and sail off again before the people of the country could collect in sufficient numbers to do them any damage." The archduke was instructed to consult with Fuentes and Ybarra as to whether this little matter, thus parenthetically indicated, could be accomplished without too much risk and trouble.

Certainly it would seem as if the king believed in the audacity, virility, velocity, alacrity, and the rest of the twenty-eight virtues of his governor-general, even more seriously than did John Baptist Houwaerts. The unfortunate archduke would have needed to be, in all earnestness, a mythological demigod to do the work required of him. With the best part of his army formally maintained by him in recognised mutiny, with the great cities of the Netherlands yielding themselves to the republic with hardly an attempt on the part of the royal forces to relieve them, and with the country which he was supposed to govern, the very centre of the obedient provinces, ruined, sacked, eaten up by the soldiers of Spain; villages, farmhouses, gentlemen's castles, churches plundered; the male population exposed to daily butchery, and the women to outrages worse than death; it seemed like the bitterest irony to propose that he should seize that moment to outwit the English and Dutch sea-kings who were perpetually cruising in the channel, and to undertake a "beard-singeing" expedition such as even the dare-devil Drake would hardly have attempted.

Such madcap experiments might perhaps one day, in the distant future, be tried with reasonable success, but hardly at the beck of a Spanish king sitting in his easy chair a thousand miles off, nor indeed by the servants of any king whatever.

The plots of murder arranged in Brussels during this administration were on a far more extensive scale than were the military plans.

The Count of Fuentes, general superintendent of foreign affairs, was especially charged with the department of assassination. This office was no sinecure; for it involved much correspondence, and required great personal attention to minute details. Philip, a consummate artist in this branch of industry, had laid out a good deal of such work which he thought could best be carried out in and from the Netherlands. Especially it was desirable to take off, by poison or otherwise, Henry IV., Queen Elizabeth, Maurice of Nassau, Olden-Barneveld, St. Aldegonde, and other less conspicuous personages.

Henry's physician-in-chief, De la Riviere, was at that time mainly occupied with devising antidotes to poison, which he well knew was offered to his master on frequent occasions, and in the most insidious ways. Andrada, the famous Portuguese poisoner, amongst others is said, under direction of Fuentes and Ybarra, to have attempted his life by a nosegay of roses impregnated with so subtle a powder that its smell alone was relied upon to cause death, and De la Riviere was doing his best to search for a famous Saxon drug, called fable-powder, as a counter-poison. "The Turk alarms us, and well he may," said a diplomatic agent of Henry, "but the Spaniard allows us not to think of the Turk. And what a strange manner is this to exercise one's enmities and vengeance by having recourse to such damnable artifices, after force and arms have not succeeded, and to attack the person of princes by poisonings and assassinations."

A most elaborate attempt upon the life of Queen Elizabeth early in this year came near being successful. A certain Portuguese Jew, Dr. Lopez, had for some time been her physician-in-ordinary. He had first been received into her service on the recommendation of Don Antonio, the pretender, and had the reputation of great learning and skill. With this man Count Fuentes and Stephen Ybarra, chief of the financial department at Brussels, had a secret understanding. Their chief agent was Emanuel Andrada, who was also in close communication with Bernardino de Mendoza and other leading personages of the Spanish court. Two years previously, Philip, by the hands of Andrada, had sent a very valuable ring of rubies and diamonds as a present to Lopez, and the doctor had bound himself to do any service for the king of Spain that might be required of him. Andrada accordingly wrote to Mendoza that he had gained over this eminent physician, but that as Lopez was poor and laden with debt, a high price would be required for his work. Hereupon Fuentes received orders from the King of Spain to give the Jew all that he could in reason demand, if he would undertake to poison the queen.

It now became necessary to handle the matter with great delicacy, and Fuentes and Ybarra entered accordingly into a correspondence, not with Lopez, but with a certain Ferrara de Gama. These letters were entrusted to one Emanuel Lewis de Tinoco, secretly informed of the plot, for delivery to Ferrara. Fuentes charged Tinoco to cause Ferrara to encourage Lopez to poison her Majesty of England, that they might all have "a merry Easter." Lopez was likewise requested to inform the King of Spain when he thought he could accomplish the task. The doctor ultimately agreed to do the deed for fifty thousand crowns, but as he had daughters and was an affectionate parent, he stipulated for a handsome provision in marriage for those young ladies. The terms were accepted, but Lopez wished to be assured of the money first.

"Having once undertaken the work," said Lord Burghley, if he it were, "he was so greedy to perform it that he would ask Ferrara every day, 'When will the money come? I am ready to do the service if the answer were come out of Spain.'"

But Philip, as has been often seen, was on principle averse to paying for work before it had been done. Some delay occurring, and the secret, thus confided to so many, having floated as it were imperceptibly into the air, Tinoco was arrested on suspicion before he had been able to deliver the letters of Fuentes and Ybarra to Ferrara, for Ferrara, too, had been imprisoned before the arrival of Tinoco. The whole correspondence was discovered, and both Ferrara and Tinoco confessed the plot. Lopez, when first arrested, denied his guilt very stoutly, but being confronted with Ferrara, who told the whole story to his face in presence of the judges, he at last avowed the crime.

They were all condemned, executed, and quartered at London in the spring of 1594. The queen wished to send a special envoy to the archduke at Brussels, to complain that Secretary of State Cristoval de Moura, Count Fuentes, and Finance Minister Ybarra—all three then immediately about his person—were thus implicated in the plot against her life, to demand their punishment, or else, in case of refusals to convict the

king and the archduke as accomplices in the crime. Safe conduct was requested for such an envoy, which was refused by Ernest as an insulting proposition both to his uncle and himself. The queen accordingly sent word to President Richardot by one of her council, that the whole story would be published, and this was accordingly done.

Early in the spring of this same year, a certain Renichon, priest and schoolmaster of Namur, was summoned from his school to a private interview with Count Berlaymont. That nobleman very secretly informed the priest that the King of, Spain wished to make use of him in an affair of great importance, and one which would be very profitable to himself. The pair then went together to Brussels, and proceeded straightway to the palace. They were secretly admitted to the apartments of the archduke, but the priest, meaning to follow his conductor into the private chamber, where he pretended to recognize the person of Ernest, was refused admittance. The door was, however, not entirely closed, and he heard, as he declared, the conversation between his Highness and Berlaymont, which was carried on partly in Latin and partly in Spanish. He heard them discussing the question—so he stated—of the recompense to be awarded for the business about to be undertaken, and after a brief conversation, distinctly understood the archduke to say, as the count was approaching the door, "I will satisfy him abundantly and with interest."

Berlaymont then invited his clerical guest to supper—so ran his statement—and, after that repast was finished, informed him that he was requested by the archduke to kill Prince Maurice of Nassau. For this piece of work he was to receive one hundred Philip-dollars in hand, and fifteen thousand more, which were lying ready for him, so soon as the deed should be done.

The schoolmaster at first objected to the enterprise, but ultimately yielded to the persuasions of the count. He was informed that Maurice was a friendly, familiar gentleman, and that there would be opportunities enough for carrying out the project if he took his time. He was to buy a good pair of pistols and remove to the Hague, where he was to set up a school, and wait for the arrival of his accomplices, of whom there were six. Berlaymont then caused to be summoned and introduced to the pedagogue a man whom he described as one of the six. The new comer, hearing that Renichon had agreed to the propositions made to him, hailed him cordially as comrade and promised to follow him very soon into Holland. Berlaymont then observed that there were several personages to be made away with, besides Prince Maurice—especially Barneveld, and St. Aldegonde and that the six assassins had, since the time of the Duke of Parma, been kept in the pay of the King of Spain as nobles, to be employed as occasion should serve.

His new comrade accompanied Renichon to the canal boat, conversing by the way, and informed him that they were both to be sent to Leyden in order to entice away and murder the young brother of Maurice, Frederic Henry, then at school at that place, even as Philip William, eldest of all the brothers, had been kidnapped five-and-twenty years before from the same town.

Renichon then disguised himself as a soldier, proceeded to Antwerp, where he called himself Michael de Triviere, and thence made his way to Breda, provided with letters from Berlaymont. He was, however, arrested on suspicion not long after his arrival there, and upon trial the whole plot was discovered. Having unsuccessfully attempted to hang himself, he subsequently, without torture, made a full and minute confession, and was executed on the 3rd June, 1594.

Later in the year, one Pierre du Four, who had been a soldier both in the States and the French service, was engaged by General La Motte and Counsellor Assonleville to attempt the assassination of Prince Maurice. La Motte took the man to the palace, and pretended at least to introduce him to the chamber of the archduke, who was said to be lying ill in bed. Du Four was advised to enrol himself in the body-guard at the Hague, and to seek an opportunity when the prince went hunting, or was mounting his horse, or was coming from church, or at some such unguarded moment, to take a shot at him. "Will you do what I ask," demanded from the bed the voice of him who was said to be Ernest, "will you kill this tyrant?"—"I will," replied the soldier. "Then my son," was the parting benediction of the supposed archduke, "you will go straight to paradise."

Afterwards he received good advice from Assonleville, and was assured that if he would come and hear a mass in the royal chapel next morning, that religious ceremony would make him invisible when he should make his attempt on the life of Maurice, and while he should be effecting his escape. The poor wretch accordingly came next morning to chapel, where this miraculous mass was duly performed, and he then received a certain portion of his promised reward in ready money. He was also especially charged, in case he should be arrested, not to make a confession—as had been done by those previously employed in such work—as all complicity with him on part of his employers would certainly be denied.

The miserable dupe was arrested, convicted, executed; and of course the denial was duly made on the part of the archduke, La Motte, and Assonleville. It was also announced, on behalf of Ernest, that some one else, fraudulently impersonating his Highness, had lain in the bed to which the culprit had been taken, and every one must hope that the statement was a true one.

Enough has been given to show the peculiar school of statesmanship according to the precepts of which the internal concerns and foreign affairs of the obedient Netherlands were now administered. Poison and pistols in the hands of obscure priests and deserters were relied on to bring about great political triumphs, while the mutinous royal armies, entrenched and defiant, were extorting capitulations from their own generals and their own sovereign upon his own soil.

Such a record as this seems rather like the exaggeration of a diseased fancy, seeking to pander to a corrupt public taste which feeds greedily upon horrors; but, unfortunately, it is derived from the register of high courts of justice, from diplomatic correspondence, and from the confessions, without torture or hope of free pardon, of criminals. For a crowned king and his high functionaries and generals to devote so much of their time, their energies, and their money to the murder of brother and sister sovereigns, and other illustrious personages, was not to make after ages in love with the monarchic and aristocratic system, at least as thus administered. Popular governments may be deficient in polish, but a system resting for its chief support upon bribery and murder cannot be considered lovely by any healthy mind. And this is one of the lessons to be derived from the history of Philip II. and of the Holy League.

But besides mutiny and assassination there were also some feeble attempts at negotiation to characterize the Ernestian epoch at Brussels. The subject hardly needs more than a passing allusion.

Two Flemish juris-consults, Otto Hertius and Jerome Comans, offered their services to the archduke in the peacemaking department. Ernest accepted the proposition,—although it was strongly opposed by Fuentes, who relied upon the more practical agency of Dr. Lopez, Andrada, Renichon, and the rest—and the peace-makers accordingly made their appearance at the Hague, under safe conduct, and provided with very conciliatory letters from his Highness to the States-General. In all ages and under all circumstances it is safe to enlarge, with whatever eloquence may be at command, upon the blessings of peace and upon the horrors of war; for the appeal is not difficult to make, and a response is certain in almost every human breast. But it is another matter to descend from the general to the particular, and to demonstrate how the desirable may be attained and the horrible averted. The letters of Ernest were full of benignity and affection, breathing a most ardent desire that the miserable war, now a quarter of a century old, should be then and there terminated. But not one atom of concession was offered, no whisper breathed that the republic, if it should choose to lay down its victorious arms, and renounce its dearly gained independence, should share any different fate from that under which it saw the obedient provinces gasping before its eyes. To renounce religious and political liberty and self-government, and to submit unconditionally to the authority of Philip II. as administered by Ernest and Fuentes, was hardly to be expected as the result of the three years' campaigns of Maurice of Nassau.

The two doctors of law laid the affectionate common-places of the archduke before the States-General, each of them making, moreover, a long and flowery oration in which the same protestations of good will and hopes of future good-fellowship were distended to formidable dimensions by much windy rhetoric. The accusations which had been made against the Government of Brussels of complicity in certain projects of assassination were repelled with virtuous indignation.

The answer of the States-General was wrathful and decided. They informed the commissioners that they had taken up arms for a good cause and meant to retain them in their hands. They expressed their thanks for the expressions of good will which had been offered, but avowed their right to complain before God and the world of those who under pretext of peace were attempting to shed the innocent blood of Christians, and to procure the ruin and destruction of the Netherlands. To this end the state-council of Spain was more than ever devoted, being guilty of the most cruel and infamous proceedings and projects. They threw out a rapid and stinging summary of their wrongs; and denounced with scorn the various hollow attempts at negotiation during the preceding twenty-five years. Coming down to the famous years 1587 and 1588, they alluded in vehement terms to the fraudulent peace propositions which had been thrown as a veil over the Spanish invasion of England and the Armada; and they glanced at the mediation-projects of the emperor in 1591 at the desire of Spain, while armies were moving in force from Germany, Italy, and the Netherlands to crush the King of France, in order that Philip might establish his tyranny over all kings, princes, provinces, and republics. That the Spanish Government was secretly dealing with the emperor and other German potentates for the extension of his universal empire appeared from intercepted letters of the king—copies of which were communicated—from which it was sufficiently plain that the purpose of his Majesty was not to bestow peace and tranquillity upon the Netherlands. The names of Fuentes, Clemente, Ybarra, were sufficient in themselves to destroy any such illusion. They spoke in blunt terms of the attempt of Dr. Lopez to poison Queen Elizabeth, at the instigation of Count Fuentes for fifty thousand crowns to be paid by the King of Spain: they charged upon the same Fuentes and upon Ybarra that they had employed the same Andrada to murder the King of France with a nosegay of roses; and they alluded further to the revelations of Michael Renichon, who was to murder Maurice of Nassau and kidnap Frederic William, even as their father and brother had been already murdered and kidnapped.

For such reasons the archduke might understand by what persons and what means the good people of the Netherlands were deceived, and how difficult it was for the States to forget such lessons, or to imagine anything honest in the present propositions.

The States declared themselves, on the contrary, more called upon than ever before to be upon the watch against the stealthy proceedings of the Spanish council of state—bearing in mind the late execrable attempts at assassination, and the open war which was still carried on against the King of France.

And although it was said that his Highness was displeased with such murderous and hostile proceedings, still it was necessary for the States to beware of the nefarious projects of the King of Spain and his council.

After the conversion of Henry IV. to the Roman Church had been duly accomplished that monarch had sent a secret envoy to Spain. The mission of this agent—De Varenne by name—excited intense anxiety and suspicion in England and Holland and among the Protestants of France and Germany. It was believed that Henry had not only made a proposition of a separate peace with Philip, but that he had formally but mysteriously demanded the hand of the Infanta in marriage. Such a catastrophe as this seemed to the heated imaginations of the great body of Calvinists throughout Europe, who had so faithfully supported the King of Navarre up to the moment of his great apostasy, the most cruel and deadly treachery of all. That the princess with the many suitors should come to reign over France after all—not as the bride of her own father, not as the queen-consort of Ernest the Habsburger or of Guise the Lorrainer, but as the lawful wife of Henry the Huguenot—seemed almost too astounding for belief, even amid the chances and changes of that astonishing epoch. Yet Duplessis Mornay avowed that the project was entertained, and that he had it from the very lips of the secret envoy who was to negotiate the marriage. "La Varenne is on his way to Spain," wrote Duplessis to the Duke of Bouillon, "in company with a gentleman of Don Bernardino de Mendoza, who brought the first overtures. He is to bring back the portrait of the Infanta. 'Tis said that the marriage is to be on condition that the Queen and the Netherlands are comprised in the peace, but you know that this cannot be satisfactorily arranged for those two parties. All this was once guess-work, but is now history."

That eminent diplomatist and soldier Mendoza had already on his return from France given the King of Spain to understand that there were no hopes of his obtaining the French crown either for himself or for his daughter, that all the money lavished on the chiefs of the League was thrown away, and that all their promises were idle wind. Mendoza in consequence had fallen into contempt at court, but Philip, observing

apparently that there might have been something correct in his statements, had recently recalled him, and, notwithstanding his blindness and other infirmities, was disposed to make use of him in secret negotiations. Mendoza had accordingly sent a confidential agent to Henry IV. offering his good offices, now that the king had returned to the bosom of the Church.

This individual, whose name was Nunez, was admitted by De Bethune (afterwards the famous Due de Sully) to the presence of the king, but De Bethune, believing it probable that the Spaniard had been sent to assassinate Henry, held both the hands of the emissary during the whole interview, besides subjecting him to a strict personal visitation beforehand. Nunez stated that he was authorized to propose to his Majesty a marriage with the Infanta Clara Isabella, and Henry, much to the discontent of De Bethune, listened eagerly to the suggestion, and promised to send a secret agent to Spain to confer on the subject with Mendoza.

The choice he made of La Varenne, whose real name was Guillaume Fouquet, for this mission was still more offensive to De Bethune. Fouquet had originally been a cook in the service of Madame Catherine, and was famous for his talent for larding poultry, but he had subsequently entered the household of Henry, where he had been employed in the most degrading service which one man can render to another.

> *["La Varenne," said Madame Catherine on one occasion "tu as plus gagne ti porter les poulets de men frere, qu'a piquer les miens." Memoires de Sully, Liv. vi. p. 296, note 6. He accumulated a large fortune in these dignified pursuits—having, according to Winwood, landed estates to the annual amount of sixty thousand francs a-year —and gave large dowries to his daughters, whom he married into noblest families; "which is the more remarkable," adds Winwood, "considering the services wherein he is employed about the king, which is to be the Mezzano for his loves; the place from whence he came, which is out of the kitchen of Madame the king's sister."— Memorials, i. 380.]*

On his appointment to this office of secret diplomacy he assumed all the airs of an ambassador, while Henry took great pains to contradict the reports which were spread as to the true nature of this mission to Spain.

Duplessis was, in truth, not very far wrong in his conjectures, but, as might be supposed, Henry was most anxious to conceal these secret negotiations with his Catholic Majesty from the Huguenot chiefs whom he had so recently deserted. "This is all done without the knowledge of the Duke of Bouillon," said Calvaert, "or at least under a very close disguise, as he, himself keenly feels and confesses to me." The envoy of the republic, as well as the leaders of the Protestant party in France, were resolved if possible to break off these dark and dangerous intrigues, the nature of which they so shrewdly suspected, and to substitute for them an open rupture of Henry with the King of Spain, and a formal declaration of war against him. None of the diplomatists or political personages engaged in these great affairs, in which the whole world was so deeply interested, manifested more sagacity and insight on this occasion than did the Dutch statesmen. We have seen that even Sir Edward Stafford was deceived up to a very late moment, as to the rumoured intentions of Henry to enter the Catholic Church. Envoy Edmonds was now equally and completely in the dark as to the mission of Varenne, and informed his Government that the only result of it was that the secret agent to Spain was favoured, through the kindness of Mendoza, with a distant view of Philip II. with his son and daughter at their devotions in the chapel of the Escorial. This was the tale generally recounted and believed after the agent's return from Spain, so that Varenne was somewhat laughed at as having gone to Spain on a fool's errand, and as having got nothing from Mendoza but a disavowal of his former propositions. But the shrewd Calvaert, who had entertained familiar relations with La Varenne, received from that personage after his return a very different account of his excursion to the Escorial from the one generally circulated. "Coming from Monceaus to Paris in his company," wrote Calvaert in a secret despatch to the States, "I had the whole story from him. The chief part of his negotiations with Don Bernardino de Mendoza was that if his Majesty (the French king) would abandon the Queen of England and your Highnesses (the States of the Netherlands), there were no conditions that would be refused the king, including the hand of the Infanta, together with a good recompense for the kingdom of Navarre. La Varenne maintained that the King of Spain had caused these negotiations to be entered upon at this time with him in the certain hope and intention of a definite conclusion, alleging to me many pertinent reasons, and among others that he, having been lodged at Madrid, through the adroitness of Don Bernardino, among all the agents of the League, and hearing all their secrets and negotiations, had never been discovered, but had always been supposed to be one of the League himself. He said also that he was well assured that the Infanta in her heart had an affection for the French king, and notwithstanding any resolutions that might be taken (to which I referred, meaning the projects for bestowing her on the house of Austria) that she with her father's consent or in case of his death would not fail to carry out this marriage. You may from all this, even out of the proposal for compensation for the kingdom of Navarre (of which his Majesty also let out something to me inadvertently); collect the reasons why such feeble progress is made in so great an occasion as now presents itself for a declaration of war and an open alliance with your Highnesses. I shall not fail to watch these events, even in case of the progress of the said resolutions, notwithstanding the effects of which it is my opinion that this secret intrigue is not to be abandoned. To this end, besides the good intelligence which one gets by means of good friends, a continual and agreeable presentation of oneself to his Majesty, in order to see and hear everything, is necessary."

Certainly, here were reasons more than sufficient why Henry should be making but feeble preparations for open war in alliance with England and the republic against Philip, as such a step was hardly compatible with the abandonment of England and the republic and the espousal of Philip's daughter—projects which Henry's commissioner had just been discussing with Philip's agent at Madrid and the Escorial.

Truly it was well for the republican envoy to watch events as closely as possible, to make the most of intelligence from his good friends, and to present himself as frequently and as agreeably as possible to his Majesty, that he might hear and see everything. There was much to see and to hear, and it needed adroitness and courage, not to slip or stumble in such dark ways where the very ground seemed often to be sliding from beneath the feet.

To avoid the catastrophe of an alliance between Henry, Philip, and the Pope against Holland and England, it

was a pressing necessity for Holland and England to force Henry into open war against Philip. To this end the Dutch statesmen were bending all their energies. Meantime Elizabeth regarded the campaign in Artois and Hainault with little favour.

As he took leave on departing for France, La Varenne had requested Mendoza to write to King Henry, but the Spaniard excused himself—although professing the warmest friendship for his Majesty—on the ground of the impossibility of addressing him correctly. "If I call him here King of Navarre, I might as well put my head on the block at once," he observed; "if I call him King of France, my master has not yet recognized him as such; if I call him anything else, he will himself be offended."

And the vision of Philip in black on his knees, with his children about him, and a rapier at his side, passed with the contemporary world as the only phenomenon of this famous secret mission.

But Henry, besides this demonstration towards Spain, lost no time in despatching a special minister to the republic and to England, who was instructed to make the most profuse, elaborate, and conciliatory explanations as to his recent conversion and as to his future intentions. Never would he make peace, he said, with Spain without the full consent of the States and of England; the dearest object of his heart in making his peace with Rome having been to restore peace to his own distracted realm, to bring all Christians into one brotherhood, and to make a united attack upon the grand Turk—a vision which the cheerful monarch hardly intended should ever go beyond the ivory gate of dreams, but which furnished substance enough for several well-rounded periods in the orations of De Morlans.

That diplomatist, after making the strongest representations to Queen Elizabeth as to the faithful friendship of his master, and the necessity he was under of pecuniary and military assistance, had received generous promises of aid both in men and money—three thousand men besides the troops actually serving in Brittany—from that sagacious sovereign, notwithstanding the vehement language in which she had rebuked her royal brother's apostasy. He now came for the same purpose to the Hague, where he made very eloquent harangues to the States-General, acknowledging that the republic had ever been the most upright, perfect, and undisguised friend to his master and to France in their darkest days and deepest affliction; that she had loved the king and kingdom for themselves, not merely hanging on to their prosperity, but, on the contrary, doing her best to produce that prosperity by her contributions in soldiers, ships, and subsidies. "The king," said De Morlans, "is deeply grieved that he can prove his gratitude only in words for so many benefits conferred, which are absolutely without example, but he has commissioned me to declare that if God should ever give him the occasion, he will prove how highly he places your friendship."

The envoy assured the States that all fears entertained by those of the reformed religion on account of the conversion of his Majesty were groundless. Nothing was farther from the king's thoughts than to injure those noble spirits with whom his soul had lived so long, and whom he so much loved and honoured. No man knew better than the king did, the character of those who professed the Religion, their virtue, valour, resolution, and patience in adversity. Their numbers had increased in war, their virtues had been purified by affliction, they had never changed their position, whether battles had been won or lost. Should ever an attempt be made to take up arms against them within his realms, and should there be but five hundred of them against ten thousand, the king, remembering their faithful and ancient services, would leave the greater number in order to die at the head of his old friends. He was determined that they should participate in all the honours of the kingdom, and with regard to a peace with Spain, he would have as much care for the interests of the United Provinces as for his own. But a peace was impossible with that monarch, whose object was to maintain his own realms in peace while he kept France in perpetual revolt against the king whom God had given her. The King of Spain had trembled at Henry's cradle, at his youth, at the bloom of his manhood, and knew that he had inflicted too much injury upon him ever to be on friendly terms with him. The envoy was instructed to say that his master never expected to be in amity with one who had ruined his house confiscated his property, and caused so much misery to France; and he earnestly hoped—without presuming to dictate—that the States-General would in this critical emergency manifest their generosity. If the king were not assisted now, both king and kingdom would perish. If he were assisted, the succour would bear double fruit.

The sentiments expressed on the part of Henry towards his faithful subjects of the Religion, the heretic Queen of England, and the stout Dutch Calvinists who had so long stood by him, were most noble. It was pity that, at the same moment, he was proposing to espouse the Infanta, and to publish the Council of Trent.

The reply of the States-General to these propositions of the French envoy was favourable, and it was agreed that a force of three thousand foot and five hundred horse should be sent to the assistance of the king. Moreover, the state-paper drawn up on this occasion was conceived with so much sagacity and expressed with so much eloquence, as particularly to charm the English queen when it was communicated to her Majesty. She protested very loudly and vehemently to Noel de Caron, envoy from the provinces at London, that this response on the part of his Government to De Morlans was one of the wisest documents that she had ever seen. "In all their actions," said she, "the States-General show their sagacity, and indeed, it is the wisest Government ever known among republics. I would show you," she added to the gentlemen around her, "the whole of the paper if it were this moment at hand."

After some delays, it was agreed between the French Government and that of the United Provinces, that the king should divide his army into three parts, and renew the military operations against Spain with the expiration of the truce at the end of the year (1593).

One body, composed of the English contingent, together with three thousand French horse, three thousand Swiss, and four thousand French harquebus-men, were to be under his own immediate command, and were to act against the enemy wherever it should appear to his Majesty most advantageous. A second, army was to expel the rebels and their foreign allies from Normandy and reduce Rouen to obedience. A third was to make a campaign in the provinces of Artois and Hainault, under the Duke of Bouillon (more commonly called the Viscount Turenne), in conjunction with the forces to be supplied by the republic. "Any treaty of peace on our part with the King of Spain," said the States-General, "is our certain ruin. This is an axiom. That monarch's object is to incorporate into his own realms not only all the states and possessions of neighbouring kings, principalities, and powers, but also all Christendom, aye, the whole world, were it possible. We joyfully concur then in your Majesty's resolution to carry on the war in Artois and Hainault, and agree to your

suggestion of diversions on our part by sieges and succour by contingents."

Balagny, meantime, who had so long led an independent existence at Cambray, now agreed to recognise Henry's authority, in consideration of sixty-seven thousand crowns yearly pension and the dignity of Marshal of France.

Towards the end of the year 1594, Buzanval, the regular French envoy at the Hague, began to insist more warmly than seemed becoming that the campaign in Artois and Hainault—so often the base of military operations on the part of Spain against France—should begin. Further achievements on the part of Maurice after the fall of Groningen were therefore renounced for that year, and his troops went into garrison and winter-quarters. The States-General, who had also been sending supplies, troops, and ships to Brittany to assist the king, now, after soundly rebuking Buzanval for his intemperate language, entrusted their contingent for the proposed frontier campaign to Count Philip Nassau, who accordingly took the field toward the end of the year at the head of twenty-eight companies of foot and five squadrons of cavalry. He made his junction with Turenne-Bouillon, but the duke, although provided with a tremendous proclamation, was but indifferently supplied with troops. The German levies, long-expected, were slow in moving, and on the whole it seemed that the operations might have been continued by Maurice with more effect, according to his original plan, than in this rather desultory fashion. The late winter campaign on the border was feeble and a failure.

The bonds of alliance, however, were becoming very close between Henry and the republic. Despite the change in religion on the part of the king, and the pangs which it had occasioned in the hearts of leading Netherlanders, there was still the traditional attraction between France and the States, which had been so remarkably manifested during the administration of William the Silent. The republic was more restive than ever under the imperious and exacting friendship of Elizabeth, and, feeling more and more its own strength, was making itself more and more liable to the charge of ingratitude; so constantly hurled in its face by the queen. And Henry, now that he felt himself really king of France, was not slow to manifest a similar ingratitude or an equal love of independence. Both monarch and republic, chafing under the protection of Elizabeth, were drawn into so close a union as to excite her anger and jealousy—sentiments which in succeeding years were to become yet more apparent. And now; while Henry still retained the chivalrous and flowery phraseology, so sweet to her ears, in his personal communications to the queen, his ministers were in the habit of using much plainer language. "Mr. de Sancy said to me," wrote the Netherland minister in France, Calvaert, "that his Majesty and your Highnesses (the States-General) must without long delay conclude an alliance offensive and defensive. In regard to England, which perhaps might look askance at this matter, he told me it would be invited also by his Majesty into the same alliance; but if, according to custom, it shilly-shallied, and without coming to deeds or to succour should put him off with words, he should in that case proceed with our alliance without England, not doubting that many other potentates in Italy and Germany would join in it likewise. He said too, that he, the day before the departure of the English ambassador, had said these words to him in the presence of his Majesty; namely, that England had entertained his Majesty sixteen months long with far-fetched and often-repeated questions and discontents, that one had submitted to this sort of thing so long as his Majesty was only king of Mantes, Dieppe, and Louviers, but that his Majesty being now king of Paris would be no longer a servant of those who should advise him to suffer it any longer or accept it as good payment; that England must treat his Majesty according to his quality, and with deeds, not words. He added that the ambassador had very anxiously made answer to these words, and had promised that when he got back to England he would so arrange that his Majesty should be fully satisfied, insisting to the last on the alliance then proposed."

In Germany, meanwhile, there was much protocolling, and more hard drinking, at the Diet of Ratisbon. The Protestant princes did little for their cause against the new designs of Spain and the moribund League, while the Catholics did less to assist Philip. In truth, the holy Roman Empire, threatened with a Turkish invasion, had neither power nor inclination to help the new universal empire of the west into existence. So the princes and grandees of Germany, while Amurath was knocking at the imperial gates, busied themselves with banquetting and other diplomatic work, but sent few reiters either to the east or west.

Philip's envoys were indignant at the apathy displayed towards the great Catholic cause, and felt humbled at the imbecility exhibited by Spain in its efforts against the Netherlands and France. San Clemente, who was attending the Diet at Ratisbon, was shocked at the scenes he witnessed. "In less than three months," said that temperate Spaniard, "they have drunk more than five million florins' worth of wine, at a time when the Turk has invaded the frontiers of Germany; and among those who have done the most of this consumption of wine, there is not one who is going to give any assistance on the frontier. In consequence of these disorders my purse is drained so low, that unless the king helps me I am ruined. You must tell our master that the reputation of his grandeur and strength has never been so low as it is now in Germany. The events in France and those which followed in the Netherlands have thrown such impediments in the negotiations here, that not only our enemies make sport of Marquis Havre and myself, but even our friends—who are very few—dare not go to public feasts, weddings, and dinners, because they are obliged to apologize for us."

Truly the world-empire was beginning to crumble. "The emperor has been desiring twenty times," continued the envoy, "to get back to Prague from the Diet, but the people hold him fast like a steer. As I think over all that passes, I lose all judgment, for I have no money, nor influence, nor reputation. Meantime, I see this rump of an empire keeping itself with difficulty upon its legs. 'Tis full of wrangling and discord about religion, and yet there is the Turk with two hundred thousand men besieging a place forty miles from Vienna, which is the last outpost. God grant it may last!"

Such was the aspect of the Christian world at the close of the year 1594

CHAPTER XXXI. 1595

Formal declaration of war against Spain—Marriage festivities—Death of Archduke Ernest—His year of government—Fuentes declared governor-general—Disaffection of the Duke of Arschot and Count Arenberg—Death of the Duke of Arschot—Fuentes besieges Le Catelet—The fortress of Ham, sold to the Spanish by De Gomeron, besieged and taken by the Duke of Bouillon—Execution of De Gomeron—Death of Colonel Verdugo—Siege of Dourlens by Fuentes—Death of La Motte—Death of Charles Mansfeld—Total defeat of the French—Murder of Admiral De Pillars—Dourlens captured, and the garrison and citizens put to the sword—Military operations in eastern Netherlands and on the Rhine—Maurice lays siege to Groento—Mondragon hastening to its relief, Prince Maurice raises the siege—Skirmish between Maurice and Mondragon—Death of Philip of Nassau—Death of Mondragon—Bombardment and surrender of Weerd Castle—Maurice retires into winter quarters—Campaign of Henry IV.—He besieges Dijon—Surrender of Dijon—Absolution granted to Henry by the pope—Career of Balagny at Cambray—Progress of the siege—Capitulation of the town—Suicide of the Princess of Cambray, wife of Balagny

The year 1595 Opened with a formal declaration of war by the King of France against the King of Spain. It would be difficult to say for exactly how many years the war now declared had already been waged, but it was a considerable advantage to the United Netherlands that the manifesto had been at last regularly issued. And the manifesto was certainly not deficient in bitterness. Not often in Christian history has a monarch been solemnly and officially accused by a brother sovereign of suborning assassins against his life. Bribery, stratagem, and murder, were, however, so entirely the commonplace machinery of Philip's administration as to make an allusion to the late attempt of Chastel appear quite natural in Henry's declaration of war. The king further stigmatized in energetic language the long succession of intrigues by which the monarch of Spain, as chief of the Holy League, had been making war upon him by means of his own subjects, for the last half dozen years. Certainly there was hardly need of an elaborate statement of grievances. The deeds of Philip required no herald, unless Henry was prepared to abdicate his hardly-earned title to the throne of France.

Nevertheless the politic Gascon subsequently regretted the fierce style in which he had fulminated his challenge. He was accustomed to observe that no state paper required so much careful pondering as a declaration of war, and that it was scarcely possible to draw up such a document without committing many errors in the phraseology. The man who never knew fear, despondency, nor resentment, was already instinctively acting on the principle that a king should deal with his enemy as if sure to become his friend, and with his friends as if they might easily change to foes.

The answer to the declaration was delayed for two months. When the reply came it of course breathed nothing but the most benignant sentiments in regard to France, while it expressed regret that it was necessary to carry fire and sword through that country in order to avert the unutterable woe which the crimes of the heretic Prince of Bearne were bringing upon all mankind.

It was a solace for Philip to call the legitimate king by the title borne by him when heir-presumptive, and to persist in denying to him that absolution which, as the whole world was aware, the Vicar of Christ was at that very moment in the most solemn manner about to bestow upon him.

More devoted to the welfare of France than were the French themselves, he was determined that a foreign prince himself, his daughter, or one of his nephews—should supplant the descendant of St. Louis on the French throne. More catholic than the pope he could not permit the heretic, whom his Holiness was just washing whiter than snow, to intrude himself into the society of Christian sovereigns.

The winter movements by Bouillon in Luxembourg, sustained by Philip Nassau campaigning with a meagre force on the French frontier, were not very brilliant. The Netherland regiments quartered at Yssoire, La Ferte, and in the neighbourhood accomplished very little, and their numbers were sadly thinned by dysentery. A sudden and successful stroke, too, by which that daring soldier Heraugiere, who had been the chief captor of Breda, obtained possession of the town, and castle of Huy, produced no permanent advantage. This place, belonging to the Bishop of Liege, with its stone bridge over the Meuse, was an advantageous position from which to aid the operations of Bouillon in Luxembourg. Heraugiere was, however, not sufficiently reinforced, and Huy was a month later recaptured by La Motte. The campaigning was languid during that winter in the United Netherlands, but the merry-making was energetic. The nuptials of Hohenlo with Mary, eldest daughter of William the Silent and own sister of the captive Philip William; of the Duke of Bouillon with Elizabeth, one of the daughters of the same illustrious prince by his third wife, Charlotte of Bourbon; and of Count Everard Solms, the famous general of the Zeeland troops, with Sabina, daughter of the unfortunate Lamoral Egmont, were celebrated with much pomp during the months of February and March. The States of Holland and of Zeeland made magnificent presents of diamonds to the brides; the Countess Hohenlo receiving besides a yearly income of three thousand florins for the lives of herself and her husband.

In the midst of these merry marriage bells at the Hague a funeral knell was sounding in Brussels. On the 20th February, the governor-general of the obedient Netherlands, Archduke Ernest, breathed his last. His career had not been so illustrious as the promises of the Spanish king and the allegories of schoolmaster Houwaerts had led him to expect. He had not espoused the Infanta nor been crowned King of France. He had not blasted the rebellious Netherlands with Cyclopean thunderbolts, nor unbound the Belgic Andromeda from the rock of doom. His brief year of government had really been as dismal as, according to the announcement of his sycophants, it should have been amazing. He had accomplished nothing, and all that was left him was

to die at the age of forty-two, over head and ears in debt, a disappointed, melancholy man. He was very indolent, enormously fat, very chaste, very expensive, fond of fine liveries and fine clothes, so solemn and stately as never to be known to laugh, but utterly without capacity either as a statesman or a soldier. He would have shone as a portly abbot ruling over peaceful friars, but he was not born to ride a revolutionary whirlwind, nor to evoke order out of chaos. Past and Present were contending with each other in fierce elemental strife within his domain. A world was in dying agony, another world was coming, full-armed, into existence within the hand-breadth of time and of space where he played his little part, but he dreamed not of it. He passed away like a shadow, and was soon forgotten.

An effort was made, during the last illness of Ernest, to procure from him the appointment of the elector of Cologne as temporary successor to the government, but Count Fuentes was on the spot and was a man of action. He produced a power in the French language from Philip, with a blank for the name. This had been intended for the case of Peter Ernest Mansfeld's possible death during his provisional administration, and Fuentes now claimed the right of inserting his own name.

The dying Ernest consented, and upon his death Fuentes was declared governor-general until the king's further pleasure should be known.

Pedro de Guzman, Count of Fuentes, a Spaniard of the hard and antique type, was now in his sixty-fourth year. The pupil and near relative of the Duke of Alva, he was already as odious to the Netherlanders as might have been inferred from such education and such kin. A dark, grizzled, baldish man, with high steep forehead, long, haggard, leathern visage, sweeping beard, and large, stern, commanding, menacing eyes, with his Brussels ruff of point lace and his Milan coat of proof, he was in personal appearance not unlike the terrible duke whom men never named without a shudder, although a quarter of a century had passed since he had ceased to curse the Netherlands with his presence. Elizabeth of England was accustomed to sneer at Fuentes because he had retreated before Essex in that daring commander's famous foray into Portugal. The queen called the Spanish general a timid old woman. If her gibe were true, it was fortunate for her, for Henry of France, and for the republic, that there were not many more such old women to come from Spain to take the place of the veteran chieftains who were destined to disappear so rapidly during this year in Flanders. He was a soldier of fortune, loved fighting, not only for the fighting's sake, but for the prize-money which was to be accumulated by campaigning, and he was wont to say that he meant to enter Paradise sword in hand.

Meantime his appointment excited the wrath of the provincial magnates. The Duke of Arschot was beside himself with frenzy, and swore that he would never serve under Fuentes nor sit at his council-board. The duke's brother, Marquis Havre, and his son-in-law, Count Arenberg, shared in the hatred, although they tried to mitigate the vehemence of its expression. But Arschot swore that no man had the right to take precedence of him in the council of state, and that the appointment of this or any Spaniard was a violation of the charters of the provinces and of the promises of his Majesty. As if it were for the nobles of the obedient provinces to prate of charters and of oaths! Their brethren under the banner of the republic had been teaching Philip for a whole generation how they could deal with the privileges of freemen and with the perjury of tyrants. It was late in the day for the obedient Netherlanders to remember their rights. Havre and Arenberg, dissembling their own wrath, were abused and insulted by the duke when they tried to pacify him. They proposed a compromise, according to which Arschot should be allowed to preside in the council of state while Fuentes should content himself with the absolute control of the army. This would be putting a bit of fat in the duke's mouth, they said. Fuentes would hear of no such arrangement. After much talk and daily attempts to pacify this great Netherlander, his relatives at last persuaded him to go home to his country place. He even promised Arenberg and his wife that he would go to Italy, in pursuance of a vow made to our lady of Loretto. Arenberg privately intimated to Stephen Ybarra that there was a certain oil, very apt to be efficacious in similar cases of irritation, which might be applied with prospect of success. If his father-in-law could only receive some ten thousand florins which he claimed as due to him from Government, this would do more to quiet him than a regiment of soldiers could. He also suggested that Fuentes should call upon the duke, while Secretary Ybarra should excuse himself by sickness for not having already paid his respects. This was done. Fuentes called. The duke returned the call, and the two conversed amicably about the death of the archduke, but entered into no political discussion.

Arschot then invited the whole council of state, except John Baptist Tassis, to a great dinner. He had prepared a paper to read to them in which he represented the great dangers likely to ensue from such an appointment as this of Fuentes, but declared that he washed his hands of the consequences, and that he had determined to leave a country where he was of so little account. He would then close his eyes and ears to everything that might occur, and thus escape the infamy of remaining in a country where so little account was made of him. He was urged to refrain from reading this paper and to invite Tassis. After a time he consented to suppress the document, but he manfully refused to bid the objectionable diplomatist to his banquet.

The dinner took place and passed off pleasantly enough. Arschot did not read his manifesto, but, as he warmed with wine, he talked a great deal of nonsense which, according to Stephen Ybarra, much resembled it, and he vowed that thenceforth he would be blind and dumb to all that might occur. A few days later, he paid a visit to the new governor-general, and took a peaceful farewell of him. "Your Majesty knows very well what he is," wrote Fuentes: "he is nothing but talk." Before leaving the country he sent a bitter complaint to Ybarra, to the effect that the king had entirely forgotten him, and imploring that financier's influence to procure for him some gratuity from his Majesty. He was in such necessity, he said, that it was no longer possible for him to maintain his household.

And with this petition the grandee of the obedient provinces shook the dust from his shoes, and left his natal soil for ever. He died on the 11th December of the same year in Venice.

His son the Prince of Chimay, his brother, and son-inlaw, and the other obedient nobles, soon accommodated themselves to the new administration, much as they had been inclined to bluster at first about their privileges. The governor soon reported that matters were proceeding very, smoothly. There was a general return to the former docility now that such a disciplinarian as Fuentes held the reins.

The opening scenes of the campaign between the Spanish governor and France were, as usual, in Picardy.

The Marquis of Varambon made a demonstration in the neighbourhood of Dourlens—a fortified town on the river Authie, lying in an open plain, very deep in that province—while Fuentes took the field with eight thousand men, and laid siege to Le Catelet. He had his eye, however, upon Ham. That important stronghold was in the hands of a certain nobleman called De Gomeron, who had been an energetic Leaguer, and was now disposed, for a handsome consideration, to sell himself to the King of Spain. In the auction of governors and generals then going on in every part of France it had been generally found that Henry's money was more to be depended upon in the long run, although Philip's bids were often very high, and, for a considerable period, the payments regular. Gomeron's upset price for himself was twenty-five thousand crowns in cash, and a pension of eight thousand a year. Upon these terms he agreed to receive a Spanish garrison into the town, and to cause the French in the citadel to be sworn into the service of the Spanish king. Fuentes agreed to the bargain and paid the adroit tradesman, who knew so well how to turn a penny for himself, a large portion of the twenty-five thousand crowns upon the nail.

De Gomeron was to proceed to Brussels to receive the residue. His brother-in-law, M. d'Orville, commanded in the citadel, and so soon as the Spanish troops had taken possession of the town its governor claimed full payment of his services.

But difficulties awaited him in Brussels. He was informed that a French garrison could not be depended upon for securing the fortress, but that town and citadel must both be placed in Spanish hands. De Gomeron loudly protesting that this was not according to contract, was calmly assured, by command of Fuentes, that unless the citadel were at once evacuated and surrendered, he would not receive the balance of his twenty-five thousand crowns, and that he should instantly lose his head. Here was more than De Gomeron had bargained for; but this particular branch of commerce in revolutionary times, although lucrative, has always its risks. De Gomeron, thus driven to the wall, sent a letter by a Spanish messenger to his brother-in-law, ordering him to surrender the fortress. D'Orville—who meantime had been making his little arrangements with the other party—protested that the note had been written under duress, and refused to comply with its directions.

Time was pressing, for the Duke of Bouillon and the Count of St. Pol lay with a considerable force in the neighbourhood, obviously menacing Ham.

Fuentes accordingly sent that distinguished soldier and historian, Don Carlos Coloma, with a detachment of soldiers to Brussels, with orders to bring Gomeron into camp. He was found seated at supper with his two young brothers, aged respectively sixteen and eighteen years, and was just putting a cherry into his mouth as Coloma entered the room. He remained absorbed in thought, trifling with the cherry without eating it, which Don Carlos set down as a proof of guilt: The three brothers were at once put in a coach, together with their sister, a nun of the age of twenty, and conveyed to the head-quarters of Fuentes, who lay before Le Catelet, but six leagues from Ham.

Meantime D'Orville had completed his negotiations with Bouillon, and had agreed to surrender the fortress so soon as the Spanish troops should be driven from the town. The duke knowing that there was no time to lose, came with three thousand men before the place. His summons to surrender was answered by a volley of cannon-shot from the town defences. An assault was made and repulsed, D'Humieres, a most gallant officer and a favourite of King Henry, being killed, besides at least two hundred soldiers. The next attack was successful, the town was carried, and the Spanish garrison put to the sword.

D'Orville then, before giving up the citadel, demanded three hostages for the lives of his three brothers-in-law.

The hostages availed him little. Fuentes had already sent word to Gomeron's mother, that if the bargain were not fulfilled he would send her the heads of her three sons on three separate dishes. The distracted woman made her way, to D'Orville, and fell at his feet with tears and entreaties. It was too late, and D'Orville, unable to bear her lamentations, suddenly rushed from the castle, and nearly fell into the hands of the Spaniards as he fled from the scene. Two of the four cuirassiers, who alone of the whole garrison accompanied him, were taken prisoners. The governor escaped to unknown regions. Madame de Gomeron then appeared before Fuentes, and tried in vain to soften him. De Gomeron was at once beheaded in the sight of the whole camp. The two younger sons were retained in prison, but ultimately set at liberty. The town and citadel were thus permanently acquired by their lawful king, who was said to be more afflicted at the death of D'Humieres than rejoiced at the capture of Ham.

Meantime Colonel Verdugo, royal governor of Friesland, whose occupation in those provinces, now so nearly recovered by the republic, was gone, had led a force of six thousand foot, and twelve hundred horse across the French border, and was besieging La Ferte on the Cher. The siege was relieved by Bouillon on the 26th May, and the Spanish veteran was then ordered to take command in Burgundy. But his days were numbered. He had been sick of dysentery at Luxembourg during the summer, but after apparent recovery died suddenly on the 2nd September, and of course was supposed to have been poisoned. He was identified with the whole history of the Netherland wars. Born at Talavera de la Reyna, of noble parentage, as he asserted—although his mother was said to have sold dogs' meat, and he himself when a youth was a private soldier—he rose by steady conduct and hard fighting to considerable eminence in his profession. He was governor of Harlem after the famous siege, and exerted himself with some success to mitigate the ferocity of the Spaniards towards the Netherlanders at that epoch. He was marshal-general of the camp under Don John of Austria, and distinguished himself at the battle of Gemblours. He succeeded Count Renneberg as governor of Friesland and Groningen, and bore a manful part in most of the rough business that had been going on for a generation of mankind among those blood-stained wolds and morasses. He was often victorious, and quite as often soundly defeated; but he enjoyed campaigning, and was a glutton of work. He cared little for parade and ceremony, but was fond of recalling with pleasure the days when he was a soldier at four crowns a month, with an undivided fourth of one cloak, which he and three companions wore by turns on holidays. Although accused of having attempted to procure the assassination of William Lewis Nassau, he was not considered ill-natured, and he possessed much admiration for Prince Maurice. An iron-clad man, who had scarcely taken harness from his back all his life, he was a type of the Spanish commanders who had implanted international hatred deeply in the Netherland soul, and who, now that this result and no other had

been accomplished, were rapidly passing away. He had been baptised Franco, and his family appellation of Verdugo meant executioner. Punning on these names he was wont to say, that he was frank for all good people, but a hangman for heretics; and he acted up to his gibe.

Foiled at Ham, Fuentes had returned to the siege of Catelet, and had soon reduced the place. He then turned his attention again to Dourlens, and invested that city. During the preliminary operations, another veteran commander in these wars, Valentin Pardieu de la Motte, recently created Count of Everbecque by Philip, who had been for a long time general-in-chief of the artillery, and was one of the most famous and experienced officers in the Spanish service, went out one fine moonlight night to reconnoitre the enemy, and to superintend the erection of batteries. As he was usually rather careless of his personal safety, and rarely known to put on his armour when going for such purposes into the trenches, it was remarked with some surprise, on this occasion, that he ordered his page to bring his, accoutrements, and that he armed himself cap-a pie before leaving his quarters. Nevertheless, before he had reached the redoubt, a bullet from the town struck him between the fold of his morion and the edge of his buckler and he fell dead without uttering a sound.

Here again was a great loss to the king's service. La Motte, of a noble family in Burgundy, had been educated in the old fierce traditions of the Spanish system of warfare in the Netherlands, and had been one of the very hardest instruments that the despot could use for his bloody work. He had commanded a company of horse at the famous battle of St. Quintin, and since that opening event in Philip's reign he had been unceasingly—engaged in the Flemish wars. Alva made him a colonel of a Walloon regiment; the grand commander Requesena appointed him governor of Gravelines. On the whole he had been tolerably faithful to his colours; having changed sides but twice. After the pacification of Ghent he swore allegiance to the States-General, and assisted in the bombardment of the citadel of that place. Soon afterwards he went over to Don John of Austria, and surrendered to him the town and fortress of Gravelines, of which he then continued governor in the name of the king. He was fortunate in the accumulation of office and of money; rather unlucky in his campaigning. He was often wounded in action, and usually defeated when commanding in chief. He lost an arm at the siege of Sluy's, and had now lost his life almost by an accident. Although twice married he left no children to inherit his great estates, while the civil and military offices left vacant by his death were sufficient to satisfy the claims of five aspiring individuals. The Count of Varax succeeded him as general of artillery; but it was difficult to find a man to replace La Motte, possessing exactly the qualities which had made that warrior so valuable to his king. The type was rapidly disappearing, and most fortunately for humanity, if half the stories told of him by grave chroniclers, accustomed to discriminate between history and gossip, are to be believed. He had committed more than one cool homicide. Although not rejoicing in the same patronymic as his Spanish colleague of Friesland, he too was ready on occasion to perform hangman's work. When sergeant-major in Flanders, he had himself volunteered—so ran the chronicle—to do execution on a poor wretch found guilty of professing the faith of Calvin; and, with his own hands, had prepared a fire of straw, tied his victim to the stake, and burned him to cinders. Another Netherlander for the name crime of heresy had been condemned to be torn to death by horses. No one could be found to carry out the sentence. The soldiers under La Motte's command broke into mutiny rather than permit themselves to be used for such foul purposes; but the ardent young sergeant-major came forward, tied the culprit by the arms and legs to two horses, and himself whipped them to their work till it was duly accomplished. Was it strange that in Philip's reign such energy should be rewarded by wealth, rank, and honour? Was not such a labourer in the vineyard worthy of his hire?

Still another eminent chieftain in the king's service disappeared at this time—one who, although unscrupulous and mischievous enough in his day, was however not stained by any suspicion of crimes like these. Count Charles Mansfeld, tired of governing his decrepit parent Peter Ernest, who, since the appointment of Fuentes, had lost all further chance of governing the Netherlands, had now left Philip's service and gone to the Turkish wars. For Amurath III., who had died in the early days of the year, had been succeeded by a sultan as warlike as himself. Mahomet III., having strangled his nineteen brothers on his accession, handsomely buried them in cypress coffins by the side of their father, and having subsequently sacked and drowned ten infant princes posthumously born to Amurath, was at leisure to carry the war through Transylvania and Hungary, up to the gates of Vienna, with renewed energy. The Turk, who could enforce the strenuous rules of despotism by which all secundogenitures and collateral claimants in the Ottoman family were thus provided for, was a foe to be dealt with seriously. The power of the Moslems at that day was a full match for the holy Roman Empire. The days were far distant when the grim Turk's head was to become a mockery and a show; and when a pagan empire, born of carnage and barbarism, was to be kept alive in Europe when it was ready to die, by the collective efforts of Christian princes. Charles Mansfeld had been received with great enthusiasm at the court of Rudolph, where he was created a prince of the Empire, and appointed to the chief command of the Imperial armies under the Archduke Matthias. But his warfare was over. At the siege of Gran he was stricken with sickness and removed to Comorn, where he lingered some weeks. There, on the 24th August, as he lay half-dozing on his couch, he was told that the siege was at last successful; upon which he called for a goblet of wine, drained it eagerly, and then lay resting his head on his hand, like one absorbed in thought. When they came to arouse him from his reverie they found that he was dead. His father still remained superfluous in the Netherlands, hating and hated by Fuentes; but no longer able to give that governor so much annoyance as during his son's life-time the two had been able to create for Alexander Farnese. The octogenarian was past work and past mischief now; but there was one older soldier than he still left upon the stage, the grandest veteran in Philip's service, and now the last survivor, except the decrepit Peter Ernest, of the grim commanders of Alva's school. Christopher Mondragon —that miracle of human endurance, who had been an old man when the great duke arrived in the Netherlands—was still governor of Antwerp citadel, and men were to speak of him yet once more before he passed from the stage.

I return from this digression to the siege of Dourlens. The death of La Motte made no difference in the plans of Fuentes. He was determined to reduce the place preparatively to more important operations. Bouillon was disposed to relieve it, and to that end had assembled a force of eight thousand men within the city of Amiens. By midsummer the Spaniards had advanced with their mines and galleries close to the walls of

the city. Meantime Admiral Villars, who had gained so much renown by defending Rouen against Henry IV., and who had subsequently made such an excellent bargain with that monarch before entering his service, arrived at Amiens. On the 24th July an expedition was sent from that city towards Dourlens. Bouillon and St. Pol commanded in person a force of six hundred picked cavalry. Pillars and Sanseval each led half as many, and there was a supporting body of twelve hundred musketeers. This little army convoyed a train of wagons, containing ammunition and other supplies for the beleaguered town. But Fuentes, having sufficiently strengthened his works, sallied forth with two thousand infantry, and a flying squadron of Spanish horse, to intercept them. It was the eve of St. James, the patron saint of Spain, at the sound, of whose name as a war-cry so many battle-fields had been won in the Netherlands, so many cities sacked, so many wholesale massacres perpetrated. Fuentes rode in the midst of his troops with the royal standard of Spain floating above him. On the other hand Yillars, glittering in magnificent armour and mounted on a superbly caparisoned charger came on, with his three hundred troopers, as if about to ride a course in a tournament. The battle which ensued was one of the most bloody for the numbers engaged, and the victory one of the most decisive recorded in this war. Villars charged prematurely, furiously, foolishly. He seemed jealous of Bouillon, and disposed to show the sovereign to whom he had so recently given his allegiance that an ancient Leaguer and Papist was a better soldier for his purpose than the most grizzled Huguenot in his army. On the other hand the friends of Villars accused the duke of faintheartedness, or at least of an excessive desire to save himself and his own command. The first impetuous onset of the admiral was successful, and he drove half-a-dozen companies of Spaniards before him. But he had ventured too far from his supports. Bouillon had only intended a feint, instead of a desperate charge; the Spaniards were rallied, and the day was saved by that cool and ready soldier, Carlos Coloma. In less than an hour the French were utterly defeated and cut to pieces. Bouillon escaped to Amiens with five hundred men; this was all that was left of the expedition. The horse of Villars was shot under him and the admiral's leg was broken as he fell. He was then taken prisoner by two lieutenants of Carlos Coloma; but while these warriors were enjoying, by anticipation, the enormous ransom they should derive from so illustrious a captive, two other lieutenants in the service of Marshal de Rosnes came up and claimed their share in the prize. While the four were wrangling, the admiral called out to them in excellent Spanish not to dispute, for he had money enough to satisfy them all. Meantime the Spanish commissary—general of cavalry, Contreras, came up, rebuked this unseemly dispute before the enemy had been fairly routed, and, in order to arrange the quarrel impartially, ordered his page to despatch De Villars on the spot. The page, without a word, placed his arquebus to the admiral's forehead and shot him dead.

So perished a bold and brilliant soldier, and a most unscrupulous politician. Whether the cause of his murder was mere envy on the part of the commissary at having lost a splendid opportunity for prize-money, or hatred to an ancient Leaguer thus turned renegade, it is fruitless now to enquire.

Villars would have paid two hundred thousand crowns for his ransom, so that the assassination was bad as a mercantile speculation; but it was pretended by the friends of Contreras that rescue was at hand. It is certain, however, that nothing was attempted by the French to redeem their total overthrow. Count Belin was wounded and fell into the hands of Coloma. Sanseval was killed; and a long list of some of the most brilliant nobles in France was published by the Spaniards as having perished on that bloody field. This did not prevent a large number of these victims, however, from enjoying excellent health for many long years afterwards, although their deaths have been duly recorded in chronicle from that day to our own times.

But Villars and Sanseval were certainly slain, and Fuentes sent their bodies, with a courteous letter, to the Duke of Nevers, at Amiens, who honoured them with a stately funeral.

There was much censure cast on both Bouillon and Villars respectively by the antagonists of each chieftain; and the contest as to the cause of the defeat was almost as animated as the skirmish itself. Bouillon was censured for grudging a victory to the Catholics, and thus leaving the admiral to his fate. Yet it is certain that the Huguenot duke himself commanded a squadron composed almost entirely of papists. Villars, on the other hand, was censured for rashness, obstinacy, and greediness for distinction; yet it is probable that Fuentes might have been defeated had the charges of Bouillon been as determined and frequent as were those of his colleague. Savigny de Rosnes, too, the ancient Leaguer, who commanded under Fuentes, was accused of not having sufficiently followed up the victory, because unwilling that his Spanish friends should entirely trample upon his own countrymen. Yet there is no doubt whatever that De Rosnes was as bitter an enemy to his own country as the most ferocious Spaniard of them all. It has rarely been found in civil war that the man who draws his sword against his fatherland, under the banner of the foreigner, is actuated by any lingering tenderness for the nation he betrays; and the renegade Frenchman was in truth the animating spirit of Fuentes during the whole of his brilliant campaign. The Spaniard's victories were, indeed, mainly attributable to the experience, the genius, and the rancour of De Rosnes.

But debates over a lost battle are apt to be barren. Meantime Fuentes, losing no time in controversy, advanced upon the city of Dourlens, was repulsed twice, and carried it on the third assault, exactly one week after the action just recounted. The Spaniards and Leaguers, howling "Remember Ham!" butchered without mercy the garrison and all the citizens, save a small number of prisoners likely to be lucrative. Six hundred of the townspeople and two thousand five hundred French soldiers were killed within a few hours. Well had Fuentes profited by the relationship and tuition of Alva!

The Count of Dinant and his brother De Ronsoy were both slain, and two or three hundred thousand florins were paid in ransom by those who escaped with life. The victims were all buried outside of the town in one vast trench, and the effluvia bred a fever which carried off most of the surviving inhabitants. Dourlens became for the time a desert.

Fuentes now received deputies with congratulations from the obedient provinces, especially from Hainault, Artois, and Lille. He was also strongly urged to attempt the immediate reduction of Cambray, to which end those envoys were empowered to offer contributions of four hundred and fifty thousand florins and a contingent of seven thousand infantry. Berlaymont, too, bishop of Tournay and archbishop of Cambray, was ready to advance forty thousand florins in the same cause.

Fuentes, in the highest possible spirits at his success, and having just been reinforced by Count Bucquoy with a fresh Walloon regiment of fifteen hundred foot and with eight hundred and fifty of the mutineers from

Tirlemont and Chapelle, who were among the choicest of Spanish veterans, was not disposed to let the grass grow under his feet. Within four days after the sack of Dourlens he broke up his camp, and came before Cambray with an army of twelve thousand foot and nearly four thousand horse. But before narrating the further movements of the vigorous new governor-general, it is necessary to glance at the military operations in the eastern part of the Netherlands and upon the Rhine.

The States-General had reclaimed to their authority nearly all that important region lying beyond the Yssel—the solid Frisian bulwark of the republic—but there were certain points nearer the line where Upper and Nether Germany almost blend into one, which yet acknowledged the name of the king. The city of Groenlo, or Grol, not a place of much interest or importance in itself, but close to the frontier, and to that destined land of debate, the duchies of Cleves, Juliers, and Berg, still retained its Spanish garrison. On the 14th July Prince Maurice of Nassau came before the city with six thousand infantry, some companies of cavalry, and sixteen pieces of artillery. He made his approaches in form, and after a week's operations he fired three volleys, according to his custom, and summoned the place to capitulate. Governor Jan van Stirum replied stoutly that he would hold the place for God and the king to the last drop of his blood. Meantime there was hope of help from the outside.

Maurice was a vigorous young commander, but there was a man to be dealt with who had been called the "good old Mondragon" when the prince was in his cradle; and who still governed the citadel of Antwerp, and was still ready for an active campaign.

Christopher Mondragon was now ninety-two years old. Not often in the world's history has a man of that age been capable of personal, participation in the joys of the battlefield, whatever natural reluctance veterans are apt to manifest at relinquishing high military control.

But Mondragon looked not with envy but with admiration on the growing fame of the Nassau chieftain, and was disposed, before he himself left the stage, to match himself with the young champion.

So soon as he heard of the intended demonstration of Maurice against Grol, the ancient governor of Antwerp collected a little army by throwing together all the troops that could be spared from the various garrisons within his command. With two Spanish regiments, two thousand Swiss, the Walloon troops of De Grisons, and the Irish regiment of Stanley—in all seven thousand foot and thirteen hundred horse—Mondragon marched straight across Brabant and Gelderland to the Rhine. At Kaiserworth he reviewed his forces, and announced his intention of immediately crossing the river. There was a murmur of disapprobation among officers and men at what they considered the foolhardy scheme of mad old Mondragon. But the general had not campaigned a generation before, at the age of sixty-nine, in the bottom of the sea, and waded chin-deep for six hours long of an October night, in the face of a rising tide from the German Ocean and of an army of Zeelanders, to be frightened now at the summer aspect of the peaceful Rhine.

The wizened little old man, walking with difficulty by the aid of a staff, but armed in proof, with plumes waving gallantly from his iron headpiece, and with his rapier at his side, ordered a chair to be brought to the river's edge. Then calmly seating himself in the presence of his host, he stated that he should not rise from that chair until the last man had crossed the river. Furthermore, he observed that it was not only his purpose to relieve the city of Grol, but to bring Maurice to an action, and to defeat him, unless he retired. The soldiers ceased to murmur, the pontoons were laid, the river was passed, and on the 25th July, Maurice, hearing of the veteran's approach, and not feeling safe in his position, raised the siege of the city. Burning his camp and everything that could not be taken with him on his march, the prince came in perfect order to Borkelo, two Dutch miles from Grol. Here he occupied himself for some time in clearing the country of brigands who in the guise of soldiers infested that region and made the little cities of Deutecom, Anholt, and Heerenberg unsafe. He ordered the inhabitants of these places to send out detachments to beat the bushes for his cavalry, while Hohenlo was ordered to hunt the heaths and wolds thoroughly with packs of bloodhounds until every man and beast to be found lurking in those wild regions should be extirpated. By these vigorous and cruel, but perhaps necessary, measures the brigands were at last extirpated, and honest people began to sleep in their beds.

On the 18th August Maurice took up a strong position at Bislich, not far from Wesel, where the River Lippe empties itself into the Rhine. Mondragon, with his army strengthened by reinforcements from garrisons in Gelderland, and by four hundred men brought by Frederic, van den Berg from Grol, had advanced to a place called Walston in den Ham, in the neighbourhood of Wesel. The Lippe flowed between the two hostile forces. Although he had broken up his siege, the prince was not disposed to renounce his whole campaign before trying conclusions with his veteran antagonist. He accordingly arranged an ambush with much skill, by means of which he hoped to bring on a general engagement and destroy Mondragon and his little army.

His cousin and favourite lieutenant, Philip Nassau, was entrusted with the preliminaries. That adventurous commander, with a picked force of seven hundred cavalry, moved quietly from the camp on the evening of the 1st September. He took with him his two younger brothers, Ernest and Lewis Gunther, who, as has been seen, had received the promise of the eldest brother of the family, William Lewis, that they should be employed from time to time in any practical work that might be going, forward. Besides these young gentlemen, several of the most famous English and Dutch commanders were on, the expedition; the brothers Paul and Marcellus Bax, Captains Parker, Cutler, and Robert Vere, brother of Sir Francis, among the number.

Early in the morning of the 2nd September the force crossed the Lippe, according to orders, keeping a pontoon across the stream to secure their retreat.

They had instructions thus to feel the enemy at early dawn, and, as he was known to have foraging parties out every morning along the margin of the river, to make a sudden descent upon their pickets, and to capture those companies before they could effect their escape or be reinforced. Afterwards they were to retreat across the Lippe, followed, as it was hoped would be the case, by the troops: of Mondragon, anxious to punish this piece of audacity. Meantime Maurice with five thousand infantry, the rest of his cavalry, and several pieces of artillery, awaited their coming, posted behind some hills in the neighbourhood of Wesel.

The plot of the young commander was an excellent one, but the ancient campaigner on the other side of the river had not come all the way from his comfortable quarters in Antwerp to be caught napping on that

September morning. Mondragon had received accurate information from his scouts as to what was going on in the enemy's camp; and as to the exact position of Maurice. He was up long before daybreak—"the good old Christopher"—and himself personally arranged a counter-ambush. In the fields lying a little back from the immediate neighbourhood of, the Lippe he posted the mass of his cavalry, supported by a well-concealed force of infantry. The pickets on the stream and the foraging companies were left to do their usual work as if nothing were likely to happen.

Philip Nassau galloped cheerfully forward; according to the well-concerted plan, sending Cutler and Marcellus Bax with a handful of troopers to pounce upon the enemy's pickets. When those officers got to the usual foraging ground they, came upon a much larger cavalry force than they had looked for; and, suspecting something wrong; dashed back—again to give information to Count Philip. That impatient commander, feeling sure of his game unless this foolish delay should give the foraging companies time to, escape; ordered an immediate advance with his whole cavalry force: The sheriff of Zallant was ordered to lead the way. He objected that the pass, leading through a narrow lane and opening by a gate into an open field, was impassable for more than two troopers abreast; and that the enemy was in force beyond. Philips scorning these words of caution, and exclaiming that seventy-five lancers were enough to put fifty carabineers to rout; put on his casque, drew his sword; and sending his brother Lewis to summon Kinski and Donck; dashed into the pass, accompanied by the two counts and, a couple of other nobles. The sheriff, seeing this, followed him at full gallop; and after him came the troopers of Barchon, of Du Bois, and of Paul Bax; riding single file but in much disorder. When they had all entered inextricably into the lane, with the foremost of the lancers already passing through the gate, they discovered the enemy's cavalry and infantry drawn up in force upon the watery, heathery pastures beyond. There was at once a scene of confusion. To use lances was impossible, while they were all struggling together through the narrow passage offering themselves an easy prey to the enemy as they slowly emerged into the gelds. The foremost defended themselves with sabre and pistol as well as they could. The hindmost did their best to escape, and rode for their lives to the other side of the river. All trampled upon each other and impeded each other's movements. There was a brief engagement, bloody, desperate, hand to hand, and many Spaniards fell before the entrapped Netherlanders. But there could not be a moment's doubt as to the issue. Count Philip went down in the beginning of the action, shot through the body by an arquebus, discharged so close to him that his clothes were set on fire. As there was no water within reach the flames could be extinguished at last only by rolling him over, and over, wounded as he was, among the sand and heather. Count Ernest Solms was desperately wounded at the same time. For a moment both gentlemen attempted to effect their escape by mounting on one horse, but both fell to the ground exhausted and were taken prisoners. Ernest Nassau was also captured. His young brother, Lewis Gunther, saved himself by swimming the river. Count Kinski was mortally wounded. Robert Vere, too, fell into the enemy's hands, and was afterwards murdered in cold blood. Marcellus Bax, who had returned to the field by a circuitous path, still under the delusion that he was about handsomely to cut off the retreat of the foraging companies, saved himself and a handful of cavalry by a rapid flight, so soon as he discovered the enemy drawn up in line of battle. Cutler and Parker were equally fortunate. There was less than a hundred of the States' troops killed, and it is probable that a larger number of the Spaniards fell. But the loss of Philip Nassau, despite the debauched life and somewhat reckless valour of that soldier, was a very severe one to the army and to his family. He was conveyed to Rheinberg, where his wounds were dressed. As he lay dying he was courteously visited by Mondragon, and by many other Spanish officers, anxious to pay their respects to so distinguished and warlike a member of an illustrious house. He received them with dignity, and concealed his physical agony so as to respond to their conversation as became a Nassau. His cousin, Frederic van den Berg, who was among the visitors, indecently taunted him with his position; asking him what he had expected by serving the cause of the Beggars. Philip turned from him with impatience and bade him hold his peace. At midnight he died.

William of Orange and his three brethren had already laid down their lives for the republic, and now his eldest brother's son had died in the same cause. "He has carried the name of Nassau with honour into the grave," said his brother Lewis William, to their father. Ten others of the house, besides many collateral relations, were still in arms for their adopted country. Rarely in history has a single noble race so entirely identified itself with a nation's record in its most heroic epoch as did that of Orange-Nassau with the liberation of Holland.

Young Ernest Solms, brother of Count Everard, lay in the same chamber with Philip Nassau, and died on the following day. Their bodies were sent by Mondragon with a courteous letter to Maurice at Bisslich. Ernest Nassau was subsequently ransomed for ten thousand florins.

This skirmish on the Lippe has no special significance in a military point of view, but it derives more than a passing interest, not only from the death of many a brave and distinguished soldier, but for the illustration of human vigour triumphing, both physically and mentally, over the infirmities of old age, given by the achievement of Christopher Mondragon. Alone he had planned his expedition across the country from Antwerp, alone he had insisted on crossing the Rhine, while younger soldiers hesitated; alone, with his own active brain and busy hands, he had outwitted the famous young chieftain of the Netherlands, counteracted his subtle policy, and set the counter-ambush by which his choicest cavalry were cut to pieces, and one of his bravest generals slain. So far could the icy blood of ninety-two prevail against the vigour of twenty-eight.

The two armies lay over against each other, with the river between them, for some days longer, but it was obvious that nothing further would be attempted on either side. Mondragon had accomplished the object for which he had marched from Brabant. He had, spoiled the autumn campaign of Maurice, and, was, now disposed to return before winter to, his own quarters. He sent a trumpet accordingly to his antagonist, begging him, half in jest, to have more consideration for his infirmities than to keep him out in his old age in such foul weather, but to allow him the military honour of being last to break up camp. Should Maurice consent to move away, Mondragon was ready to pledge himself not to pursue him, and within three days to leave his own entrenchments.

The proposition was not granted, and very soon afterwards the Spaniard, deciding to retire, crossed the Rhine on the 11th October. Maurice made a slight attempt at pursuit, sending Count William Lewis with some

cavalry, who succeeded in cutting off a few wagons. The army, however, returned safely, to be dispersed into various garrisons.

This was Mondragon's last feat of, arms. Less than three months afterwards, in Antwerp citadel, as the veteran was washing his hands previously to going to the dinner-table, he sat down and died. Strange to say, this man—who had spent almost a century on the battlefield, who had been a soldier in nearly every war that had been waged in any part of Europe during that most belligerent age, who had come an old man to the Netherlands before Alva's arrival, and had ever since been constantly and personally engaged in the vast Flemish tragedy which had now lasted well nigh thirty years—had never himself lost a drop of blood. His battle-fields had been on land and water, on ice, in fire, and at the bottom of the sea, but he had never received a wound. Nay, more; he had been blown up in a fortress—the castle of Danvilliers in Luxembourg, of which he was governor—where all perished save his wife and himself, and, when they came to dig among the ruins, they excavated at last the ancient couple, protected by the framework of a window in the embrasure of which they had been seated, without a scratch or a bruise. He was a Biscayan by descent, but born in Medina del Campo. A strict disciplinarian, very resolute and pertinacious, he had the good fortune to be beloved by his inferiors, his equals, and his superiors. He was called the father of his soldiers, the good Mondragon, and his name was unstained by any of those deeds of ferocity which make the chronicles of the time resemble rather the history of wolves than of men. To a married daughter, mother of several children, he left a considerable fortune.

Maurice broke up his camp soon after the departure of his antagonist, and paused for a few days at Arnheim to give honourable burial to his cousin Philip and Count Solms. Meantime Sir Francis Vere was detached, with three regiments, which were to winter in Overyssel, towards Weerd castle, situate at a league's distance from Ysselsburg, and defended by a garrison of twenty-six men under Captain Pruys. That doughty commandant, on being summoned to surrender, obstinately refused. Vere, according to Maurice's orders, then opened with his artillery against the place, which soon capitulated in great panic and confusion. The captain demanded the honours of war. Vere told him in reply that the honours of war were halters for the garrison who had dared to defend such a hovel against artillery. The twenty-six were accordingly ordered to draw black and white straws. This was done, and the twelve drawing white straws were immediately hanged; the thirteenth receiving his life on consenting to act as executioner for his comrades. The commandant was despatched first of all. The rope broke, but the English soldiers held him under the water of the ditch until he was drowned. The castle was then thoroughly sacked, the women being sent unharmed to Ysselsburg.

Maurice then shipped the remainder of his troops along the Rhine and Waal to their winter quarters and returned to the Hague. It was the feeblest year's work yet done by the stadholder.

Meantime his great ally, the Huguenot-Catholic Prince of Bearne, was making a dashing, and, on the whole, successful campaign in the heart of his own kingdom. The constable of Castile, Don Ferdinando de Velasco, one of Spain's richest grandees and poorest generals, had been sent with an army of ten thousand men to take the field in Burgundy against the man with whom the great Farnese had been measuring swords so lately, and with not unmingled success, in Picardy. Biron, with a sudden sweep, took possession of Aussone, Autun, and Beaune, but on one adventurous day found himself so deeply engaged with a superior force of the enemy in the neighbourhood of Fontaine Francaise, or St. Seine, where France's great river takes its rise, as to be nearly cut off and captured. But Henry himself was already in the field, and by one of those mad, reckless impulses which made him so adorable as a soldier and yet so profoundly censurable as a commander-in-chief, he flung himself, like a young lieutenant, with a mere handful of cavalry, into the midst of the fight, and at the imminent peril of his own life succeeded in rescuing the marshal and getting off again unscathed. On other occasions Henry said he had fought for victory, but on that for dear life; and, even as in the famous and foolish skirmish at Aumale three years before, it was absence of enterprise or lack of cordiality on the part of his antagonists, that alone prevented a captive king from being exhibited as a trophy of triumph for the expiring League.

But the constable of Castile was not born to cheer the heart of his prudent master with such a magnificent spectacle. Velasco fell back to Gray and obstinately refused to stir from his entrenchments, while Henry before his eyes laid siege to Dijon. On the 28th June the capital of Burgundy surrendered to its sovereign, but no temptations could induce the constable to try the chance of a battle. Henry's movements in the interior were more successful than were the operations nearer the frontier, but while the monarch was thus cheerfully fighting for his crown in France, his envoys were winning a still more decisive campaign for him in Rome.

D'Ossat and Perron had accomplished their diplomatic task with consummate ability, and, notwithstanding the efforts and the threats of the Spanish ambassador and the intrigues of his master, the absolution was granted. The pope arose early on the morning of the 5th August, and walked barefoot from his palace of Mount Cavallo to the church of Maria Maggiore, with his eyes fixed on the ground, weeping loudly and praying fervently. He celebrated mass in the church, and then returned as he went, saluting no one on the road and shutting himself up in his palace afterwards. The same ceremony was performed ten days later on the festival of our Lady's Ascension. In vain, however, had been the struggle on the part of his Holiness to procure from the ambassador the deposition of the crown of France in his hands, in order that the king might receive it back again as a free gift and concession from the chief pontiff. Such a triumph was not for Rome, nor could even the publication of the Council of Trent in France be conceded except with a saving clause "as to matters which could not be put into operation without troubling the repose of the kingdom." And to obtain this clause the envoys declared "that they had been obliged to sweat blood and water."

On the 17th day of September the absolution was proclaimed with great pomp and circumstance from the gallery of St. Peter's, the holy father seated on the highest throne of majesty, with his triple crown on has head, and all his cardinals and bishops about him in their most effulgent robes.

The silver trumpets were blown, while artillery roared from the castle of St. Angelo, and for two successive nights Rome was in a blaze of bonfires and illumination, in a whirl of bell-ringing, feasting, and singing of hosannaha. There had not been such a merry-making in the eternal city since the pope had celebrated solemn thanksgiving for the massacre of St. Bartholomew. The king was almost beside himself with rapture when the

great news reached him, and he straightway wrote letters, overflowing with gratitude and religious enthusiasm, to the pontiff and expressed his regret that military operations did not allow him to proceed at once to Rome in person to kiss the holy father's feet.

The narrative returns to Fuentes, who was left before the walls of Cambray.

That venerable ecclesiastical city; pleasantly seated amid gardens, orchards, and green pastures, watered, by the winding Scheld, was well fortified after the old manner, but it was especially defended and dominated by a splendid pentagonal citadel built by Charles V. It was filled with fine churches, among which the magnificent cathedral was pre-eminent, and with many other stately edifices. The population was thrifty, active, and turbulent, like that of all those Flemish and Walloon cities which the spirit of mediaeval industry had warmed for a time into vehement little republics.

But, as has already been depicted in these pages, the Celtic element had been more apt to receive than consistent to retain the generous impress which had once been stamped on all the Netherlands. The Walloon provinces had fallen away from their Flemish sisters and seemed likely to accept a permanent yoke, while in the territory of the united States, as John Baptist Tassis was at that very moment pathetically observing in a private letter to Philip, "with the coming up of a new generation educated as heretics from childhood, who had never heard what the word king means, it was likely to happen at last that the king's memory, being wholly forgotten nothing would remain in the land but heresy alone." From this sad fate Cambray had been saved. Gavre d'Inchy had seventeen years before surrendered the city to the Duke of Alencon during that unlucky personage's brief and base career in the Netherlands, all, that was left of his visit being the semi-sovereignty which the notorious Balagny had since that time enjoyed, in the archiepiscopal city. This personage, a natural son of Monluc, Bishop of Valence, and nephew of the distinguished Marshal Monluci was one of the most fortunate and the most ignoble of all the soldiers of fortune who had played their part at this epoch in the Netherlands. A poor creature himself, he had a heroine for a wife. Renee, the sister of Bussy d'Amboise, had vowed to unite herself to a man who would avenge the assassination of her brother by the Count Montsoreau? Balagny readily agreed to perform the deed, and accordingly espoused the high-born dame, but it does not appear that he ever wreaked her vengeance on the murderer. He had now governed Cambray until the citizens and the whole countryside were galled and exhausted by his grinding tyranny, his inordinate pride, and his infamous extortions. His latest achievement had been to force upon his subjects a copper currency bearing the nominal value of silver, with the same blasting effects which such experiments in political economy are apt to produce on princes and peoples. He had been a Royalist, a Guisist, a Leaguer, a Dutch republican, by turns, and had betrayed all the parties, at whose expense he had alternately filled his coffers. During the past year he had made up his mind—like most of the conspicuous politicians and campaigners of France—that the moribund League was only fit to be trampled upon by its recent worshippers, and he had made accordingly one of the very best bargains with Henry IV. that had yet been made, even at that epoch of self-vending grandees.

Henry, by treaty ratified in August, 1594, had created him Prince of Cambray and Marshal of France, so that the man who had been receiving up to that very moment a monthly subsidy of seven thousand two hundred dollars from the King of Spain was now gratified with a pension to about the same yearly amount by the King of France. During the autumn Henry had visited Cambray, and the new prince had made wondrous exhibitions of loyalty to the sovereign whom he had done his best all his life to exclude from his kingdom. There had been a ceaseless round of tournaments, festivals, and masquerades in the city in honour of the Huguenot chieftain, now changed into the most orthodox and most legitimate of monarchs, but it was not until midsummer of the present year that Balagny was called on to defend his old possessions and his new principality against a well-seasoned army and a vigorous commander. Meanwhile his new patron was so warmly occupied in other directions that it might be difficult for him to send assistance to the beleaguered city.

On the 14th August Fuentes began his siege operations. Before the investment had been completed the young Prince of Rhetelois, only fifteen years of age, son of the Duke of Nevers, made his entrance into the city attended by thirty of his father's archers. De Vich, too, an experienced and faithful commander, succeeded in bringing four or five hundred dragoons through the enemy's lines. These meagre reinforcements were all that reached the place; for, although the States-General sent two or three thousand Scotchmen and Zeelanders, under Justinus of Nassau, to Henry, that he might be the better enabled to relieve this important frontier city, the king's movements were not sufficiently prompt to turn the force to good account Balagny was left with a garrison of three thousand French and Walloons in the city, besides five hundred French in the fortress.

After six weeks steady drawing of parallels and digging of mines Fuentes was ready to open his batteries. On the 26th September, the news, very much exaggerated, of Mondragon's brilliant victory near Wessel, and of the deaths of Philip Nassau and Ernest Solms, reached the Spanish camp. Immense was the rejoicing. Triumphant salutes from eighty-seven cannon and many thousand muskets shook the earth and excited bewilderment and anxiety within the walls of the city. Almost immediately afterwards a tremendous cannonade was begun and so vigorously sustained that the burghers, and part of the garrison, already half rebellious with hatred to Balagny, began loudly to murmur as the balls came flying into their streets. A few days later an insurrection broke out. Three thousand citizens, with red flags flying, and armed to the teeth were discovered at daylight drawn up in the market place. Balagny came down from the citadel and endeavoured to calm the tumult, but was received with execrations. They had been promised, shouted the insurgents, that every road about Cambray was to swarm with French soldiers under their formidable king, kicking the heads of the Spaniards in all directions. And what had they got? a child with thirty archers, sent by his father, and half a man at the head of four hundred dragoons. To stand a siege under such circumstances against an army of fifteen thousand Spaniards, and to take Balagny's copper as if it were gold, was more than could be asked of respectable burghers.

The allusion to the young prince Rhetelois and to De Vich, who had lost a leg in the wars, was received with much enthusiasm. Balagny, appalled at the fury of the people, whom he had so long been trampling upon while their docility lasted, shrank back before their scornful denunciations into the citadel.

But his wife was not appalled. This princess had from the beginning of the siege showed a courage and an energy worthy of her race. Night and day she had gone the rounds of the ramparts, encouraging and directing the efforts of the garrison. She had pointed batteries against the enemy's works, and, with her own hands, had fired the cannon. She now made her appearance in the market-place, after her husband had fled, and did her best to assuage the tumult, and to arouse the mutineers to a sense of duty or of shame. She plucked from her bosom whole handfuls of gold which she threw among the bystanders, and she was followed by a number of carts filled with sacks of coin ready to be exchanged for the debased currency.

Expressing contempt for the progress made by the besieging army, and for the slight impression so far produced upon the defences of the city, she snatched a pike from a soldier and offered in person to lead the garrison to the breach. Her audience knew full well that this was no theatrical display, but that the princess was ready as the boldest warrior to lead a forlorn hope or to repel the bloodiest assault. Nor, from a military point of view, was their situation desperate. But their hatred and scorn for Balagny could not be overcome by any passing sentiment of admiration for his valiant though imperious wife. No one followed her to the breach. Exclaiming that she at least would never surrender, and that she would die a sovereign princess rather than live a subject, Renee de Balagny retained to the citadel.

The town soon afterwards capitulated, and as the Spanish soldiers, on entering, observed the slight damage that had been caused by their batteries, they were most grateful to the faint-hearted or mutinous condition by which they had been spared the expense of an assault.

The citadel was now summoned to surrender; and Balagny agreed, in case he should not be relieved within six days, to accept what was considered honourable terms. It proved too late to expect succour from Henry, and Balagny, but lately a reigning prince, was fain to go forth on the appointed day and salute his conqueror. But the princess kept her vow. She had done her best to defend her dominions and to live a sovereign, and now there was nothing left her but to die. With bitter reproaches on her husband's pusillanimity, with tears and sobs of rage and shame, she refused food, spurned the idea of capitulation, and expired before the 9th of October.

On that day a procession moved out of the citadel gates. Balagny, with a son of eleven years of age, the Prince of Rhetelois, the Commander De Vich; and many other distinguished personages, all magnificently attired, came forth at the head of what remained of the garrison. The soldiers, numbering thirteen hundred foot and two hundred and forty horse, marched with colours flying, drums beating, bullet in mouth, and all the other recognised palliatives of military disaster. Last of all came a hearse, bearing the coffin of the Princess of Cambray. Fuentes saluted the living leaders of the procession, and the dead heroine; with stately courtesy, and ordered an escort as far as Peronne.

Balagny met with a cool reception from Henry at St. Quintin, but subsequently made his peace, and espoused the sister of the king's mistress, Gabrielle d'Estrees. The body of Gavre d'Inchy, which had been buried for years, was dug up and thrown into a gutter.

ETEXT EDITOR'S BOOKMARKS:

Deal with his enemy as if sure to become his friend
Mondragon was now ninety-two years old
More catholic than the pope
Octogenarian was past work and past mischief
Sacked and drowned ten infant princes
Strangled his nineteen brothers on his accession

CHAPTER XXXII. 1595-1596

Archduke Cardinal Albert appointed governor of the Netherlands—Return of Philip William from captivity—His adherence to the King of Spain—Notice of the Marquis of Varambon, Count Varax, and other new officers—Henry's communications with Queen Elizabeth—Madame de Monceaux—Conversation of Henry with the English ambassador—Marseilles secured by the Duke of Guise—The fort of Rysbank taken by De Roane Calais in the hands of the Spanish—Assistance from England solicited by Henry—Unhandsome conditions proposed by Elizabeth—Annexation of Calais to the obedient provinces—Pirates of Dunkirk—Uneasiness of the Netherlanders with regard to the designs of Elizabeth—Her protestations of sincerity—Expedition of Dutch and English forces to Spain—Attack on the Spanish war-ships—Victory of the allies—Flag of the Republic planted on the fortress of Cadiz—Capitulation of the city—Letter of Elizabeth to the Dutch Admirals—State of affairs in France—Proposition of the Duke of Montpensier for the division of the kingdom—Successes of the Cardinal Archduke in Normandy—He proceeds to Flanders—Siege and capture of Hulat—Projected alliance against Spain—Interview of De Sancy with Lord Burghley—Diplomatic conference at Greenwich—Formation of a league against Spain—Duplicity of the treaty—Affairs in Germany—Battle between the Emperor and the Grand Turk—Endeavours of Philip to counteract the influence of the league—His interference in the affairs of Germany—Secret intrigue of Henry with Spain—Philip's second attempt at the conquest of England.

Another governor-general arrived in the early days of the year 1596, to take charge of the obedient provinces. It had been rumoured for many months that Philip's choice was at last fixed upon the Archduke Cardinal Albert, Archbishop of Toledo, youngest of the three surviving brothers, of the Emperor Rudolph, as the candidate for many honours. He was to espouse the Infanta, he was to govern the Netherlands, and, as it

was supposed, there were wider and wilder schemes for the aggrandizement of this fortunate ecclesiastic brooding in the mind of Philip than yet had seen the light.

Meantime the cardinal's first care was to unfrock himself. He had also been obliged to lay down the most lucrative episcopate in Christendom, that of Toledo, the revenues of which amounted to the enormous sum of three hundred thousand dollars a year. Of this annual income, however, he prudently reserved to himself fifty thousand dollars, by contract with his destined successor.

The cardinal reached the Netherlands before the end of January. He brought with him three thousand Spanish infantry, and some companies of cavalry, while his personal baggage was transported on three hundred and fifty mules. Of course there was a triumphal procession when, on the 11th February, the new satrap entered the obedient Netherlands, and there was the usual amount of bell-ringing, cannon-firing, trumpet-blowing, with torch-light processions, blazing tar-barrels, and bedizened platforms, where Allegory, in an advanced state of lunacy, performed its wonderful antics. It was scarcely possible for human creatures to bestow more adulation, or to abase themselves more thoroughly, than the honest citizens of Brussels had so recently done in honour of the gentle, gouty Ernest, but they did their best. That mythological conqueror and demigod had sunk into an unhonoured grave, despite the loud hosannaha sung to him on his arrival in Belgica, and the same nobles, pedants, and burghers were now ready and happy to grovel at the feet of Albert. But as it proved as impossible to surpass the glories of the holiday which had been culled out for his brother, so it would be superfluous now to recall the pageant which thus again delighted the capital.

But there was one personage who graced this joyous entrance whose presence excited perhaps more interest than did that of the archduke himself. The procession was headed by three grandees riding abreast. There was the Duke of Aumale, pensionary of Philip, and one of the last of the Leaguers, who had just been condemned to death and executed in effigy at Paris, as a traitor to his king and country; there was the Prince of Chimay, now since the recent death of his father at Venice become Duke of Arschot; and between the two rode a gentleman forty-two years of age, whose grave; melancholy features—although wearing a painful expression of habitual restraint and distrust suggested, more than did those of the rest of his family, the physiognomy of William the Silent to all who remembered that illustrious rebel.

It was the eldest son of the great founder of the Dutch republic. Philip William, Prince of Orange, had at last, after twenty-eight years of captivity in Spain, returned to the Netherlands, whence he had been kidnapped while a school boy at Louvain, by order of the Duke of Alva. Rarely has there been a more dreary fate, a more broken existence than his. His almost life-long confinement, not close nor cruel, but strict and inexorable, together with the devilish arts of the Jesuits, had produced nearly as blighting an effect upon his moral nature as a closer dungeon might have done on his physical constitution. Although under perpetual arrest in Madrid, he had been allowed to ride and to hunt, to go to mass, and to enjoy many of the pleasures of youth. But he had been always a prisoner, and his soul—a hopeless captive—could no longer be liberated now that the tyrant, in order to further his own secret purposes; had at last released his body from gaol. Although the eldest-born of his father, and the inheritor of the great estates of Orange and of Buren, he was no longer a Nassau except in name. The change wrought by the pressure of the Spanish atmosphere was complete. All that was left of his youthful self was a passionate reverence for his father's memory, strangely combined with a total indifference to all that his father held dear, all for which his father had laboured his whole lifetime, and for which his heart's blood had been shed. On being at last set free from bondage he had been taken to the Escorial, and permitted to kiss the hand of the king—that hand still reeking with his father's murder. He had been well received by the Infante and the Infanta, and by the empress-mother, daughter of Charles V., while the artistic treasures of the palace and cloister were benignantly pointed out to him. It was also signified to him that he was to receive the order of the Golden Fleece, and to enter into possession of his paternal and maternal estates. And Philip William had accepted these conditions as if a born loyal subject of his Most Catholic Majesty.

Could better proof be wanting that in that age religion was the only fatherland, and that a true papist could sustain no injury at the hands of his Most Catholic Majesty. If to be kidnapped in boyhood, to be imprisoned during a whole generation of mankind, to be deprived of vast estates, and to be made orphan by the foulest of assassinations, could not engender resentment against, the royal, perpetrator of these crimes in the bosom of his victim, was it strange that Philip should deem himself, something far, more than man, and should placidly accept the worship rendered to him by inferior beings, as to the holy impersonation of Almighty Wrath?

Yet there is no doubt that the prince had a sincere respect for his father, and had bitterly sorrowed at his death. When a Spanish officer, playing chess with him, in prison, had ventured to speak lightly of that father, Philip William had seized him bodily, thrown him from the window, and thus killed him on the spot. And when on his arrival in Brussels it was suggested to him by President Riehardat that it was the king's intention to reinstate him in the possession of his estates, but that a rent-charge of eighteen thousand florins a year was still to be paid from them; to the heirs of Balthazar Gerard, his father's assassin, he flamed into a violent rage, drew his poniard, and would have stabbed the president; had not the bystanders forcibly interferred. In consequence of this refusal—called magnanimous by contemporary writers—to accept his property under such conditions, the estates were detained from him for a considerable time longer. During the period of his captivity he had been allowed an income of fifteen thousand livres; but after his restoration his household, gentlemen, and servants alone cost him eighty thousand livres annually. It was supposed that the name of Orange-Nassau might now be of service to the king's designs in the Netherlands. Philip William had come by way of Rome, where he had been allowed to kiss the pope's feet and had received many demonstrations of favour, and it was fondly thought that he would now prove an instrument with which king and pontiff might pipe back the rebellious republic to its ancient allegiance. But the Dutchmen and Frisians were deaf. They had tasted liberty too long, they had dealt too many hard blows on the head of regal and sacerdotal despotism, to be deceived by coarse artifices. Especially the king thought that something might be done with Count Hohenlo. That turbulent personage having recently married the full sister of Philip William, and being already at variance with Count Maurice, both for military and political causes, and on account of family and pecuniary disputes, might, it was thought, be purchased by the king, and perhaps a few towns and castles in the united Netherlands might be thrown into the bargain. In that huckstering age, when the loftiest and most

valiant nobles of Europe were the most shameless sellers of themselves, the most cynical mendicants for alms and the most infinite absorbers of bribes in exchange for their temporary fealty; when Mayenne, Mercoeur, Guise, Pillars, Egmont, and innumerable other possessors of ancient and illustrious names alternately and even simultaneously drew pensions from both sides in the great European conflict, it was not wonderful that Philip should think that the boisterous Hohenlo might be bought as well as another. The prudent king, however, gave his usual order that nothing was to be paid beforehand, but that the service was to be rendered first; and the price received afterwards.

The cardinal applied himself to the task on his first arrival, but was soon obliged to report that he could make but little progress in the negotiation.

The king thought, too, that Heraugiere, who had commanded the memorable expedition against Breda, and who was now governor of that stronghold, might be purchased, and he accordingly instructed the cardinal to make use of the Prince of Orange in the negotiations to be made for that purpose. The cardinal, in effect, received an offer from Heraugiere in the course of a few months not only to surrender Breda, without previous recompense, but likewise to place Gertruydenberg, the governor of which city was his relative, in the king's possession. But the cardinal was afraid of a trick, for Heraugiere was known to be as artful as he was brave, and there can be little doubt that the Netherlander was only disposed to lay an ambush for the governor-general.

And thus the son of William the Silent made his reappearance in the streets of Brussels, after twenty-eight years of imprisonment, riding in the procession of the new viceroy. The cardinal-archduke came next, with Fuentes riding at his left hand. That vigorous soldier and politician soon afterwards left the Netherlands to assume the government of Milan.

There was a correspondence between the Prince of Orange and the States-General, in which the republican authorities after expressing themselves towards him with great propriety, and affectionate respect, gave him plainly but delicately to understand that his presence at that time in the United Provinces would neither be desirable, nor, without their passports, possible. They were quite aware of the uses to which the king was hoping to turn their reverence for the memory and the family of the great martyr, and were determined to foil such idle projects on the threshold.

The Archduke Albert, born on 3rd of November, 1560, was now in his thirty-sixth year. A small, thin, pale-faced man, with fair hair, and beard, commonplace features, and the hereditary underhanging Burgundian jaw prominently developed, he was not without a certain nobility of presence. His manners were distant to haughtiness and grave to solemnity. He spoke very little and very slowly. He had resided long in Spain, where he had been a favourite with his uncle—as much as any man could be a favourite with Philip—and he had carefully formed himself on that royal model. He looked upon the King of Spain as the greatest, wisest, and best of created beings, as the most illustrious specimen of kingcraft ever yet vouchsafed to the world. He did his best to look sombre and Spanish, to turn his visage into a mask; to conceal his thoughts and emotions, not only by the expression of his features but by direct misstatements of his tongue, and in all things to present to the obedient Flemings as elaborate a reproduction of his great prototype as copy can ever recall inimitable original. Old men in the Netherlands; who remembered in how short a time Philip had succeeded, by the baleful effect of his personal presence, in lighting up a hatred which not the previous twenty years of his father's burnings, hangings, and butcherings in those provinces had been able to excite, and which forty subsequent years of bloodshed had not begun to allay, might well shake their heads when they saw this new representative of Spanish authority. It would have been wiser—so many astute politicians thought—for Albert to take the Emperor Charles for his model, who had always the power of making his tyranny acceptable to the Flemings, through the adroitness with which he seemed to be entirely a Fleming himself.

But Albert, although a German, valued himself on appearing like a Spaniard. He was industrious, regular in his habits, moderate in eating and drinking, fond of giving audiences on business. He spoke German, Spanish, and Latin, and understood French and Italian. He had at times been a student, and, especially, had some knowledge of mathematics. He was disposed to do his duty—so far as a man can do his duty, who imagines himself so entirely lifted above his fellow creatures as to owe no obligation except to exact their obedience and to personify to them the will of the Almighty. To Philip and the Pope he was ever faithful. He was not without pretensions to military talents, but his gravity, slowness, and silence made him fitter to shine in the cabinet than in the field. Henry IV., who loved his jests whether at his own expense or that of friend or foe, was wont to observe that there were three things which nobody would ever believe, and which yet were very true; that Queen Elizabeth deserved her title of the throned vestal, that he was himself a good Catholic, and that Cardinal Albert was a good general. It is probable that the assertions were all equally accurate.

The new governor did not find a very able group of generals or statesmen assembled about him to assist in the difficult task which he had undertaken. There were plenty of fine gentlemen, with ancient names and lofty pretensions, but the working men in field or council had mostly disappeared. Mondragon, La Motte, Charles Mansfeld, Frank Verdugo were all dead. Fuentes was just taking his departure for Italy. Old Peter Ernest was a cipher; and his son's place was filled by the Marquis of Varambon; as principal commander in active military operations. This was a Burgundian of considerable military ability, but with an inordinate opinion of himself and of his family. "Accept the fact that his lineage is the highest possible, and that he has better connections than those of anybody else in the whole world, and he will be perfectly contented," said a sharp, splenetic Spaniard in the cardinal's confidence. "'Tis a faithful and loyal cavalier, but full of impertinences." The brother of Varambon, Count Varax, had succeeded la Motte as general of artillery, and of his doings there was a tale ere long to be told. On the whole, the best soldier in the archduke's service for the moment was the Frenchman Savigny de Rosne, an ancient Leaguer, and a passionate hater of the Bearnese, of heretics, and of France as then constituted. He had once made a contract with Henry by which he bound himself to his service; but after occasioning a good deal of injury by his deceitful attitude, he had accepted a large amount of Spanish dollars, and had then thrown off the mask and proclaimed himself the deadliest foe of his lawful sovereign. "He was foremost," said Carlos Coloma, "among those who were successfully angled for by the Commander Moreo with golden hooks." Although prodigiously fat, this renegade was an active and experienced campaigner; while his personal knowledge of his own country made his assistance of much value

to those who were attempting its destruction.

The other great nobles, who were pressing themselves about the new viceroy with enthusiastic words of welcome, were as like to give him embarrassment as support. All wanted office, emoluments, distinctions, nor could, much dependence be placed on the ability or the character of any of them. The new duke of Arschot had in times past, as prince of Chimay, fought against the king, and had even imagined himself a Calvinist, while his wife was still a determined heretic. It is true that she was separated from her husband. He was a man of more quickness and acuteness than his father had been, but if possible more mischievous both to friend and foe; being subtle, restless, intriguing, fickle; ambitious, and deceitful. The Prince of Orange was considered a man of very ordinary intelligence, not more than half witted, according to Queen Elizabeth, and it was probable that the peculiar circumstances of his life would extinguish any influence that he might otherwise have attained with either party. He was likely to affect a neutral position and, in times of civil war, to be neutral is to be nothing.

Arenberg, unlike the great general on the Catholic side who had made the name illustrious in the opening scenes of the mighty contest, was disposed to quiet obscurity so far as was compatible with his rank. Having inherited neither fortune nor talent with his ancient name, he was chiefly occupied with providing for the wants of his numerous family. A good papist, well-inclined and docile, he was strongly recommended for the post of admiral, not because he had naval acquirements, but because he had a great many children. The Marquis of Havre, uncle to the Duke of Arschot, had played in his time many prominent parts in the long Netherland tragedy. Although older than he was when Requesens and Don John of Austria had been governors, he was not much wiser, being to the full as vociferous, as false, as insolent, as self-seeking, and as mischievous as in his youth. Alternately making appeals to popular passions in his capacity of high-born demagogue, or seeking crumbs of bounty as the supple slave of his sovereign, he was not more likely to acquire the confidence of the cardinal than he had done that of his predecessors.

The most important and opulent grandee of all the provinces was the Count de Ligne, who had become by marriage or inheritance Prince of Espinay, Seneschal of Hainault, and Viscount of Ghent. But it was only his enormous estates that gave him consideration, for he was not thought capable of either good or bad intentions. He had, however, in times past, succeeded in the chief object of his ambition, which was to keep out of trouble, and to preserve his estates from confiscation. His wife, who governed him, and had thus far guided him safely, hoped to do so to the end. The cardinal was informed that the Golden Fleece would be all-sufficient to keep him upon the right track.

Of the Egmonts, one had died on the famous field of Ivry, another was an outlaw, and had been accused of participation in plots of assassination against William of Orange; the third was now about the archduke's court, and was supposed, to be as dull a man—as Ligne, but likely to be serviceable so long as he could keep his elder brother out of his inheritance. Thus devoted to Church and King were the sons of the man whose head Philip had taken off on a senseless charge of treason. The two Counts Van den Berg—Frederic and Herman—sons of the sister of William the Silent, were, on the whole, as brave, efficient, and trustworthy servants of the king and cardinal as were to be found in the obedient, provinces.

The new governor had come well provided with funds, being supplied for the first three-quarters of the year with a monthly: allowance of 1,100,000 florins. For reasons soon to appear, it was not probable that the States-General would be able very, soon to make a vigorous campaign, and it was thought best for the cardinal to turn his immediate attention to France.

The negotiations for, effecting an alliance offensive and defensive, between the three powers most interested in opposing the projects of Spain for universal empire, were not yet begun, and will be reserved for a subsequent chapter. Meantime there had been much informal discussion and diplomatic trifling between France and England for the purpose of bringing about a sincere co-operation of the two crowns against the Fifth Monarchy—as it was much the fashion to denominate Philip's proposed dominion.

Henry had suggested at different times to Sir Robert Sidney, during his frequent presence in France as special envoy for the queen, the necessity of such a step, but had not always found a hearty sympathy. But as the king began to cool in his hatred to Spain, after his declaration of war against that power, it seemed desirable to Elizabeth to fan his resentment afresh, and to revert to those propositions which had been so coolly received when made. Sir Harry Umton, ambassador from her Majesty, was accordingly provided with especial letters on the subject from the queen's own hand, and presented them early in the year at Coucy (Feb. 13, 1596). No man in the world knew better the tone to adopt in his communications with Elizabeth than did the chivalrous king. No man knew better than he how impossible it was to invent terms of adulation too gross for her to accept as spontaneous and natural effusions, of the heart. He received the letters from the hands of Sir Henry, read them with rapture, heaved a deep sigh, and exclaimed. "Ah! Mr. Ambassador, what shall I say to you? This letter of the queen, my sister, is full of sweetness and affection. I see that she loves me, while that I love her is not to be doubted. Yet your commission shows me the contrary, and this proceeds from her, ministers. How else can these obliquities stand with her professions of love? I am forced, as a king, to take a course which, as Henry, her loving brother, I could never adopt."

They then walked out into the park, and the king fell into frivolous discourse, on purpose to keep the envoy from the important subject which had been discussed in the cabinet. Sir Henry brought him back to business, and insisted that there was no disagreement between her Majesty and her counsellors, all being anxious to do what she wished. The envoy, who shared in the prevailing suspicions that Henry was about to make a truce with Spain, vehemently protested against such a step, complaining that his ministers, whose minds were distempered with jealousy, were inducing him to sacrifice her friendship to a false and hollow reconciliation with Spain. Henry protested that his preference would be for England's amity, but regretted that the English delays were so great, and that such dangers were ever impending over his head, as to make it impossible for him, as a king, to follow the inclinations of his heart.

They then met Madame de Monceaux, the beautiful Gabrielle, who was invited to join in the walk, the king saying that she was no meddler in politics, but of a tractable spirit.

This remark, in Sir Henry's opinion, was just, for, said he to Burghley, she is thought incapable of affairs,

and, very simple.

The duchess unmasked very graciously as the ambassador was presented; but, said the splenetic diplomatist, "I took no pleasure in it, nor held it any grace at all." "She was attired in a plain satin gown," he continued, "with a velvet hood to keep her from the weather, which became her very ill. In my opinion, she is altered very much for the worse, and was very grossly painted." The three walked together discoursing of trifles, much to the annoyance of Umton. At last, a shower forced the lady into the house, and the king soon afterwards took the ambassador to his cabinet. "He asked me how I liked his mistress," wrote Sir Henry to Burghley, "and I answered sparingly in her praise, and told him that if without offence I might speak it, I had the picture of a far more excellent mistress, and yet did her picture come far from the perfection of her beauty."

"As you love me," cried the king, "show it me, if you have it about you!"

"I made some difficulty," continued Sir Henry, "yet upon his importunity I offered it to his view very secretly, still holding it in my hand. He beheld it with passion and admiration, saying that I was in the right." "I give in," said the king, "Je me rends."

Then, protesting that he had never seen such beauty all his life, he kissed it reverently twice or thrice, Sir Henry still holding the miniature firmly in his hand.

The king then insisted upon seizing the picture, and there was a charming struggle between the two, ending in his Majesty's triumph. He then told Sir Henry that he might take his leave of the portrait, for he would never give it up again for any treasure, and that to possess the favour of the original he would forsake all the world. He fell into many more such passionate and incoherent expressions of rhapsody, as of one suddenly smitten and spell-bound with hapless love, bitterly reproaching the ambassador for never having brought him any answers to the many affectionate letters which he had written to the queen, whose silence had made him so wretched. Sir Henry, perhaps somewhat confounded at being beaten at his own fantastic game, answered as well as he could, "but I found," said he, "that the dumb picture did draw on more speech and affection from him than all my best arguments and eloquence. This was the effect of our conference, and, if infiniteness of vows and outward professions be a strong argument of inward affection, there is good likelihood of the king's continuance of amity with her Majesty; only I fear lest his necessities may inconsiderately draw him into some hazardous treaty with Spain, which I hope confidently it is yet in the power of her Majesty to prevent."

The king, while performing these apish tricks about the picture of a lady with beady black eyes, a hooked nose, black teeth, and a red wig, who was now in the sixty-fourth year of her age, knew very well that the whole scene would be at once repeated to the fair object of his passion by her faithful envoy; but what must have been the opinion entertained of Elizabeth by contemporary sovereigns and statesmen when such fantastic folly could be rehearsed and related every day in the year!

And the king knew, after all, and was destined very soon to acquire proof of it which there was no gainsaying, that the beautiful Elizabeth had exactly as much affection for him as he had for her, and was as capable of sacrificing his interests for her own, or of taking advantage of his direct necessities as cynically and as remorselessly, as the King of Spain, or the Duke of Mayenne, or the Pope had ever done.

Henry had made considerable progress in re-establishing his authority over a large portion of the howling wilderness to which forty years of civil war had reduced his hereditary kingdom. There was still great danger, however, at its two opposite extremities. Calais, key to the Norman gate of France, was feebly held; while Marseilles, seated in such dangerous proximity to Spain on the one side, and to the Republic of Genoa, that alert vassal of Spain, on the other, was still in the possession of the League. A concerted action was undertaken by means of John Andrew Doria, with a Spanish fleet from Genoa on the outside and a well-organised conspiracy from within, to carry the city bodily over to Philip. Had it succeeded, this great Mediterranean seaport would have become as much a Spanish 'possession as Barcelona or Naples, and infinite might have been the damage to Henry's future prospects in consequence. But there was a man in Marseilles; Petrus Libertas by name, whose ancestors had gained this wholesome family appellation by a successful effort once made by them to rescue the little town of Calvi, in Corsica, from the tyranny of Genoa. Peter Liberty needed no prompting to vindicate, on a fitting occasion, his right to his patronymic. In conjunction with men in Marseilles who hated oppression, whether of kings, priests, or renegade republics, as much as he did, and with a secret and well-arranged understanding with the Duke of Guise, who was burning with ambition to render a signal benefit to the cause which he had just espoused, this bold tribune of the people succeeded in stirring the population to mutiny at exactly the right moment, and in opening the gates of Marseilles to the Duke of Guise and his forces before it was possible for the Leaguers to admit the fleet of Doria into its harbour. Thus was the capital of Mediterranean France lost and won. Guise gained great favour in Henry's eyes; and with reason; for the son of the great Balafre, who was himself the League, had now given the League the stroke of mercy. Peter Liberty became consul of Marseilles, and received a patent of nobility. It was difficult, however, for any diploma to confer anything more noble upon him than the name which he hade inherited, and to which he had so well established his right.

But while Henry's cause had thus been so well served in the south, there was danger impending in the north. The king had been besieging, since autumn, the town of La Fere, an important military and strategic position, which had been Farnese's basis of operations during his memorable campaigns in France, and which had ever since remained in the hands of the League.

The cardinal had taken the field with an army of fifteen thousand foot and three thousand horse, assembled at Valenciennes, and after hesitating some time whether, or not he should attempt to relieve La Fere, he decided instead on a diversion. In the second week of April; De Rosne was detached at the head of four thousand men, and suddenly appeared before Calais. The city had been long governed by De Gordan, but this wary and experienced commander had unfortunately been for two years dead. Still more unfortunately, it had been in his power to bequeath, not only his fortune, which was very large, but the government of Calais, considered the most valuable command in France, to his nephew, De Vidosan. He had, however, not bequeathed to him his administrative and military genius.

The fortress called the Risban, or Rysbank, which entirely governed the harbour, and the possession of which made Calais nearly impregnable, as inexhaustible supplies could thus be poured into it by sea, had fallen into comparative decay. De Gordan had been occupied in strengthening the work, but since his death the nephew had entirely neglected the task. On the land side, the bridge of Nivelet was the key to the place. The faubourg was held by two Dutch companies, under Captains Le Gros and Dominique, who undertook to prevent the entrance of the archduke's forces. Vidosan, however; ordered these faithful auxiliaries into the citadel.

De Rosne, acting with great promptness; seized both the bridge of Nivelet and the fort of Rysbank by a sudden and well-concerted movement. This having been accomplished, the city was in his power, and, after sustaining a brief cannonade, it surrendered. Vidosan, with his garrison, however, retired into the citadel, and it was agreed between, himself and De Rosne that unless succour should be received from the French king before the expiration of six days; the citadel should also be-evacuated.

Meantime Henry, who was at Boulogne, much disgusted at this unexpected disaster, had sent couriers to the Netherlands, demanding assistance of the States-General and of the stadholder. Maurice had speedily responded to the appeal. Proceeding himself to Zeeland, he had shipped fifteen companies of picked troops from Middelburg, together with a flotilla laden with munitions and provisions enough to withstand a siege of several weeks. When the arrangements were completed, he went himself on board of a ship of war to take command of the expedition in person. On the 17th of April he arrived with his succours off the harbour of Calais, and found to his infinite disappointment that the Rysbank fort was in the hands of the enemy. As not a vessel could pass the bar without almost touching that fortress, the entrance to Calais was now impossible. Had the incompetent Vidosan heeded the advice of his brave Dutch officers; the place might still have been saved, for it had surrendered in a panic on the very day when the fleet of Maurice arrived off the port.

Henry had lost no time in sending, also, to his English allies for succour. The possession of Calais by the Spaniards might well seem alarming to Elizabeth, who could not well forget that up to the time of her sister this important position had been for two centuries an English stronghold. The defeat of the Spanish husband of an English queen had torn from England the last trophies of the Black Prince, and now the prize had again fallen into the hands of Spain; but of Spain no longer in alliance, but at war, with England. Obviously it was most dangerous to the interests and to the safety of the English realm, that this threatening position, so near the gates of London, should be in the hands of the most powerful potentate in the world and the dire enemy of England. In response to Henry's appeal, the Earl of Essex was despatched with a force of six thousand men —raised by express command of the queen on Sunday when the people were all at church—to Dover, where shipping was in readiness to transport the troops at once across the Channel. At the same time, the politic queen and some of her counsellors thought the opening a good one to profit by the calamity of their dear ally, Certainly it was desirable to prevent Calais from falling into the grasp of Philip. But it was perhaps equally desirable, now that the place without the assistance of Elizabeth could no longer be preserved by Henry, that Elizabeth, and not Henry, should henceforth be its possessor. To make this proposition as clear to the French king as it seemed to the English queen, Sir Robert Sidney was despatched in all haste to Boulogne, even while the guns of De Rosne were pointed at Calais citadel, and while Maurice's fleet, baffled by the cowardly surrender of the Risban, was on its retreat from the harbour.

At two o'clock in the afternoon of the 21st of April, Sidney landed at Boulogne. Henry, who had been intensely impatient to hear from England, and who suspected that the delay was boding no good to his cause, went down to the strand to meet the envoy, with whom then and there he engaged instantly in the most animated discourse.

As there was little time to be lost, and as Sidney on getting out of the vessel found himself thus confronted with the soldier-king in person, he at once made the demand which he had been sent across the Channel to make. He requested the king to deliver up the town and citadel of Calais to the Queen of England as soon as, with her assistance, he should succeed in recovering the place. He assigned as her Majesty's reasons for this peremptory summons that she would on no other terms find it in her power to furnish the required succour. Her subjects, she said, would never consent to it except on these conditions. It was perhaps not very common with the queen to exhibit so much deference to the popular will, but on this occasion the supposed inclinations of the nation furnished her with an excellent pretext for carrying out her own. Sidney urged moreover that her Majesty felt certain of being obliged—in case she did not take Calais into her own safe-keeping and protection—to come to the rescue again within four or six months to prevent it once more from being besieged, conquered, and sacked by the enemy.

The king had feared some such proposition as this, and had intimated as much to the States' envoy, Calvaert, who had walked with him down to the strand, and had left him when the conference began. Henry was not easily thrown from his equanimity nor wont to exhibit passion on any occasion, least of all in his discussions with the ambassadors of England, but the cool and insolent egotism of this communication was too much for him.

He could never have believed, he said in reply, that after the repeated assurances of her Majesty's affection for him which he had received from the late Sir Henry Umton in their recent negotiations, her Majesty would now so discourteously seek to make her profit out of his misery. He had come to Boulogne, he continued, on the pledge given by the Earl of Essex to assist him with seven or eight thousand men in the recovery of Calais. If this after all should fail him—although his own reputation would be more injured by the capture of the place thus before his eyes than if it had happened in his absence—he would rather a hundred times endure the loss of the place than have it succoured with such injurious and dishonourable conditions. After all, he said, the loss of Calais was substantially of more importance to the queen than to himself. To him the chief detriment would be in the breaking up of his easy and regular communications with his neighbours through this position, and especially with her Majesty. But as her affection for him was now proved to be so slender as to allow her to seek a profit from his misfortune and dishonour, it would be better for him to dispense with her friendship altogether and to strengthen his connections with truer and more honourable friends. Should the worst come to the worst, he doubted not that he should be able, being what he was and much more than he was of old, to make a satisfactory arrangement with, the King of Spain. He was ready to

save Calais at the peril of his life, to conquer it in person, and not by the hands of any of his lieutenants; but having done so, he was not willing—at so great a loss of reputation without and at so much peril within—to deliver it to her Majesty or to any-one else. He would far rather see it fall into the hands of the Spaniards.

Thus warmly and frankly did Henry denounce the unhandsome proposition made in the name of the queen, while, during his vehement expostulations, Sidney grew red with shame, and did not venture to look the king for one moment in the face. He then sought to mitigate the effect of his demand by intimating, with much embarrassment of demeanour, that perhaps her Majesty would be satisfied with the possession of Calais for her own life-time, and—as this was at once plumply refused—by the suggestion of a pledge of it for the term of one year. But the king only grew the more indignant as the bargaining became more paltry, and he continued to heap bitter reproaches upon the queen, who, without having any children or known inheritor of her possessions, should nevertheless, be so desirous of compassing his eternal disgrace and of exciting the discontent of his subjects for the sake of an evanescent gain for herself. At such a price, he avowed, he had no wish to purchase her Majesty's friendship.

After this explosion the conference became more amicable. The English envoy assured the king that there could be, at all events, no doubt of the arrival of Essex with eight thousand men on the following Thursday to assist in the relief of the citadel; notwithstanding the answer which, he had received to the demand of her Majesty.

He furthermore expressed the strong desire which he felt that the king might be induced to make a personal visit to the queen at Dover, whither she would gladly come to receive him, so soon as Calais should have been saved. To this the king replied with gallantry, that it was one of the things in the world that he had most at heart. The envoy rejoined that her Majesty would consider such a visit a special honour and favour. She had said that she could leave this world more cheerfully, when God should ordain, after she had enjoyed two hours' conversation with his Majesty.

Sidney on taking his departure repeated the assurance that the troops under Essex would arrive before Calais by Thursday, and that they were fast marching to the English coast; forgetting, apparently, that, at the beginning of the interview, he had stated, according to the queen's instructions, that the troops had been forbidden to march until a favourable answer had been returned by the king to her proposal.

Henry then retired to his headquarters for the purpose of drawing up information for his minister in England, De Saucy, who had not yet been received by the queen, and who had been kept in complete ignorance of this mission of Sidney and of its purport.

While the king was thus occupied, the English envoy was left in the company of Calvaert, who endeavoured, without much success, to obtain from him the result of the conference which had just taken place. Sidney was not to be pumped by the Dutch diplomatist, adroit as he unquestionably was, but, so soon as the queen's ambassador was fairly afloat again on his homeward track—which was the case within three hours after his arrival at Boulogne—Calvaert received from the king a minute account of the whole conversation.

Henry expressed unbounded gratitude to the States-General of the republic for their prompt and liberal assistance, and he eagerly contrasted the conduct of Prince Maurice—sailing forth in person so chivalrously to his rescue—with the sharp bargainings and shortcomings of the queen. He despatched a special messenger to convey his thanks to the prince, and he expressed his hope to Calvaert that the States might be willing that their troops should return to the besieged place under the command of Maurice, whose presence alone, as he loudly and publicly protested, was worth four thousand men.

But it was too late. The six days were rapidly passing, away. The governor of Boulogne, Campagnolo, succeeded, by Henry's command, in bringing a small reinforcement of two or three hundred men into the citadel of Calais during the night of the 22nd of April. This devoted little band made their way, when the tide was low, along the flats which stretched between the fort of Rysbank and the sea. Sometimes wading up to the neck in water, sometimes swimming for their lives, and during a greater part of their perilous, march clinging so close to the hostile fortress as almost to touch its guns, the gallant adventurers succeeded in getting into the citadel in time to be butchered with the rest of the garrison on the following day. For so soon as the handful of men had gained admittance to the gates—although otherwise the aspect of affairs was quite unchanged—the rash and weak De Vidosan proclaimed that the reinforcements stipulated in his conditional capitulation having arrived, he should now resume hostilities. Whereupon he opened fire, upon the town, and a sentry was killed. De Rosne, furious, at what he considered a breach of faith, directed a severe cannonade against the not very formidable walls of the castle. During the artillery engagement which ensued the Prince of Orange, who had accompanied De Rosne to the siege, had a very narrow escape. A cannon-ball from the town took off the heads of two Spaniards standing near him, bespattering him with their blood and brains. He was urged to retire, but assured those about him that he came of too good a house to be afraid. His courage was commendable, but it seems not to have occurred to him that the place for his father's son was not by the aide of the general who was doing the work of his father's murderer. While his brother Maurice with a fleet of twenty Dutch war-ships was attempting in vain to rescue Calais from the grasp of the Spanish king, Philip William of Nassau was looking on, a pleased and passive spectator of the desperate and unsuccessful efforts at defence. The assault was then ordered? The-first storm was repulsed, mainly by the Dutch companies, who fought in the breach until most of their numbers were killed or wounded, their captains Dominique and Le Gros having both fallen. The next attack was successful, the citadel was carried; and the whole garrison, with exception of what remained of the Hollanders and Zeelanders, put to the sword. De Vidosan himself perished. Thus Calais was once more a Spanish city, and was re-annexed to the obedient provinces of Flanders. Of five thousand persons, soldiers and citizens, who had taken refuge in the castle, all were killed or reduced to captivity.'

The conversion of this important naval position into a Spanish-Flemish station was almost as disastrous to the republic as it was mortifying to France and dangerous to England. The neighbouring Dunkirk had long been a nest of pirates, whence small, fast-sailing vessels issued, daily and nightly, to prey indiscriminately upon the commerce of all nations. These corsairs neither gave nor took quarter, and were in the habit, after they had plundered their prizes, of setting them adrift, with the sailors nailed to the deck or chained to the rigging; while the officers were held for ransom. In case the vessels themselves were wanted, the crews were

indiscriminately tossed overboard; while, on the ether hand, the buccaneers rarely hesitated to blow up their own ships, when unable to escape from superior force. Capture was followed by speedy execution, and it was but recently that one of these freebooters having been brought into Rotterdam, the whole crew, forty-four in number, were hanged on the day of their arrival, while some five and twenty merchant-captains held for ransom by the pirates thus obtained their liberty.

And now Calais was likely to become a second and more dangerous sea-robbers' cave than even Dunkirk had been.

Notwithstanding this unlucky beginning of the campaign for the three allies, it was determined to proceed with a considerable undertaking which had been arranged between England and the republic. For the time, therefore, the importunate demands of the queen for repayments by the States of her disbursements during the past ten years were suspended. It had, indeed, never been more difficult than at that moment for the republic to furnish extraordinary sums of money. The year 1595 had not been prosperous. Although the general advance in commerce, manufactures, and in every department of national development had been very remark able, yet there had recently been, for exceptional causes, an apparent falling off; while, on the other hand, there had been a bad harvest in the north of Europe. In Holland, where no grain was grown, and which yet was the granary of the world, the prices were trebled. One hundred and eight bushels (a last) of rye, which ordinarily was worth fifty florins, now sold for one hundred and fifty florins, and other objects of consumption were equally enhanced in value. On the other hand, the expenses of the war were steadily increasing, and were fixed for this year at five millions of florins. The republic, and especially the States of Holland, never hesitated to tax heroically. The commonwealth had no income except that which the several provinces chose to impose upon themselves in order to fill the quota assigned to them by the States-General; but this defect in their political organization was not sensibly felt so long as the enthusiasm for the war continued in full force. The people of the Netherlands knew full well that there was no liberty for them without fighting, no fighting without an army, no army without wages, and no wages without taxation; and although by the end of the century the imposts had become so high that, in the language of that keen observer, Cardinal Bentivoglio; nuncio at Brussels, they could scarcely be imagined higher, yet, according to the same authority, they were laid unflinchingly and paid by the people without a murmur. During this year and the next the States of Holland, whose proportion often amounted to fifty per cent. of the whole contribution of the United Provinces, and who ever set a wholesome example in taxation, raised the duty on imports and all internal taxes by one-eighth, and laid a fresh impost on such articles of luxury as velvets and satins, pleas and processes. Starch, too, became a source of considerable revenue. With the fast-rising prosperity of the country luxury had risen likewise, and, as in all ages and countries of the world of which there is record, woman's dress signalized itself by extravagant and very often tasteless conceptions. In a country where, before the doctrine of popular sovereignty had been broached in any part of the world by the most speculative theorists, very vigorous and practical examples of democracy had been afforded to Europe; in a country where, ages before the science of political economy had been dreamed of, lessons of free trade on the largest scale had been taught to mankind by republican traders instinctively breaking in many directions through the nets by which monarchs and oligarchs, guilds and corporations, had hampered the movements of commerce; it was natural that fashion should instinctively rebel against restraint. The honest burgher's vrow of Middelburg or Enkhuyzen claimed the right to make herself as grotesque as Queen Elizabeth in all her glory. Sumptuary laws were an unwholesome part of feudal tyranny, and, as such, were naturally dropping into oblivion on the free soil of the Netherlands. It was the complaint therefore of moralists that unproductive consumption was alarmingly increasing. Formerly starch had been made of the refuse parts of corn, but now the manufacturers of that article made use of the bloom of the wheat and consumed as much of it as would have fed great cities. In the little village of Wormer the starch-makers used between three and four thousand bushels a week. Thus a substantial gentlewoman in fashionable array might bear the food of a parish upon her ample bosom. A single manufacturer in Amsterdam required four hundred weekly bushels. Such was the demand for the stiffening of the vast ruffs, the wonderful head-gear, the elaborate lace-work, stomachers and streamers, without which no lady who respected herself could possibly go abroad to make her daily purchases of eggs and poultry in the market-place.

"May God preserve us," exclaimed a contemporary chronicler, unreasonably excited on the starch question, "from farther luxury and wantonness, and abuse of His blessings and good gifts, that the punishment of Jeroboam, which followed upon Solomon's fortunate reign and the gold-ships of Ophir may not come upon us."

The States of Holland not confounding—as so often has been the case—the precepts of moral philosophy with those of political economy, did not, out of fear for the doom of Jeroboam, forbid the use of starch. They simply laid a tax of a stiver a pound on the commodity, or about six per cent, ad valorem; and this was a more wholesome way of serving the State than by abridging the liberty of the people in the choice of personal attire. Meantime the preachers were left to thunder from their pulpits upon the sinfulness of starched rues and ornamental top-knots, and to threaten their fair hearers with the wrath to come, with as much success as usually attends such eloquence.

There had been uneasiness in the provinces in regard to the designs of the queen, especially since the States had expressed their inability to comply in full with her demands for repayment. Spanish emissaries had been busily circulating calumnious reports that her Majesty was on the eve of concluding a secret peace with Philip, and that it was her intention to deliver the cautionary towns to the king. The Government attached little credence to such statements, but it was natural that Envoy Caron should be anxious at their perpetual recurrence both in England and in the provinces. So, one day, he had a long conversation with the Earl of Essex on the subject; for it will be recollected that Lord Leicester had strenuously attempted at an earlier day to get complete possession, not only of the pledged cities but of Leyden also, in order to control the whole country. Essex was aflame with indignation at once, and, expressed himself with his customary recklessness. He swore that if her Majesty were so far forsaken of God and so forgetful of her own glory, as through evil counsel to think of making any treaty with Spain without the knowledge of the States-General and in order to cheat them, he would himself make the matter as public as it was possible to do, and would place himself in direct opposition to such a measure, so as to show the whole world that his heart and soul

were foreign at least to any vile counsel of the kind that might have been given to his Sovereign. Caron and Essex conversed much in this vein, and although the envoy, especially requested him not to do so, the earl, who was not distinguished, for his powers of dissimulation, and who suspected Burleigh of again tampering, as he had often before tampered, with secret agents of Philip, went straight to the queen with the story. Next day, Essex invited Caron to dine and to go with him after dinner to the queen. This was done, and, so soon as the States' envoy was admitted to the royal presence, her Majesty at once opened the subject. She had heard, she said, that the reports in question had been spread through the provinces, and she expressed much indignation in regard to them. She swore very vehemently, as usual, and protested that she had better never have been born than prove so miserable a princess as these tales would make her. The histories of England, she said, should never describe her as guilty of such falsehood. She could find a more honourable and fitting means of making peace than by delivering up cities and strongholds so sincerely and confidingly placed in her hands. She hoped to restore them as faithfully as they had loyally been entrusted to her keeping. She begged Caron to acquaint the States-General with these asseverations; declaring that never since she had sent troops to the Netherlands had she lent her ear to those who had made such underhand propositions. She was aware that Cardinal Albert had propositions to make, and that he was desirous of inducing both the French king and, herself to consent to a peace with Spain: but she promised, the States' envoy solemnly before God to apprise him of any such overtures, so soon as they should be made known to herself.

Much more in this strain, with her usual vehemence and mighty oaths, did the great queen aver, and the republican envoy, to whom she was on this occasion very gracious, was fain to believe in her sincerity. Yet the remembrance of the amazing negotiations between the queen's ministers and the agents of Alexander Farnese, by which the invasion of the Armada had been masked; could not but have left an uneasy feeling in the mind of every Dutch statesman. "I trust in God," said Caron, "that He may never so abandon her as to permit her to do the reverse of what she now protests with so much passion. Should it be otherwise—which God forbid—I should think that He would send such chastisement upon her and her people that other princes would see their fate therein as in a mirror, should they make and break such oaths and promises. I tell you these things as they occur, because, as I often feel uneasiness myself, I imagine that my friends on the other side the water may be subject to the same anxiety. Nevertheless, beat the bush as I may, I can obtain no better information than this which I am now sending you."

It had been agreed that for a time the queen should desist from her demands for repayment—which, according to the Treaty of 1585, was to be made only after conclusion of peace between Spain and the provinces, but which Elizabeth was frequently urging on the ground that the States could now make that peace when they chose—and in return for such remission the republic promised to furnish twenty-four ships of war and four tenders for a naval expedition which was now projected against the Spanish coast. These war-ships were to be of four hundred, three hundred, and two hundred tons-eight of each dimension—and the estimated expense of their fitting out for five months was 512,796 florins.

Before the end of April, notwithstanding the disappointment occasioned in the Netherlands by the loss of Calais, which the States had so energetically striven to prevent, the fleet under Admiral John of Duvenwoord, Seigneur of Warmond, and Vice-Admirals Jan Gerbrantz and Cornelius Leusen, had arrived at Plymouth, ready to sail with their English allies. There were three thousand sailors of Holland and Zeeland on board, the best mariners in the world, and two thousand two hundred picked veterans from the garrisons of the Netherlands. These land-troops were English, but they belonged to the States' army, which was composed of Dutch, German, Walloon, Scotch, and Irish soldiers, and it was a liberal concession on the part of the republican Government to allow them to serve on the present expedition. By the terms of the treaty the queen had no more power to send these companies to invade Spain than to campaign against Tyr Owen in Ireland, while at a moment when the cardinal archduke had a stronger and better-appointed army in Flanders than had been seen for many years in the provinces, it was a most hazardous experiment for the States to send so considerable a portion of their land and naval forces upon a distant adventure. It was also a serious blow to them to be deprived for the whole season of that valiant and experienced commander, Sir Francis Vere, the most valuable lieutenant, save Lewis William, that Maurice had at his disposition. Yet Vere was to take command of this contingent thus sent to the coast of Spain, at the very moment when the republican army ought to issue from their winter quarters and begin active operations in the field. The consequence of this diminution of their strength and drain upon their resources was that the States were unable to put an army in the field during the current year, or make any attempt at a campaign.

The queen wrote a warm letter of thanks to Admiral Warmond for the promptness and efficiency with which he had brought his fleet to the place of rendezvous, and now all was bustle and preparation in the English ports for the exciting expedition resolved upon. Never during Philip's life-time, nor for several years before his birth, had a hostile foot trod the soil of Spain, except during the brief landing at Corunna in 1590, and, although the king's beard had been well singed ten years previously by Sir Francis Drake, and although the coast of Portugal had still more recently been invaded by Essex and Vere, yet the present adventure was on a larger scale, and held out brighter prospects of success than any preceding expedition had done. In an age when the line between the land and sea service, between regular campaigners and volunteers, between public and private warfare, between chivalrous knights-errant and buccaneers, was not very distinctly drawn, there could be nothing more exciting to adventurous spirits, more tempting to the imagination of those who hated the Pope and Philip, who loved fighting, prize-money, and the queen, than a foray into Spain.

It was time to return the visit of the Armada. Some of the sea-kings were gone. Those magnificent freebooters, Drake and Hawkins, had just died in the West Indies, and doughty Sir Roger Williams had left the world in which he had bustled so effectively, bequeathing to posterity a classic memorial of near a half century of hard fighting, written, one might almost imagine, in his demi-pique saddle. But that most genial, valiant, impracticable, reckless, fascinating hero of romance, the Earl of Essex—still a youth although a veteran in service—was in the spring-tide of favour and glory, and was to command the land-forces now assembled at Plymouth. That other "corsair"—as the Spaniards called him—that other charming and heroic shape in England's chequered chronicle of chivalry and crime—famous in arts and arms, politics, science, literature, endowed with so many of the gifts by which men confer lustre on their age and country, whose name was already a part of England's eternal glory, whose tragic destiny was to be her undying shame—

Raleigh, the soldier, sailor, scholar, statesman, poet, historian, geographical discoverer, planter of empires yet unborn—was also present, helping to organize the somewhat chaotic elements of which the chief Anglo-Dutch enterprise for this year against—the Spanish world-dominion was compounded.

And, again, it is not superfluous to recal the comparatively slender materials, both in bulk and numbers, over which the vivid intelligence and restless energy of the two leading Protestant powers, the Kingdom and the Republic, disposed. Their contest against the overshadowing empire, which was so obstinately striving to become the fifth-monarchy of history, was waged by land: and naval forces, which in their aggregate numbers would scarce make a startling list of killed and wounded in a single modern battle; by ships such that a whole fleet of them might be swept out of existence with half-a-dozen modern broadsides; by weapons which would seem to modern eyes like clumsy toys for children. Such was the machinery by which the world was to be lost and won, less than three centuries ago. Could science; which even in that age had made gigantic strides out of the preceding darkness, have revealed its later miracles, and have presented its terrible powers to the despotism which was seeking to crush all Christendom beneath its feet, the possible result might have been most tragical to humanity. While there are few inventions in morals, the demon Intellect is ever at his work, knowing no fatigue and scorning contentment in his restless demands upon the infinite Unknown. Yet moral truth remains unchanged, gradually through the ages extending its influence, and it is only by conformity to its simple and, eternal dictates that nations, like individuals, can preserve a healthful existence. In the unending warfare between right and wrong, between liberty and despotism; Evil has the advantage of rapidly assuming many shapes. It has been well said that constant vigilance is the price of liberty. The tendency of our own times, stimulated by scientific discoveries and their practical application, is to political consolidation, to the absorption of lesser communities in greater; just as disintegration was the leading characteristic of the darker ages. The scheme of Charlemagne to organize Europe into a single despotism was a brilliant failure because the forces which were driving human society into local and gradual reconstruction around various centres of crystallization: were irresistible to any countervailing enginry which the emperor had at his disposal. The attempt of Philip, eight centuries later, at universal monarchy, was frivolous, although he could dispose of material agencies which in the hands of Charlemagne might have made the dreams of Charlemagne possible. It was frivolous because the rising instinct of the age was for religious, political, and commercial freedom in a far intenser degree than those who lived in that age were themselves aware. A considerable republic had been evolved as it were involuntarily out of the necessities of the time almost without self-consciousness that it was a republic, and even against the desire of many who were guiding its destinies. And it found itself in constant combination with two monarchs, despotic at heart and of enigmatical or indifferent religious convictions, who yet reigned over peoples, largely influenced by enthusiasm for freedom. Thus liberty was preserved for the world; but, as the law of human progress would seem to be ever by a spiral movement, it; seems strange to the superficial observer not prone to generalizing, that Calvinism, which unquestionably was the hard receptacle in which the germ of human freedom was preserved in various countries and at different epochs, should have so often degenerated into tyranny. Yet notwithstanding the burning of Servetus at Geneva, and the hanging of Mary Dyer at Boston, it is certain that France, England, the Netherlands, and America, owe a large share of such political liberty as they have enjoyed to Calvinism. It may be possible for large masses of humanity to accept for ages the idea of one infallible Church, however tyrannical but the idea once admitted that there may be many churches; that what is called the State can be separated from what is called the Church; the plea of infallibility and of authority soon becomes ridiculous—a mere fiction of political or fashionable quackery to impose upon the uneducated or the unreflecting.

And now Essex, Raleigh and Howard, Vere, Warmond and Nassau were about to invade the shores of the despot who sat in his study plotting to annex England, Scotland, Ireland, France, the Dutch republic, and the German empire to the realms of Spain, Portugal, Naples, Milan, and the Eastern and Western Indies, over which he already reigned.

The fleet consisted of fifty-seven ships of war, of which twenty-four were Dutch vessels under Admiral Warmond, with three thousand sailors of Holland and Zeeland. Besides the sailors, there was a force of six thousand foot soldiers, including the English veterans from the Netherlands under Sir Francis Vere. There were also fifty transports laden with ammunition and stores. The expedition was under the joint command of Lord High Admiral Howard and of the Earl of Essex. Many noble and knightly volunteers, both from England and the republic, were on board, including, besides those already mentioned, Lord Thomas Howard, son of the Duke of Norfolk, Sir John Wingfield, who had commanded at Gertruydenburg, when it had been so treacherously surrendered to Farnese; Count Lewis Gunther of Nassau, who had so recently escaped from the disastrous fight with Mondragon in the Lippe, and was now continuing his education according to the plan laid down for him by his elder brother Lewis William; Nicolas Meetkerk, Peter Regesmortes, Don Christopher of Portugal, son of Don Antonio, and a host of other adventurers.

On the last day of June the expedition arrived off Cadiz. Next morning they found a splendid Spanish fleet in the harbour of that city, including four of the famous apostolic great galleons, St. Philip, St. Matthew, St. Thomas, and St. Andrew, with twenty or thirty great war-ships besides, and fifty-seven well-armed Indiamen, which were to be convoyed on their outward voyage, with a cargo estimated at twelve millions of ducats.

The St. Philip was the phenomenon of naval architecture of that day, larger and stronger than any ship before known. She was two thousand tons burthen, carried eighty-two bronze cannon, and had a crew of twelve hundred men. The other three apostles carried each fifty guns and four hundred men. The armament of the other war-ships varied from fifty-two to eighteen guns each. The presence of such a formidable force might have seemed a motive for discouragement, or at least of caution. On the contrary, the adventurers dashed at once upon their prey; thus finding a larger booty than they had dared to expect. There was but a brief engagement. At the outset a Dutch ship accidentally blew up, and gave much encouragement to the Spaniards. Their joy was but short-lived. Two of the great galleons were soon captured, the other two, the St. Philip and the St. Thomas, were run aground and burned. The rest of the war-ships were driven within the harbour, but were unable to prevent a landing of the enemy's forces. In the eagerness of the allies to seize the city, they unluckily allowed many of the Indiamen to effect their escape through the puente del Zuazzo, which had not been supposed a navigable passage for ships of such burthen. Nine hundred soldiers under Essex, and four hundred noble volunteers under Lewis Gunther of Nassau, now sprang on shore, and drove

some eleven hundred Spanish skirmishers back within the gates of the city, or into a bastion recently raised to fortify the point when the troops had landed. Young Nassau stormed the bulwark sword in hand, carried it at the first assault, and planted his colours on its battlement. It was the flag of William the Silent; for the republican banner was composed of the family colours of the founder of the new commonwealth. The blazonry of the proscribed and assassinated rebel waved at last defiantly over one of the chief cities of Spain. Essex and Nassau and all the rest then entered the city. There was little fighting. Twenty-five English and Hollanders were killed, and about as many Spaniards. Essex knighted about fifty gentlemen, Englishmen and Hollanders, in the square of Cadiz for their gallantry. Among the number were Lewis Gunther of Nassau, Admiral Warmond, and Peter Regesmortes. Colonel Nicolas Meetkerke was killed in the brief action, and Sir John Wingfield, who insisted in prancing about on horseback without his armour, defying the townspeople and neglecting the urgent appeal of Sir Francis Vere, was also slain. The Spanish soldiers, discouraged by the defeat of the ships on which they had relied for protection of the town, retreated with a great portion of the inhabitants into the citadel. Next morning the citadel capitulated without striking a blow, although there, were six thousand able-bodied, well-armed men within its walls. It was one of the most astonishing panics ever recorded. The great fleet, making a third of the king's navy, the city of Cadiz and its fortress, were surrendered to this audacious little force, which had only arrived off the harbour thirty-six hours before. The invaders had, however, committed a great mistake. They had routed, and, as it were, captured the Spanish galleons, but they had not taken possession of them, such had been their eagerness to enter the city. It was now agreed that the fleet should be ransomed for two million ducats, but the proud Duke of Medina Sidonia, who had already witnessed the destruction of one mighty armada, preferred that these splendid ships too should perish rather than that they should pay tribute to the enemy. Scorning the capitulation of the commandant of the citadel, he ordered the fleet to be set on fire. Thirty-two ships, most of them vessels of war of the highest class, were burned, with all their equipments. Twelve hundred cannon sunk at once to the bottom of the Bay of Cadiz, besides arms for five or six thousand men. At least one-third of Philip's effective navy was thus destroyed.

The victors now sacked the city very thoroughly, but the results were disappointing. A large portion of the portable wealth of the inhabitants, their gold and their jewelry, had been so cunningly concealed that, although half a dozen persons were tortured till they should reveal hidden treasures, not more than five hundred thousand ducats worth of-plunder was obtained. Another sum of equal amount having been levied upon the citizens; forty notable personages; among them eighteen ecclesiastical dignitaries, were carried off as hostages for its payment. The city was now set on fire by command of Essex in four different quarters. Especially the cathedral and other churches, the convents and the hospitals, were burned. It was perhaps not unnatural: that both Englishmen and Hollanders should be disposed to wreak a barbarous vengeance on everything representative of the Church which they abhorred, and from which such endless misery had issued to the uttermost corners of their own countries. But it is at any rate refreshing to record amid these acts of pillage and destruction, in which, as must ever be the case, the innocent and the lowly were made to suffer for the crimes of crowned and mitred culprits, that not many special acts of cruelty were committed upon individuals:

No man was murdered in cold blood, no woman was outraged. The beautiful city was left a desolate and blackened ruin, and a general levy of spoil was made for the benefit of the victors, but there was no infringement of the theory and practice of the laws of war as understood in that day or in later ages. It is even recorded that Essex ordered one of his soldiers, who was found stealing a woman's gown, to be hanged on the spot, but that, wearied by the intercession of an ecclesiastic of Cadiz, the canon Quesada, he consented at last to pardon the marauder.

It was the earnest desire of Essex to hold Cadiz instead of destroying it. With three thousand men, and with temporary supplies from the fleet, the place could be maintained against all comers; Holland and England together commanding the seas. Admiral Warmond and all the Netherlanders seconded the scheme, and offered at once to put ashore from their vessels food and munitions enough to serve two thousand men for two months. If the English admiral would do as much, the place might be afterwards supplied without limit and held till doomsday, a perpetual thorn in Philip's side. Sir Francis Vere was likewise warmly in favour of the project, but he stood alone. All the other Englishmen opposed it as hazardous, extravagant, and in direct contravention of the minute instructions of the queen. With a sigh or a curse for what he considered the superfluous caution of his royal mistress, and the exaggerated docility of Lord High Admiral Howard, Essex was fain to content himself with the sack and the conflagration, and the allied fleet sailed away from Cadiz.

On their way towards Lisbon they anchored off Faro, and landed a force, chiefly of Netherlanders, who expeditiously burned and plundered the place. When they reached the neighbourhood of Lisbon, they received information that a great fleet of Indiamen, richly laden, were daily expected from the Flemish islands, as the Azores were then denominated. Again Essex was vehemently disposed to steer at once for that station, in order to grasp so tempting a prize; again he was strenuously supported by the Dutch admiral and Yere, and again Lord Howard peremptorily interdicted the plan. It was contrary to his instructions and to his ideas of duty, he said, to risk so valuable a portion of her Majesty's fleet on so doubtful a venture. His ships were not fitted for a winter's cruise, he urged. Thus, although it was the very heart of midsummer, the fleet was ordered to sail homeward. The usual result of a divided command was made manifest, and it proved in the sequel that, had they sailed for the islands, they would have pounced at exactly the right moment upon an unprotected fleet of merchantmen, with cargoes valued at seven millions of ducats. Essex, not being willing to undertake the foray to the Azores with the Dutch ships alone, was obliged to digest his spleen as: best he could. Meantime the English fleet bore away for England, leaving Essex in his own ship, together with the two captured Spanish galleons, to his fate. That fate might, have been a disastrous one, for his prizes were not fully manned, his own vessel was far from powerful, and there were many rovers and cruisers upon the seas. The Dutch admiral, with all his ships, however, remained in company, and safely convoyed him to Plymouth, where they arrived only a day or two later than Howard and his fleet. Warmond, who had been disposed to sail up the Thames in order to pay his respects to the queen, was informed that his presence would not be desirable but rather an embarrassment. He, however, received the following letter from the hand of Elizabeth.

MONSIEUR DUYENWOORD,—The report made to me by the generals of our fleet, just happily arrived from the coast of Spain, of the devoirs of those who have been partakers in so, famous a victory, ascribes so much of it to the valour, skill, and readiness exhibited by yourself and our other friends from the Netherlands under your command, during the whole course of the expedition, as to fill our mind with special joy and satisfaction, and, with a desire to impart these feelings to you. No other means presenting themselves at this moment than that of a letter (in some sense darkening the picture of the conceptions of our soul), we are willing to make use of it while waiting for means more effectual. Wishing thus to disburthen ourselves we find ourselves confused, not knowing where to begin, the greatness of each part exceeding the merit of the other. For, the vigour and promptness with which my lords the States-General stepped into the enterprise, made us acknowledge that the good favour, which we have always borne the United Provinces and the proofs thereof which we have given in the benefits conferred by us upon them, had not been ill-bestowed. The valour, skill, and discipline manifested by you in this enterprise show that you and your whole nation are worthy the favour and protection of princes against those who wish to tyrannize over you. But the honourableness and the valour shown by you, Sir Admiral, towards our cousin the Earl of Essex on his return, when he unfortunately was cut off from the fleet, and deep in the night was deprived of all support, when you kept company with him and gave him escort into the harbour of Plymouth, demonstrate on the one hand your foresight in providing thus by your pains and patience against all disasters, which through an accident falling upon one of the chiefs of our armada might have darkened the great victory; and on the other hand the fervour and fire of the affection which you bear us, increasing thus, through a double bond, the obligations we are owing you, which is so great in our hearts that we have felt bound to discharge a part of it by means of this writing, which we beg you to communicate to the whole company of our friends under your command; saying to them besides, that they may feel assured that even as we have before given proof of our goodwill to their fatherland, so henceforth—incited by their devoirs and merits—we are ready to extend our bounty and affection in all ways which may become a princess recompensing the virtues and gratitude of a nation so worthy as yours.

"ELIZABETH R.

"14th August, 1596."

This letter was transmitted by the admiral to the States-General; who, furnished him with a copy of it, but enrolled the original in their archives; recording as it did, in the hand of the great English queen, so striking a testimony to the valour and the good conduct of Netherlanders.

The results of this expedition were considerable, for the king's navy was crippled, a great city was destroyed, and some millions of plunder had been obtained. But the permanent possession of Cadiz, which, in such case, Essex hoped to exchange for Calais, and the destruction of the fleet at the Azores—possible achievements both, and unwisely neglected—would have been far more profitable, at least to England. It was also matter of deep regret that there was much quarrelling between the Netherlanders and the Englishmen as to their respective share of the spoils; the Netherlanders complaining loudly that they had been defrauded. Moreover the merchants of Middelburg, Amsterdam, and other commercial cities of Holland and Zeeland were, as it proved, the real owners of a large portion of the property destroyed or pillaged at Cadiz; so that a loss estimated as high as three hundred thousand florins fell upon those unfortunate traders through this triumph of the allies.

The internal consequences of the fall of Calais had threatened at the first moment to be as disastrous as the international results of that misfortune had already proved. The hour for the definite dismemberment and partition of the French kingdom, not by foreign conquerors but among its own self-seeking and disloyal grandees, seemed to have struck. The indomitable Henry, ever most buoyant when most pressed by misfortune, was on the way to his camp at La Fere, encouraging the faint-hearted, and providing as well as he could for the safety of the places most menaced, when he was met at St. Quentin by a solemn deputation of the principal nobles, military commanders, and provincial governors of France. The Duke of Montpensier was spokesman of the assembly, and, in an harangue carefully prepared for the occasion, made an elaborate proposition to the king that the provinces, districts, cities, castles; and other strong-holds throughout the kingdom should now be formally bestowed upon the actual governors and commandants thereof in perpetuity, and as hereditary property, on condition of rendering a certain military service to the king and his descendants. It seemed so amazing that this temporary disaster to the national arms should be used as a pretext for parcelling out France, and converting a great empire into a number of insignificant duchies and petty principalities; that this movement should be made, not by the partisans of Spain, but by the adherents of the king; and that its leader should be his own near relative, a prince of the blood, and a possible successor to the crown, that Henry was struck absolutely dumb. Misinterpreting his silence, the duke proceeded very confidently with his well-conned harangue; and was eloquently demonstrating that, under such a system, Henry, as principal feudal chief, would have greater military forces at his disposal whenever he chose to summon his faithful vassals to the field than could be the case while the mere shadow of royal power or dignity was allowed to remain; when the king, finding at last a tongue, rebuked his cousin; not angrily, but with a grave melancholy which was more impressive than wrath.

He expressed his pity for the duke that designing intriguers should have thus taken advantage of his facility of character to cause him to enact a part so entirely unworthy a Frenchman, a gentleman, and a prince of the blood. He had himself, at the outset of his career, been much farther from the throne than Montpensier was at that moment; but at no period of his life would he have consented to disgrace himself by attempting the dismemberment of the realm. So far from entering for a moment into the subject-matter of the duke's discourse, he gave him and all his colleagues distinctly to understand that he would rather die a thousand deaths than listen to suggestions which would cover his family and the royal dignity with infamy.

Rarely has political cynicism been displayed in more revolting shape than in this deliberate demonstration by the leading patricians and generals of France, to whom patriotism seemed an unimaginable idea. Thus signally was their greediness to convert a national disaster into personal profit rebuked by the king. Henry was no respecter of the People, which he regarded as something immeasurably below his feet. On the

contrary, he was the most sublime self-seeker of them all; but his courage, his intelligent ambition, his breadth and strength of purpose, never permitted him to doubt that his own greatness was inseparable from the greatness of France. Thus he represented a distinct and wholesome principle—the national integrity of a great homogeneous people at a period when that integrity seemed, through domestic treason and foreign hatred, to be hopelessly lost. Hence it is not unnatural that he should hold his place in the national chronicle as Henry the Great.

Meantime, while the military events just recorded had been occurring in the southern peninsula, the progress of the archduke and his lieutenants in the north against the king and against the republic had been gratifying to the ambition of that martial ecclesiastic. Soon after the fall of Calais, De Rosne had seized the castles of Guynes and Hames, while De Mexia laid siege to the important stronghold of Ardres. The garrison, commanded by Count Belin, was sufficiently numerous and well supplied to maintain the place until Henry, whose triumph at La Fere could hardly be much longer delayed, should come to its relief. To the king's infinite dissatisfaction, however, precisely as Don Alvario de Osorio was surrendering La Fere to him, after a seven months' siege, Ardres was capitulating to De Mexia. The reproaches upon Belin for cowardice, imbecility, and bad faith, were bitter and general. All his officers had vehemently protested against the surrender, and Henry at first talked of cutting off his head. It was hardly probable, however—had the surrender been really the result of treachery—that the governor would have put himself, as he did at once in the king's power; for the garrison marched out of Ardres with the commandant at their head, banners displayed, drums beating, matches lighted and bullet in mouth, twelve hundred fighting men strong, besides invalids. Belin was possessed of too much influence, and had the means of rendering too many pieces of service to the politic king, whose rancour against Spain was perhaps not really so intense as was commonly supposed, to meet with the condign punishment which might have been the fate of humbler knaves.

These successes having been obtained in Normandy, the cardinal with a force of nearly fifteen thousand men now took the field in Flanders; and, after hesitating for a time whether he should attack Breda, Bergen, Ostend, or Gertruydenburg,—and after making occasional feints in various directions, came, towards the end of June, before Hulst. This rather insignificant place, with a population of but one thousand inhabitants, was defended by a strong garrison under command of that eminent and experienced officer Count Everard Solms. Its defences were made more complete by a system of sluices, through which the country around could be laid under water; and Maurice, whose capture of the town in the year 1591 had been one of his earliest military achievements, was disposed to hold it at all hazards. He came in person to inspect the fortifications, and appeared to be so eager on the subject, and so likely to encounter unnecessary hazards, that the States of Holland passed a resolution imploring him "that he would not, in his heroic enthusiasm and laudable personal service, expose a life on which the country so much depended to manifest dangers." The place was soon thoroughly invested, and the usual series of minings and counter-minings, assaults, and sorties followed, in the course of which that courageous and corpulent renegade, De Rosne, had his head taken off by a cannon-ball, while his son, a lad of sixteen, was fighting by his side. On the 16th August the cardinal formally demanded the surrender of the place, and received the magnanimous reply that Hulst would be defended to the death. This did not, however, prevent the opening of negotiations the very same day. All the officers, save one, united in urging Solms to capitulate; and Solms, for somewhat mysterious reasons, and, as was stated, in much confusion, gave his consent. The single malcontent was the well-named Matthew Held, whose family name meant Hero, and who had been one of the chief actors in the far-famed capture of Breda. He was soon afterwards killed in an unsuccessful attack made by Maurice upon Venlo.

Hulst capitulated on the 18th August. The terms were honourable; but the indignation throughout the country against Count Solms was very great. The States of Zeeland, of whose regiment he had been commander ever, since the death of Sir Philip Sidney, dismissed him from their service, while a torrent of wrath flowed upon him from every part of the country. Members of the States-General refused to salute him in the streets; eminent person, ages turned their backs upon him, and for a time there was no one willing to listen to a word in his defence. The usual reaction in such cases followed; Maurice sustained the commander, who had doubtless committed a grave error, but who had often rendered honourable service to the republic, and the States-General gave him a command as important as that of which he had been relieved by the Zeeland States. It was mainly on account of the tempest thus created within the Netherlands, that an affair of such slight importance came to occupy so large a space in contemporary history. The defenders of Solmstold wild stories about the losses of the besieging army. The cardinal, who was thought prodigal of blood, and who was often quoted as saying "his soldiers' lives belonged to God and their bodies to the king," had sacrificed, it, was ridiculously said, according to the statement of the Spaniards themselves, five thousand soldiers before the walls of Hulst. It was very logically deduced therefrom that the capture of a few more towns of a thousand inhabitants each would cost him his whole army. People told each other, too, that the conqueror had refused a triumph which the burghers of Brussels wished to prepare for him on his entrance into the capital, and that he had administered the very proper rebuke that, if they had more money than they knew what to do with, they should expend it in aid of the wounded and of the families of the fallen, rather than in velvets and satins and triumphal arches. The humanity of the suggestion hardly tallied with the blood-thirstiness of which he was at the same time so unjustly accused—although it might well be doubted whether the commander-in-chief, even if he could witness unflinchingly the destruction of five thousand soldiers on the battle-field, would dare to confront a new demonstration of schoolmaster Houwaerts and his fellow-pedants.

The fact was, however, that the list of casualties in the cardinal's camp during the six weeks' siege amounted to six hundred, while the losses within the city were at least as many. There was no attempt to relieve the place; for the States, as before observed, had been too much cramped by the strain upon their resources and by the removal of so many veterans for the expedition against Cadiz to be able to muster any considerable forces in the field during the whole of this year.

For a vast war in which the four leading powers of the earth were engaged, the events, to modern eyes, of the campaign of 1596 seem sufficiently meagre. Meantime, during all this campaigning by land and sea in the west, there had been great but profitless bloodshed in the east. With difficulty did the holy Roman Empire withstand the terrible, ever-renewed assaults of the unholy realm of Ottoman—then in the full flush of its

power—but the two empires still counterbalanced each other, and contended with each other at the gates of Vienna.

As the fighting became more languid, however, in the western part of Christendom, the negotiations and intrigues grew only the more active. It was most desirable for the republic to effect, if possible, a formal alliance offensive and defensive with France and England against Spain. The diplomacy of the Netherlands had been very efficient in bringing about the declaration of war by Henry against Philip, by which the current year had opened, after Henry and Philip had been doing their best to destroy each other and each other's subjects during the half-dozen previous years. Elizabeth, too, although she had seen her shores invaded by Philip with the most tremendous armaments that had ever floated on the seas, and although she had herself just been sending fire and sword into the heart of Spain, had very recently made the observation that she and Philip were not formally at war with each other. It seemed, therefore, desirable to the States-General that this very practical warfare should be, as it were, reduced to a theorem. In this case the position of the republic to both powers and to Spain itself might perhaps be more accurately defined.

Calvaert, the States' envoy—to use his own words—haunted Henry like his perpetual shadow, and was ever doing his best to persuade him of the necessity of this alliance. De Saucy, as we have seen, had just arrived in England, when the cool proposition of the queen to rescue Calais from Philip on condition of keeping it for herself had been brought to Boulogne by Sidney. Notwithstanding the indignation of the king, he had been induced directly afterwards to send an additional embassy to Elizabeth, with the Duke of Bouillon at its head; and he had insisted upon Calvaert's accompanying the mission. He had, as he frequently observed, no secrets from the States-General, or from Calvaert, who had been negotiating upon these affairs for two years past and was so well acquainted with all their bearings. The Dutch envoy was reluctant to go, for he was seriously ill and very poor in purse, but Henry urged the point so vehemently, that Calvaert found himself on board ship within six hours of the making of the proposition. The incident shows of how much account the republican diplomatist was held by so keen a judge of mankind as the Bearnese; but it will subsequently appear that the candour of the king towards the States-General and their representative was by no means without certain convenient limitations.

De Sancy had arrived just as—without his knowledge—Sidney had been despatched across the channel with the brief mission already mentioned. When he was presented to the queen, the next day, she excused herself for the propositions by which Henry had been so much enraged, by assuring the envoy that it had been her intention only to keep Calais out of the enemy's hand, so long as the king's forces were too much occupied at a distance to provide for its safety. As diplomatic conferences were about to begin in which—even more than in that age, at least, was usually the case—the object of the two conferring powers was to deceive each other, and at the same time still more decidedly to defraud other states, Sancy accepted the royal explanation, although Henry's special messenger, Lomenie, had just brought him from the camp at Boulogne a minute account of the propositions of Sidney.

The envoy had, immediately afterwards, an interview with Lord Burghley, and at once perceived that he was no friend to his master. Cecil observed that the queen had formerly been much bound to the king for religion's sake. As this tie no longer existed, there was nothing now to unite them save the proximity of the two States to each other and their ancient alliances, a bond purely of interest which existed only so long as princes found therein a special advantage.

De Sancy replied that the safety of the two crowns depended upon their close alliance against a very powerful foe who was equally menacing to them both. Cecil rejoined that he considered the Spaniards deserving of the very highest praise for having been able to plan so important an enterprise, and to have so well deceived the King of France by the promptness and the secrecy of their operations as to allow him to conceive no suspicion as to their designs.

To this not very friendly sarcasm the envoy, indignant that France should thus be insulted in her misfortunes, exclaimed that he prayed to God that the affairs of Englishmen might never be reduced to such a point as to induce the world to judge by the result merely, as to the sagacity of their counsels. He added that there were many passages through which to enter France, and that it was difficult to be present everywhere, in order to defend them all against the enemy.

A few days afterwards the Duke of Bouillon arrived in London. He had seen Lord Essex at Dover as he passed, and had endeavoured without success to dissuade him from his expedition against the Spanish coast. The conferences opened on the 7th May, at Greenwich, between Burghley, Cobham, the Lord Chamberlain, and one or two other commissioners on the part of the queen, and Bouillon, Sancy, Du Yair, and Ancel, as plenipotentiaries of Henry.

There was the usual indispensable series of feints at the outset, as if it were impossible for statesmen to meet around a green table except as fencers in the field or pugilists in the ring.

"We have nothing to do," said Burghley, "except to listen to such propositions as may be made on the part of the king, and to repeat them to her Highness the queen."

"You cannot be ignorant," replied Bouillon, "of the purpose for which we have been sent hither by his Very Christian Majesty. You know very well that it is to conclude a league with England. 'Tis necessary, therefore, for the English to begin by declaring whether they are disposed to enter into such an alliance. This point once settled, the French can make their propositions, but it would be idle to dispute about the conditions of a treaty, if there is after all no treaty to be made."

To this Cecil rejoined, that, if the king were reduced to the necessity of asking succour from the queen, and of begging for her alliance, it was necessary for them, on the other hand, to see what he was ready to do for the queen in return, and to learn what advantage she could expect from the league.

The duke said that the English statesmen were perfectly aware of the French intention of proposing a league against the common enemy of both nations, and that it would be unquestionably for the advantage of both to unite their forces for a vigorous attack upon Spain, in which case it would be more difficult for the Spanish to resist them than if each were acting separately. It was no secret that the Spaniards would rather attack England than France, because their war against England, being coloured by a religious motive, would

be much less odious, and would even have a specious pretext. Moreover the conquest of England would give them an excellent vantage ground to recover what they had lost in the Netherlands. If, on the contrary, the enemy should throw himself with his whole force upon France, the king, who would perhaps lose many places at once, and might hardly be able to maintain himself single-handed against domestic treason and a concentrated effort on the part of Spain, would probably find it necessary to make a peace with that power. Nothing could be more desirable for Spain than such a result, for she would then be free to attack England and Holland, undisturbed by any fear of France. This was a piece of advice, the duke said, which the king offered, in the most friendly spirit, and as a proof of his affection, to her Majesty's earnest consideration.

Burghley replied that all this seemed to him no reason for making a league. "What more can the queen do," he observed, "than she is already doing? She has invaded Spain by land and sea, she has sent troops to Spain, France, and the Netherlands; she has lent the king fifteen hundred thousand crowns in gold. In short, the envoys ought rather to be studying how to repay her Majesty for her former benefits than to be soliciting fresh assistance." He added that the king was so much stronger by the recent gain of Marseilles as to be easily able to bear the loss of places of far less importance, while Ireland, on the contrary, was a constant danger to the queen. The country was already in a blaze, on account of the recent landing effected there by the Spaniards, and it was a very ancient proverb among the English, that to attack England it was necessary to take the road of Ireland.

Bouillon replied that in this war there was much difference between the position of France and that of England. The queen, notwithstanding hostilities, obtained her annual revenue as usual, while the king was cut off from his resources and obliged to ruin his kingdom in order to wage war. Sancy added, that it must be obvious to the English ministers that the peril of Holland was likewise the peril of England and of France, but that at the same time they could plainly see that the king, if not succoured, would be forced to a peace with Spain. All his counsellors were urging him to this, and it was the interest of all his neighbours to prevent such a step. Moreover, the proposed league could not but be advantageous to the English; whether by restraining the Spaniards from entering England, or by facilitating a combined attack upon the common enemy. The queen might invade any portion of the Flemish coast at her pleasure, while the king's fleet could sail with troops from his ports to prevent any attack upon her realms.

At this Burghley turned to his colleagues and said, in English, "The French are acting according to the proverb; they wish to sell us the bear-skin before they have killed the bear." Sancy, who understood English, rejoined, "We have no bear-skin to sell, but we are giving you a very good and salutary piece of advice. It is for you to profit by it as you may."

"Where are these ships of war, of which you were speaking?" asked Burghley.

"They are at Rochelle, at Bordeaux, and at St. Malo," replied de Sancy.

"And these ports are not in the king's possession," said the Lord Treasurer.

The discussion was growing warm. The Duke of Bouillon, in order to, put an end to it, said that what England had most to fear was a descent by Spain upon her coasts, and that the true way to prevent this was to give occupation to Philip's army in Flanders. The soldiers in the fleet then preparing were raw levies with which he would not venture to assail her kingdom. The veterans in Flanders were the men on whom he relied for that purpose. Moreover the queen, who had great influence with the States-General, would procure from them a prohibition of all commerce between the provinces and Spain; all the Netherlands would be lost to Philip, his armies would disperse of their own accord; the princes of Italy, to whom the power of Spain was a perpetual menace, would secretly supply funds to the allied powers, and the Germans, declared enemies of Philip, would furnish troops.

Burghley asserted confidently that this could never be obtained from the Hollanders, who lived by commerce alone. Upon which Saucy, wearied with all these difficulties, interrupted the Lord Treasurer by exclaiming, "If the king is to expect neither an alliance nor any succour on your part, he will be very much obliged to the queen if she will be good enough to inform him of the decision taken by her, in order that he may, upon his side, take the steps most suitable to the present position of his affairs."

The session then terminated. Two days afterwards, in another conference, Burghley offered three thousand men on the part of the queen, on condition that they should be raised at the king's expense, and that they should not leave England until they had received a month's pay in advance.

The Duke of Bouillon said this was far from being what had been expected of the generosity of her Majesty, that if the king had money he would find no difficulty in raising troops in Switzerland and Germany, and that there was a very great difference between hired princes and allies. The English ministers having answered that this was all the queen could do, the duke and Saucy rose in much excitement, saying that they had then no further business than to ask for an audience of leave, and to return to France as fast as possible.

Before they bade farewell to the queen, however, the envoys sent a memoir to her Majesty, in which they set forth that the first proposition as to a league had been made by Sir Henry Umton, and that now, when the king had sent commissioners to treat concerning an alliance, already recommended by the queen's ambassador in France, they had been received in such a way as to indicate a desire to mock them rather than to treat with them. They could not believe, they said, that it was her Majesty's desire to use such language as had been addressed to them, and they therefore implored her plainly to declare her intentions, in order that they might waste no more time unnecessarily, especially as the high offices with which their sovereign had honoured them did not allow them to remain for a long time absent from France.

The effect of this memoir upon the queen was, that fresh conferences were suggested, which took place at intervals between the 11th and the 26th of May. They were characterized by the same mutual complaints of overreachings and of shortcomings by which all the previous discussions had been distinguished. On the 17th May the French envoys even insisted on taking formal farewell of the queen, and were received by her Majesty for that purpose at a final audience. After they had left the presence—the preparations for their homeward journey being already made—the queen sent Sir Robert Cecil, Henry Brooke, son of Lord Cobham, and La Fontaine, minister of a French church in England, to say to them how very much mortified she was that the state of her affairs did not permit her to give the king as much assistance as he desired, and to

express her wish to speak to them once more before their departure.

The result of the audience given accordingly to the envoys, two days later, was the communication of her decision to enter into the league proposed, but without definitely concluding the treaty until it should be ratified by the king.

On the 26th May articles were finally agreed upon, by which the king and queen agreed to defend each other's dominions, to unite in attacking the common enemy, and to invite other princes and states equally interested with themselves in resisting the ambitious projects of Spain, to join in the league. It was arranged that an army should be put in the field as soon as possible, at the expense of the king and queen, and of such other powers as should associate themselves in the proposed alliance; that this army should invade the dominions of the Spanish monarch, that the king and queen were never, without each other's consent, to make peace or truce with Philip; that the queen should immediately raise four thousand infantry to serve six months of every year in Picardy and Normandy, with the condition that they were never to be sent to a distance of more than fifty leagues from Boulogna; that when the troubles of Ireland should be over the queen should be at liberty to add new troops to the four thousand men thus promised by her to the league; that the queen was to furnish to these four thousand men six months' pay in advance before they should leave England, and that the king should agree to repay the amount six months afterwards, sending meanwhile four nobles to England as hostages. If the dominions of the queen should be attacked it was stipulated that, at two months' notice, the king should raise four thousand men at the expense of the queen and send them to her assistance, and that they were to serve for six months at her charge, but were not to be sent to a distance of more than fifty leagues from the coasts of France.

The English were not willing that the States-General should be comprehended among the powers to be invited to join the league, because being under the protection of the Queen of England they were supposed to have no will but hers. Burghley insisted accordingly that, in speaking of those who were thus to be asked, no mention was to be made of peoples nor of states, for fear lest the States-General might be included under those terms. The queen was, however, brought at last to yield the point, and consented, in order to satisfy the French envoys, that to the word princes should be added the general expression orders or estates. The obstacle thus interposed to the formation of the league by the hatred of the queen and of the privileged classes of England to popular liberty, and by the secret desire entertained of regaining that sovereignty over the provinces which had been refused ten years before by Elizabeth, was at length set aside. The republic, which might have been stifled at its birth, was now a formidable fact, and could neither be annexed to the English dominions nor deprived of its existence as a new member of the European family.

It being no longer possible to gainsay the presence of the young commonwealth among the nations, the next best thing—so it was thought—was to defraud her in the treaty to which she was now invited to accede. This, as it will presently appear, the King of France and the Queen of England succeeded in doing very thoroughly, and they accomplished it notwithstanding the astuteness and the diligence of the States' envoy, who at Henry's urgent request had accompanied the French mission to England. Calvaert had been very active in bringing about the arrangement, to assist in which he had, as we have seen, risen from a sick bed and made the journey to England: "The proposition for an offensive and defensive alliance was agreed to by her Majesty's Council, but under intolerable and impracticable conditions," said he, "and, as such, rejected by the duke and Sancy, so that they took leave of her Majesty. At last, after some negotiation in which, without boasting, I may say that I did some service, it was again taken in hand, and at last, thank God, although with much difficulty, the league has been concluded."

When the task was finished the French envoys departed to obtain their master's ratification of the treaty. Elizabeth expressed herself warmly in regard to her royal brother, inviting him earnestly to pay her a visit, in which case she said she would gladly meet him half way; for a sight of him would be her only consolation in the midst of her adversity and annoyance. "He may see other princesses of a more lovely appearance," she added, "but he will never make a visit to a more faithful friend."

But the treaty thus concluded was for the public. The real agreement between France and England was made by a few days later, and reduced the ostensible arrangement to a sham, a mere decoy to foreign nations, especially to the Dutch republic, to induce them to imitate England in joining the league, and to emulate her likewise in affording that substantial assistance to the league which in reality England was very far from giving.

"Two contracts were made," said Secretary of State Villeroy; "the one public, to give credit and reputation to the said league, the other secret, which destroyed the effects and the promises of the first. By the first his Majesty was to be succoured by four thousand infantry, which number was limited by the second contract to two thousand, who were to reside and to serve only in the cities of Boulogne and Montreuil, assisted by an equal number of French, and not otherwise, and on condition of not being removed from those towns unless his Majesty should be personally present in Picardy with an army, in which case they might serve in Picardy, but nowhere else."

An English garrison in a couple of French seaports, over against the English coast, would hardly have seemed a sufficient inducement to other princes and states to put large armies in the field to sustain the Protestant league, had they known that this was the meagre result of the protocolling and disputations that had been going on all the summer at Greenwich.

Nevertheless the decoy did its work, The envoys returned to France, and it was not until three months later that the Duke of Bouillon again made his appearance in England, bringing the treaty duly ratified by Henry. The league was then solemnized, on, the 26th August, by the queen with much pomp and ceremony. Three peers of the realm waited upon the French ambassador at his lodgings, and escorted him and his suite in seventeen royal coaches to the Tower. Seven splendid barges then conveyed them along the Thames to Greenwich. On the pier the ambassador was received by the Earl of Derby at the head of a great suite of nobles and high functionaries, and conducted to the palace of Nonesuch.

There was a religious ceremony in the royal chapel, where a special pavilion had been constructed. Standing, within this sanctuary, the queen; with her hand on her breast, swore faithfully to maintain the

league just concluded. She then gave her hand to the Duke of Bouillon, who held it in both his own, while psalms were sung and the organ resounded through the chapel. Afterwards there was a splendid banquet in the palace, the duke sitting in solitary grandeur at the royal table, being placed at a respectful distance from her Majesty, and the dishes being placed on the board by the highest nobles of the realm, who, upon their knees, served the queen with wine. No one save the ambassador sat at Elizabeth's table, but in the same hall was spread another, at which the Earl of Essex entertained many distinguished guests, young Count Lewis Gunther of Nassau among the number.

In the midsummer twilight the brilliantly decorated barges were again floating on the historic river, the gaily-coloured lanterns lighting the sweep of the oars, and the sound of lute and viol floating merrily across the water. As the ambassador came into the courtyard of his house, he found a crowd of several thousand people assembled, who shouted welcome to the representative of Henry, and invoked blessings on the head of Queen Elizabeth and of her royal brother of France. Meanwhile all the bells of London were ringing, artillery was thundering, and bonfires were blazing, until the night was half spent.

Such was the holiday-making by which the league between the great Protestant queen and the ex-chief of the Huguenots of France was celebrated within a year after the pope had received him, a repentant sinner, into the fold of the Church. Truly it might be said that religion was rapidly ceasing to be the line of demarcation among the nations, as had been the case for the two last generations of mankind.

The Duke of Bouillon soon afterwards departed for the Netherlands, where the regular envoy to the commonwealth, Paul Chouart Seigneur de Buzanval, had already been preparing the States-General for their entrance into the league. Of course it was duly impressed upon those republicans that they should think themselves highly honoured by the privilege of associating themselves with so august an alliance. The queen wrote an earnest letter to the States, urging them to join the league. "Especially should you do so," she said, "on account of the reputation which you will thereby gain for your affairs with the people who are under you, seeing you thus sustained (besides the certainty which you have of our favour) by the friendship of other confederated princes, and particularly by that of the most Christian king."

On the 31st October the articles of agreement under which the republic acceded to the new confederation were signed at the Hague. Of course it was not the exact counterpart of the famous Catholic association. Madam League, after struggling feebly for the past few years, a decrepit beldame, was at last dead and buried. But there had been a time when she was filled with exuberant and terrible life. She, at least, had known the object of her creation, and never, so long as life was in her, had she faltered in her dread purpose. To extirpate Protestantism, to murder Protestants, to burn, hang, butcher, bury them alive, to dethrone every Protestant sovereign in Europe, especially to assassinate the Queen of England, the Prince of Orange, with all his race, and Henry of Navarre, and to unite in the accomplishment of these simple purposes all the powers of Christendom under the universal monarchy of Philip of Spain—for all this, blood was shed in torrents, and the precious metals of the "Indies" squandered as fast as the poor savages, who were thus taking their first lessons in the doctrines of Jesus of Nazareth, could dig it from the mines. For this America had been summoned, as it were by almighty fiat, out of previous darkness, in order that it might furnish money with which to massacre all the heretics of the earth. For this great purpose was the sublime discovery of the Genoese sailor to be turned to account. These aims were intelligible, and had in part been attained. William of Orange had fallen, and a patent of nobility, with a handsome fortune, had been bestowed upon his assassin. Elizabeth's life had been frequently attempted. So had those of Henry, of Maurice, of Olden-Barneveld. Divine providence might perhaps guide the hand of future murderers with greater accuracy, for even if Madam League were dead, her ghost still walked among the Jesuits and summoned them to complete the crimes left yet unfinished.

But what was the design of the new confederacy? It was not a Protestant league. Henry of Navarre could no longer be the chief of such an association, although it was to Protestant powers only that he could turn for assistance. It was to the commonwealth of the Netherlands, to the northern potentates and to the Calvinist and Lutheran princes of Germany, that the king and queen could alone appeal in their designs against Philip of Spain.

The position of Henry was essentially a false one from the beginning. He felt it to be so, and the ink was scarce dry with which he signed the new treaty before he was secretly casting about him to, make peace with that power with which he was apparently summoning all the nations of the earth to do battle. Even the cautious Elizabeth was deceived by the crafty Bearnese, while both united to hoodwink the other states and princes.

On the 31st October, accordingly, the States-General agreed to go into the league with England and France; "in order to resist the enterprises and ambitious designs of the King of Spain against all the princes and potentates of Christendom." As the queen had engaged—according to the public treaty or decoy—to furnish four thousand infantry to the league, the States now agreed to raise and pay for another four thousand to be maintained in the king's service at a cost of four hundred and fifty thousand florins annually, to be paid by the month. The king promised, in case the Netherlands should be invaded by the enemy with the greater part of his force, that these four thousand soldiers should return to the Netherlands. The king further bound himself to carry on a sharp offensive war in Artois and Hainault.

The States-General would have liked a condition inserted in the treaty that no peace should be made with Spain by England or France without the consent of the provinces; but this was peremptorily refused.

Perhaps the republic had no special reason to be grateful for the grudging and almost contemptuous manner in which it had thus been virtually admitted into the community of sovereigns; but the men who directed its affairs were far too enlightened not to see how great a step was taken when their political position, now conceded to them, had been secured. In good faith they intended to carry out the provisions of the new treaty, and they immediately turned their attention to the vital matters of making new levies and of imposing new taxes, by means of which they might render themselves useful to their new allies.

Meantime Ancel was deputed by Henry to visit the various courts of Germany and the north in order to obtain, if possible, new members for the league? But Germany was difficult to rouse. The dissensions among

Protestants were ever inviting the assaults of the Papists. Its multitude of sovereigns were passing their leisure moments in wrangling among themselves as usual on abstruse points of theology, and devoting their serious hours to banquetting, deep drinking, and the pleasures of the chase. The jeremiads of old John of Nassau grew louder than ever, but his voice was of one crying in the wilderness. The wrath to come of that horrible Thirty Years' War, which he was not to witness seemed to inspire all his prophetic diatribes. But there were few to heed them. Two great dangers seemed ever impending over Christendom, and it is difficult to decide which fate would have been the more terrible, the establishment of the universal monarchy of Philip II., or the conquest of Germany by the Grand Turk. But when Ancel and other emissaries sought to obtain succour against the danger from the south-west, he was answered by the clash of arms and the shrieks of horror which came daily from the south-east. In vain was it urged, and urged with truth, that the Alcoran was less cruel than the Inquisition, that the soil of Europe might be overrun by Turks and Tartars, and the crescent planted triumphantly in every village, with less disaster to the human race, and with better hope that the germs of civilization and the precepts of Christianity might survive the invasion, than if the system of Philip, of Torquemada, and of Alva, should become the universal law. But the Turk was a frank enemy of Christianity, while Philip murdered Christians in the name of Christ. The distinction imposed upon the multitudes, with whom words were things. Moreover, the danger from the young and enterprising Mahomet seemed more appalling to the imagination than the menace, from which experience had taken something of its terrors, of the old and decrepit Philip.

The Ottoman empire, in its exact discipline, in its terrible concentration of purpose, in its contempt for all arts and sciences, and all human occupation save the trade of war and the pursuit of military dominion, offered a strong contrast to the distracted condition of the holy Roman empire, where an intellectual and industrious people, distracted by half a century of religious controversy and groaning under one of the most elaborately perverse of all the political systems ever invented by man, seemed to offer itself an easy prey to any conqueror. The Turkish power was in the fulness of its aggressive strength, and seemed far more formidable than it would have done had there been clearer perceptions of what constitutes the strength and the wealth of nations. Could the simple truth have been thoroughly, comprehended that a realm founded upon such principles was the grossest of absurdities, the Eastern might have seemed less terrible than the Western danger.

But a great campaign, at no considerable distance from the walls of Vienna, had occupied the attention of Germany during the autumn. Mahomet had taken the field in person with a hundred thousand men, and the emperor's brother, Maximilian, in conjunction with the Prince of Transylvania, at the head of a force of equal magnitude, had gone forth to give him battle. Between the Theiss and the Danube, at Keveste, not far from the city of Erlau, on the 26th October, the terrible encounter on which the fate of Christendom seemed to hang at last took place, and Europe held its breath in awful suspense until its fate should be decided. When the result at last became known, a horrible blending of the comic and the tragic, such as has rarely been presented in history, startled the world. Seventy thousand human beings—Moslems and Christians—were lying dead or wounded on the banks of a nameless little stream which flows into the Theisa, and the commanders-in-chief of both armies were running away as fast as horses could carry them. Each army believed itself hopelessly defeated, and abandoning tents, baggage, artillery, ammunition, the remnants of each, betook themselves to panic-stricken flight. Generalissimo Maximilian never looked behind him as he fled, until he had taken refuge in Kaschan, and had thence made his way, deeply mortified and despondent, to Vienna. The Prince of Transylvania retreated into the depths of his own principality. Mahomet, with his principal officers, shut himself up in Buda, after which he returned to Constantinople and abandoned himself for a time to a voluptuous ease, inconsistent with the Ottoman projects of conquering the world. The Turks, less prone to desperation than the Christians, had been utterly overthrown in the early part of the action, but when the victors were, as usual, greedily bent upon plunder before the victory had been fairly secured, the tide of battle was turned by the famous Italian renegade Cicala. The Turks, too, had the good sense to send two days afterwards and recover their artillery, trains, and other property, which ever since the battle had been left at the mercy of the first comers.

So ended the Turkish campaign of the year 1596. Ancel, accordingly, fared ill in his negotiations with Germany. On the other hand Mendoza, Admiral of Arragon, had been industriously but secretly canvassing the same regions as the representative of the Spanish king. It was important for Philip, who put more faith in the league of the three powers than Henry himself did, to lose no time in counteracting its influence. The condition of the holy Roman empire had for some time occupied his most serious thoughts. It seemed plain that Rudolph would never marry. Certainly he would never marry the Infanta, although he was very angry that his brother should aspire to the hand which he himself rejected. In case of his death without children, Philip thought it possible that there might be a Protestant revolution in Germany, and that the house of Habsburg might lose the imperial crown altogether. It was even said that the emperor himself was of that opinion, and preferred that the empire should "end with his own life." Philip considered that neither Matthias nor Maximilian was fit to succeed their brother, being both of them "lukewarm in the Catholic faith." In other words, he chose that his destined son-in-law, the Cardinal Albert, should supersede them, and he was anxious to have him appointed as soon as possible King of the Romans.

"His Holiness the Pope and the King of Spain," said the Admiral of Arragon, "think it necessary to apply most stringent measures to the emperor to compel him to appoint a successor, because, in case of his death without one, the administration during the vacancy would fall to the elector palatine,—a most perverse Calvinistic heretic, and as great an enemy of the house of Austria and of our holy religion as the Turk himself—as sufficiently appears in those diabolical laws of his published in the palatinate a few months since. A vacancy is so dreadful, that in the north of Germany the world would come to an end; yet the emperor, being of rather a timid nature than otherwise, is inclined to quiet, and shrinks from the discussions and conflicts likely to be caused by an appointment. Therefore his Holiness and his Catholic Majesty, not choosing that we should all live in danger of the world's falling in ruins, have resolved to provide the remedy. They are to permit the electors to use the faculty which they possess of suspending the emperor and depriving him of his power; there being examples of this in other times against emperors who governed ill."

The Admiral farther alluded to the great effort made two years before to elect the King of Denmark

emperor, reminding Philip that in Hamburg they had erected triumphal arches, and made other preparations to receive him. This year, he observed, the Protestants were renewing their schemes. On the occasion of the baptism of the child of the elector palatine, the English envoy being present, and Queen Elizabeth being god-mother, they had agreed upon nine articles of faith much more hostile to the Catholic creed than anything ever yet professed. In case of the death of the emperor, this elector palatine would of course make much trouble, and the emperor should therefore be induced, by fair means if possible, on account of the great inconvenience of forcing him, but not without a hint of compulsion, to acquiesce in the necessary measures. Philip was represented as willing to assist the empire with considerable force against the Turk—as there could be no doubt that Hungary was in great danger—but in recompense it was necessary to elect a King of the Romans in all respects satisfactory to him. There were three objections to the election of Albert, whose recent victories and great abilities entitled him in Philip's opinion to the crown. Firstly, there was a doubt whether the kingdoms of Hungary and Bohemia were elective or hereditary, and it was very important that the King of the Romans should succeed to those two crowns, because the electors and other princes having fiefs within those kingdoms would be unwilling to swear fealty to two suzerains, and as Albert was younger than his brothers he could scarcely expect to take by inheritance.

Secondly, Albert had no property of his own, but the Admiral suggested that the emperor might be made to abandon to him the income of the Tyrol.

Thirdly, it was undesirable for Albert to leave the Netherlands at that juncture. Nevertheless, it was suggested by the easy-going Admiral, with the same tranquil insolence which marked all his proposed arrangements, that as Rudolph would retire from the government altogether, Albert, as King of the Romans and acting emperor, could very well take care of the Netherlands as part of his whole realm. Albert being moreover about to marry the Infanta, the handsome dowry which he would receive with her from the king would enable him to sustain his dignity.

Thus did Philip who had been so industrious during the many past years in his endeavours to expel the heretic Queen of England and the Huguenot Henry from the realms of their ancestors, and to seat himself or his daughter, or one or another of his nephews, in their places, now busy himself with schemes to discrown Rudolph of Habsburg, and to place the ubiquitous Infanta and her future husband on his throne. Time would show the result.

Meantime, while the Protestant Ancel and other agents of the new league against Philip were travelling about from one court of Europe to another to gain adherents to their cause, the great founder of the confederacy was already secretly intriguing for a peace with that monarch. The ink was scarce dry on the treaty to which he had affixed his signature before he was closeted with the agents of the Archduke Albert, and receiving affectionate messages and splendid presents from that military ecclesiastic.

In November, 1596, La Balvena, formerly a gentleman of the Count de la Fera, came to Rouen. He had a very secret interview with Henry IV. at three o'clock one morning, and soon afterwards at a very late hour in the night. The king asked him why the archduke was not willing to make a general peace, including England and Holland. Balvena replied that he had no authority to treat on that subject; it being well known, however, that the King of Spain would never consent to a peace with the rebels, except on the ground of the exclusive maintenance of the Catholic religion.

He is taking the very course to destroy that religion, said Henry. The king then avowed himself in favour of peace for the sake of the poor afflicted people of all countries. He was not tired of arms, he said, which were so familiar to him, but his wish was to join in a general crusade against the Turk. This would be better for the Catholic religion than the present occupations of all parties. He avowed that the Queen of England was his very good friend, and said he had never yet broken his faith with her, and never would do so. She had sent him the Garter, and he had accepted it, as his brother Henry III. had done before him, and he would negotiate no peace which did not include her. The not very distant future was to show how much these stout professions of sincerity were worth. Meantime Henry charged Balvena to keep their interviews a profound secret, especially from every one in France. The king expressed great anxiety lest the Huguenots should hear of it, and the agent observed that any suspicion of peace negotiations would make great disturbance among the heretics, as one of the conditions of the king's absolution by the pope was supposed to be that he should make war upon his Protestant subjects. On his return from Rouen the emissary made a visit to Monlevet, marshal of the camp to Henry IV. and a Calvinist. There was much conversation about peace, in the course of which Monlevet observed, "We are much afraid of you in negotiation, for we know that you Spaniards far surpass us in astuteness."

"Nay," said Balvena, "I will only repeat the words of the Emperor Charles V.—'The Spaniards seem wise, and are madmen; the French seem madmen, and are wise.'"

A few weeks later the archduke sent Balvena again to Rouen. He had another interview with the king, at which not only Villeroy and other Catholics were present, but Monlevet also. This proved a great obstacle to freedom of conversation. The result was the same as before.

There were strong professions of a desire on the part of the king for a peace but it was for a general peace; nothing further.

On the 4th December Balvena was sent for by the king before daylight, just as he was mounting his horse for the chase.

"Tell his Highness," said Henry, "that I am all frankness, and incapable of dissimulation, and that I believe him too much a man of honour to wish to deceive me. Go tell him that I am most anxious for peace, and that I deeply regret the defeat that has been sustained against the Turk. Had I been there I would have come out dead or victorious. Let him arrange an agreement between us, so that presto he may see me there with my brave nobles, with infantry and with plenty of Switzers. Tell him that I am his friend: Begone. Be diligent."

On the last day but two of the year, the archduke, having heard this faithful report of Henry's affectionate sentiments, sent him a suit of splendid armour, such as was then made better in Antwerp than anywhere else, magnificently burnished of a blue colour, according to an entirely new fashion.

With such secret courtesies between his most Catholic Majesty's vicegerent and himself was Henry's league

with the two Protestant powers accompanied.

Exactly at the same epoch Philip was again preparing an invasion of the queen's dominions. An armada of a hundred and twenty-eight ships, with a force of fourteen thousand infantry and three thousand horse, had been assembled during the autumn of this year at Lisbon, notwithstanding the almost crushing blow that the English and Hollanders had dealt the king's navy so recently at Cadiz. This new expedition was intended for Ireland, where it was supposed that the Catholics would be easily roused. It was also hoped that the King of Scots might be induced to embrace this opportunity of wreaking vengeance on his mother's destroyer. "He was on the watch the last time that my armada went forth against the English," said Philip, "and he has now no reason to do the contrary, especially if he remembers that here is a chance to requite the cruelty which was practised on his mother."

The fleet sailed on the 5th October under the command of the Count Santa Gadea. Its immediate destination was the coast of Ireland, where they were to find some favourable point for disembarking the troops. Having accomplished this, the ships, with the exception of a few light vessels, were to take their departure and pass the winter in Ferrol. In case the fleet should be forced by stress of weather on the English coast, the port of Milford Haven in Wales was to be seized, "because," said Philip, "there are a great many Catholics there well affected to our cause, and who have a special enmity to the English." In case the English fleet should come forth to give battle, Philip sent directions that it was to be conquered at once, and that after the victory Milford Haven was to be firmly held.

This was easily said. But it was not fated that this expedition should be more triumphant than that of the unconquerable armada which had been so signally conquered eight years before. Scarcely had the fleet put to sea when it was overtaken by a tremendous storm, in which forty ships foundered with five thousand men. The shattered remnants took refuge in Ferrol. There the ships were to refit, and in the spring the attempt was to be renewed. Thus it was ever with the King of Spain. There was a placid unconsciousness on his part of defeat which sycophants thought sublime. And such insensibility might have been sublimity had the monarch been in person on the deck of a frigate in the howling tempest, seeing ship after ship go down before his eyes; and exerting himself with tranquil energy and skill to encourage his followers, and to preserve what remained afloat from destruction. Certainly such exhibitions of human superiority to the elements are in the highest degree inspiring. His father had shown himself on more than one occasion the master of his fate. The King of France, too, bare-headed, in his iron corslet, leading a forlorn hope, and, by the personal charm of his valour, changing fugitives into heroes and defeat into victory, had afforded many examples of sublime unconsciousness of disaster, such as must ever thrill the souls of mankind. But it is more difficult to be calm in battle and shipwreck than at the writing desk; nor is that the highest degree of fortitude which enables a monarch—himself in safety—to endure without flinching the destruction of his fellow creatures.

No sooner, however, was the remnant of the tempest-tost fleet safe in Ferrol than the king requested the cardinal to collect an army at Calais and forthwith to invade England. He asked his nephew whether he could not manage to send his troops across the channel in vessels of light draught, such as he already had at command, together with some others which might be furnished him from Spain. In this way he was directed to gain a foot-hold in England, and he was to state immediately whether he could accomplish this with his own resources or should require the assistance of the fleet at Ferrol. The king further suggested that the enemy, encouraged by his success at Cadiz the previous summer, might be preparing a fresh expedition against Spain, in which case the invasion of England would be easier to accomplish.

Thus on the last day of 1596, Philip, whose fleet sent forth for the conquest of Ireland and England had been too crippled to prosecute the adventure, was proposing to his nephew to conquer England without any fleet at all. He had given the same advice to Alexander Farnese so soon as he heard of the destruction of the invincible armada.

ETEXT EDITOR'S BOOKMARKS:

Allow her to seek a profit from his misfortune
Burning of Servetus at Geneva
Constant vigilance is the price of liberty
Evil has the advantage of rapidly assuming many shapes
French seem madmen, and are wise
Hanging of Mary Dyer at Boston
Imposed upon the multitudes, with whom words were things
Impossible it was to invent terms of adulation too gross
In times of civil war, to be neutral is to be nothing
Meet around a green table except as fencers in the field
One-third of Philip's effective navy was thus destroyed
Patriotism seemed an unimaginable idea
Placid unconsciousness on his part of defeat
Plea of infallibility and of authority soon becomes ridiculous
Religion was rapidly ceasing to be the line of demarcation
So often degenerated into tyranny (Calvinism)
Spaniards seem wise, and are madmen
The Alcoran was less cruel than the Inquisition
There are few inventions in morals
To attack England it was necessary to take the road of Ireland
Tranquil insolence
Unproductive consumption was alarmingly increasing
Upon their knees, served the queen with wine
Wish to sell us the bear-skin before they have killed the bear

CHAPTER XXXIII. 1597-1598

Straggle of the Netherlands against Spain—March to Turnhout—Retreat of the Spanish commander—Pursuit and attack—Demolition of the Spanish army—Surrender of the garrison of Turnhout—Improved military science—Moral effect of the battle—The campaign in France—Attack on Amiens by the Spaniards—Sack and burning of the city—De Rosny's plan for reorganization of the finances—Jobbery and speculation—Philip's repudiation of his debts—Effects of the measure—Renewal of persecution by the Jesuits—Contention between Turk and Christian—Envoy from the King of Poland to the Hague to plead for reconciliation with Philip—His subsequent presentation to Queen Elizabeth—Military events Recovery of Amiens—Feeble operations of the confederate powers against Spain—Marriage of the Princess Emilia, sister of Maurice—Reduction of the castle and town of Alphen—Surrender of Rheinberg—Capitulation of Meurs—Surrender of Grol—Storming and taking of Brevoort Capitulation of Enschede, Ootmaxsum, Oldenzaal, and Lingen—Rebellion of the Spanish garrisons in Antwerp and Ghent—Progress of the peace movement between Henry and Philip—Relations of the three confederate powers—Henry's scheme for reconciliation with Spain—His acceptance of Philip's offer of peace announced to Elizabeth—Endeavours for a general peace.

The old year had closed with an abortive attempt of Philip to fulfil his favourite dream—the conquest of England. The new year opened with a spirited effort of Prince Maurice to measure himself in the open field with the veteran legions of Spain.

Turnhout, in Brabant, was an open village—the largest in all the Netherlands lying about twenty-five English miles in almost a direct line south from Gertruydenburg. It was nearly as far distant in an easterly direction from Antwerp, and was about five miles nearer Breda than it was to Gertruydenberg.

At this place the cardinal-archduke had gathered a considerable force, numbering at least four thousand of his best infantry, with several squadrons of cavalry, the whole under-command of the general-in-chief of artillery, Count Varax. People in the neighbourhood were growing uneasy, for it was uncertain in what direction it might be intended to use this formidable force. It was perhaps the cardinal's intention to make a sudden assault upon Breda, the governor of which seemed not inclined to carry out his proposition to transfer that important city to the king, or it was thought that he might take advantage of a hard frost and cross the frozen morasses and estuaries into the land of Ter Tholen, where he might overmaster some of the important strongholds of Zeeland.

Marcellus Bax, that boldest and most brilliant of Holland's cavalry officers, had come to Maurice early in January with an urgent suggestion that no time might be lost in making an attack upon the force of Turnhout, before they should succeed in doing any mischief. The prince pondered the proposition, for a little time, by himself, and then conferred very privately upon the subject with the state-council. On the 14th January it was agreed with that body that the enterprise should be attempted, but with the utmost secrecy. A week later the council sent an express messenger to Maurice urging him not to expose his own life to peril, but to apprise them as soon as possible as to the results of the adventure.

Meantime, patents had been sent to the various garrisons for fifty companies of foot and sixteen squadrons of horse. On the 22nd January Maurice came to Gertruydenberg, the place of rendezvous, attended by Sir Francis Vere and Count Solms. Colonel Kloetingen was already there with the transports of ammunition and a few pieces of artillery from Zeeland, and in the course of the day the whole infantry force had assembled. Nothing could have been managed with greater promptness or secrecy.

Next day, before dawn, the march began. The battalia was led by Van der Noot, with six companies of Hollanders. Then came Vere, with eight companies of the reserve, Dockray with eight companies of Englishmen, Murray with eight companies of Scotch, and Kloetingen and La Corde with twelve companies of Dutch and Zeelanders. In front of the last troop under La Corde marched the commander of the artillery, with two demi-cannon and two field-pieces, followed by the ammunition and, baggage trains. Hohenlo arrived just as the march was beginning, to whom the stadholder, notwithstanding their frequent differences, communicated his plans, and entrusted the general command of the cavalry. That force met the expedition at Osterhout, a league's distance from Gertruydenberg, and consisted of the best mounted companies, English and Dutch, from the garrisons of Breda, Bergen, Nymegen, and the Zutphen districts.

It was a dismal, drizzly, foggy morning; the weather changing to steady rain as the expedition advanced. There had been alternate frost and thaw for the few previous weeks, and had that condition of the atmosphere continued the adventure could not have been attempted. It had now turned completely to thaw. The roads were all under water, and the march was sufficiently difficult. Nevertheless, it was possible; so the stout Hollanders, Zeelanders, and Englishmen struggled on manfully, shoulder to shoulder, through the mist and the mire. By nightfall the expedition had reached Ravels, at less than a league's distance from Turnhout, having accomplished, under the circumstances, a very remarkable march of over twenty miles. A stream of water, the Neethe, one of the tributaries of the Scheld, separated Ravels from Turnhout, and was crossed by a stone bridge. It was an anxious moment. Maurice discovered by his scouts that he was almost within cannon-shot of several of the most famous regiments in the Spanish army lying fresh, securely posted, and capable of making an attack at any moment. He instantly threw forward Marcellus Bax with four squadrons of Bergen cavalry, who, jaded as they were by their day's work, were to watch the bridge that night, and to hold it against all comers and at every hazard.

The Spanish commander, on his part, had reconnoitred the advancing, foe, for it was impossible for the movement to have been so secret or so swift over those inundated roads as to be shrouded to the last moment in complete mystery. It was naturally to be expected therefore that those splendid legions—the famous Neapolitan tercio of Trevico, the veteran troops of Sultz and Hachicourt, the picked Epirote and Spanish cavalry of Nicolas Basta and Guzman—would be hurled upon the wearied, benumbed, bemired soldiers of the republic, as they came slowly along after their long march through the cold winter's rain.

Varax took no such heroic resolution. Had he done so that January afternoon, the career of Maurice of Nassau might have been brought to a sudden close, despite the affectionate warning of the state-council.

Certainly it was difficult for any commander to be placed in a more perilous position than that in which the stadholder found himself. He remained awake and afoot the whole night, perfecting his arrangements for the morning, and watching every indication of a possible advance on the part of the enemy. Marcellus Bax and his troopers remained at the bridge till morning, and were so near the Spaniards that they heard the voices of their pickets, and could even distinguish in the distance the various movements in their camp.

But no attack was made, and the little army of Maurice was allowed to sleep off its fatigue. With the dawn of the 24th January, a reconnoitring party, sent out from the republican camp, discovered that Varax, having no stomach for an encounter, had given his enemies the slip. Long before daylight his baggage and ammunition trains had been sent off in a southerly direction, and his whole force had already left the village of Turnhout. It was the intention of the commander to take refuge in the fortified city of Herenthals, and there await the attack of Maurice. Accordingly, when the stadholder arrived on the fields beyond the immediate precincts of the village, he saw the last of the enemy's rearguard just disappearing from view. The situation was a very peculiar one.

The rain and thaw, following upon frosty weather, had converted the fenny country in many directions into a shallow lake. The little river which flowed by the village had risen above its almost level banks, and could with difficulty be traversed at any point, while there was no permanent bridge, such as there was at Ravels. The retreating Spaniards had made their way through a narrow passage, where a roughly-constructed causeway of planks had enabled the infantry to cross the waters almost in single file, while the cavalry had floundered through as best they might. Those who were acquainted with the country reported that beyond this defile there was an upland heath, a league in extent, full of furze and thickets, where it would be easy enough for Varax to draw up his army in battle array, and conceal it from view. Maurice's scouts, too, brought information that the Spanish commander had left a force of musketeers to guard the passage at the farther end.

This looked very like an ambush. In the opinion of Hohenlo, of Solms, and of Sidney, an advance was not to be thought of; and if the adventure seemed perilous to such hardy and experienced campaigners as these three, the stadholder might well hesitate. Nevertheless, Maurice had made up his mind. Sir Francis Vere and Marcellus Bax confirmed him in his determination, and spoke fiercely of the disgrace which would come upon the arms of the republic if now, after having made a day's march to meet the enemy, they should turn their backs upon him just as he was doing his best to escape.

On leave obtained from the prince, these two champions, the Englishman and the Hollander, spurred their horses through the narrow pass, with the waters up to the saddle-bow, at the head of a mere handful of troopers, not more than a dozen men in all. Two hundred musketeers followed, picking their way across the planks. As they emerged into the open country beyond, the Spanish soldiers guarding the passage fled without firing a shot. Such was already the discouraging effect produced upon veterans by the unexpected order given that morning to retreat. Vere and Bax sent word for all the cavalry to advance at once, and meantime hovered about the rearguard of the retreating enemy, ready to charge upon him so soon as they should be strong enough.

Maurice lost no time in plunging with his whole mounted force through the watery defile; directing the infantry to follow as fast as practicable. When the commander-in-chief with his eight hundred horsemen, Englishmen, Zeelanders, Hollanders, and Germans, came upon the heath, the position and purpose of the enemy were plainly visible. He was not drawn up in battle order, waiting to sweep down upon his rash assailants so soon as, after struggling through the difficult pass, they should be delivered into his hands. On the contrary, it was obvious at a glance that his object was still to escape. The heath of Tiel, on which Spaniards, Italians, Walloons, Germans, Dutchmen, English; Scotch, and Irishmen now all found themselves together, was a ridgy, spongy expanse of country, bordered on one side by the swollen river, here flowing again through steeper banks which were overgrown with alders and pollard willows. Along the left of the Spanish army, as they moved in the direction of Herenthals, was a continuous fringe of scrub-oaks, intermixed with tall beeches, skirting the heath, and forming a leafless but almost impervious screen for the movements of small detachments of troops. Quite at the termination of the open apace, these thickets becoming closely crowded, overhung another extremely narrow passage, which formed the only outlet from the plain. Thus the heath of Tiel, upon that winter's morning, had but a single entrance and a single exit, each very dangerous or very fortunate for those capable of taking or neglecting the advantages offered by the position.

The whole force of Varax, at least five thousand strong, was advancing in close marching order towards the narrow passage by which only they could emerge from the heath. Should they reach this point in time, and thus effect their escape, it would be useless to attempt to follow them, for, as was the case with the first defile, it was not possible for two abreast to go through, while beyond was a swampy-country in which military operations were impossible. Yet there remained less than half a league's space for the retreating soldiers to traverse, while not a single foot-soldier Of Maurice's army had thus far made his appearance on the heath. All were still wallowing and struggling, single file, in the marshy entrance, through which only the cavalry had forced their way. Here was a dilemma. Should Maurice look calmly on while the enemy, whom he had made so painful a forced march to meet, moved off out of reach before his eyes? Yet certainly this was no slight triumph in itself. There sat the stadholder on his horse at the head of eight hundred carabineers, and there marched four of Philip's best infantry regiments, garnished with some of his most renowned cavalry squadrons, anxious not to seek but to avoid a combat. First came the Germans of Count Sultz, the musketeers in front, and the spearsmen, of which the bulk of this and of all the regiments was composed, marching in closely serried squares, with the company standards waving over each. Next, arranged in the same manner, came the Walloon regiments of Hachicourt and of La Barlotte. Fourth and last came the famous Neapolitans of Marquis Trevico. The cavalry squadrons rode on the left of the infantry, and were commanded by Nicolas Basta, a man who had been trampling upon the Netherlanders ever since the days of Alva, with whom he had first come to the country.

And these were the legions—these very men or their immediate predecessors—these Italians, Spaniards, Germans, and Walloons, who during so many terrible years had stormed and sacked almost every city of the

Netherlands, and swept over the whole breadth of those little provinces as with the besom of destruction.

Both infantry and cavalry, that picked little army of Varax was of the very best that had shared in the devil's work which had been the chief industry practised for so long in the obedient Netherlands. Was it not madness for the stadholder, at the head of eight hundred horsemen, to assail such an army as this? Was it not to invoke upon his head the swift vengeance of Heaven? Nevertheless, the painstaking, cautious Maurice did not hesitate. He ordered Hohenlo, with all the Brabantine cavalry, to ride as rapidly as their horses could carry them along the edge of the plain, and behind the tangled woodland, by which the movement would be concealed. He was at all hazards to intercept the enemy's vanguard before it should reach the fatal pass. Vere and Marcellus Bax meanwhile, supported now by Edmont with the Nymegen squadrons, were to threaten the Spanish rear. A company of two under Laurentz was kept by Maurice near his person in reserve.

The Spaniards steadily continued their march, but as they became aware of certain slight and indefinite movements on their left, their cavalry, changing their position, were transferred from the right to the left of the line of march, and now rode between the infantry and the belt of woods.

In a few minutes after the orders given to Hohenlo, that dashing soldier had circumvented the Spaniards, and emerged upon the plain between them and the entrance to the defile, The next instant the trumpets sounded a charge, and Hohenlo fell upon the foremost regiment, that of Sultz, while the rearguard, consisting of Trevico's Neapolitan regiment, was assailed by Du Bois, Donck, Rysoir, Marcellus Bax, and Sir Francis Vere. The effect seemed almost supernatural. The Spanish cavalry—those far-famed squadrons of Guzman and Basta—broke at the first onset and galloped off for the pass as if they had been riding a race. Most of them escaped through the hollow into the morass beyond. The musketeers of Sultz's regiment hardly fired a shot, and fell back in confusion upon the thickly clustered pikemen. The assailants, every one of them in complete armour, on powerful horses, and armed not with lances but with carbines, trampled over the panic-struck and struggling masses of leather jerkined pikemen and shot them at arm's length. The charge upon Trevico's men at the same moment was just as decisive. In less time than it took afterwards to describe the scene, those renowned veterans were broken into a helpless mass of dying, wounded, or fugitive creatures, incapable of striking a blow.

Thus the Germans in the front and the Neapolitans in the rear had been simultaneously shattered, and rolled together upon the two other regiments, those of Hachicourt and La Barlotte, which were placed between them. Nor did these troops offer any better resistance, but were paralysed and hurled out of existence like the rest. In less than an hour the Spanish army was demolished. Varax himself lay dead upon the field, too fortunate not to survive his disgrace. It was hardly more than daylight on that dull January morning; nine o'clock had scarce chimed from the old brick steeples of Turnhout, yet two thousand Spaniards had fallen before the blows of eight hundred Netherlanders, and there were five hundred prisoners beside. Of Maurice's army not more than nine or ten were slain. The story sounds like a wild legend. It was as if the arm of each Netherlander had been nerved by the memory of fifty years of outrage, as if the spectre of their half-century of crime had appalled the soul of every Spaniard. Like a thunderbolt the son of William the Silent smote that army of Philip, and in an instant it lay blasted on the heath of Tiel. At least it could hardly be called sagacious generalship on the part of the stadholder. The chances were all against him, and if instead of Varax those legions had been commanded that morning by old Christopher Mondragon, there might perhaps have been another tale to tell. Even as it was, there had been a supreme moment when the Spanish disaster had nearly been changed to victory. The fight was almost done, when a small party of Staten' cavalry, who at the beginning of the action had followed the enemy's horse in its sudden retreat through the gap, came whirling back over the plain in wild confusion, pursued by about forty of the enemy's lancers. They swept by the spot where Maurice, with not more than ten horsemen around him, was directing and watching the battle, and in vain the prince threw himself in front of them and strove to check their flight. They were panic-struck, and Maurice would himself have been swept off the field, had not Marcellus Bax and Edmont, with half a dozen heavy troopers, come to the rescue. A grave error had been committed by Parker, who, upon being ordered by Maurice to cause Louis Laurentz to charge, had himself charged with the whole reserve and left the stadholder almost alone upon the field. Thus the culprits—who after pursuing the Spanish cavalry through the pass had been plundering the enemy's baggage until they were set upon by the handful left to guard it, and had become fugitives in their turn—might possibly have caused the lose of the day after the victory had been won, had there been a man on the Spanish side to take in the situation at a glance. But it is probable that the rout had been too absolute to allow of any such sudden turning to account of the serious errors of the victors. The cavalry, except this handful, had long disappeared, at least half the infantry lay dead or wounded in the field, while the remainder, throwing away pipe and matchlock, were running helter-skelter for their lives.

Besides Prince Maurice himself, to whom the chief credit of the whole expedition justly belonged, nearly all the commanders engaged obtained great distinction by their skill and valour. Sir Francis Vere, as usual, was ever foremost in the thickest of the fray, and had a horse killed under him. Parker erred by too much readiness to engage, but bore himself manfully throughout the battle. Hohenlo, Solma, Sidney, Louis Laurentz, Du Bois, all displayed their usual prowess; but the real hero of the hour, the personal embodiment of the fortunate madness which prompted and won the battle, was undoubtedly Marcellus Bax.

Maurice remained an hour or two on the field of battle, and then, returning towards the village of Turnhout, summoned its stronghold. The garrison of sixty, under Captain Van der Delf, instantly surrendered. The victor allowed these troops to go off scot free, saying that there had been blood enough shed that day. Every standard borne by the Spaniards in the battle-thirty-eight in number—was taken, besides nearly all their arms. The banners were sent to the Hague to be hung up in the great hall of the castle. The dead body of Varax was sent to the archduke with a courteous letter, in which, however, a categorical explanation was demanded as to a statement in circulation that Albert had decided to give the soldiers of the republic no quarter.

No answer being immediately returned, Maurice ordered the five hundred prisoners to be hanged or drowned unless ransomed within twenty days, and this horrible decree appears from official documents to be consistent with the military usages of the period. The arrival of the letter from the cardinal-archduke, who

levied the money for the ransom on the villagers of Brabant, prevented, however, the execution of the menace, which could hardly have been seriously intended.

Within a week from the time of his departure from the Hague to engage in this daring adventure, the stadholder had returned to that little capital, having achieved a complete success. The enthusiastic demonstrations throughout the land on account of so signal a victory can easily be imagined. Nothing like this had ever before been recorded in the archives of the young commonwealth. There had been glorious defences of beleaguered cities, where scenes of heroic endurance and self-sacrifice had been enacted, such as never can be forgotten so long as the history of human liberty shall endure, but a victory won in the open field over the most famous legions of Spain and against overwhelming numbers, was an achievement entirely without example. It is beyond all doubt that the force under Varax was at least four times as large as that portion of the States' army which alone was engaged; for Maurice had not a foot-soldier on the field until the battle was over, save the handful of musketeers who had followed Vere and Bax at the beginning of the action.

Therefore it is that this remarkable action merits a much more attentive consideration than it might deserve, regarded purely as a military exploit. To the military student a mere cavalry affair, fought out upon an obscure Brabantine heath between a party of Dutch carabineers and Spanish pikemen, may seem of little account—a subject fitted by picturesque costume and animated action for the pencil of a Wouvermanns or a Terburg, but conveying little instruction. As illustrating a period of transition in which heavy armoured troopers—each one a human iron-clad fortress moving at speed and furnished with the most formidable portable artillery then known—could overcome the resistance of almost any number of foot-soldiers in light marching gear and armed with the antiquated pike, the affair may be worthy of a moment's attention; and for this improvement—itself now as obsolete as the slings and cataphracts of Roman legions—the world was indebted to Maurice. But the shock of mighty armies, the manoeuvring of vast masses in one magnificent combination, by which the fate of empires, the happiness or the misery of the peoples for generations, may perhaps be decided in a few hours, undoubtedly require a higher constructive genius than could be displayed in any such hand-to-hand encounter as that of Turnhout, scientifically managed as it unquestionably was. The true and abiding interest of the battle is derived from is moral effect, from its influence on the people of the Netherlands. And this could scarcely be exaggerated. The nation was electrified, transformed in an instant. Who now should henceforth dare to say that one Spanish fighting-man was equal to five or ten Hollanders? At last the days of Jemmingen and Mooker-heath needed no longer to be remembered by every patriot with a shudder of shame. Here at least in the open field a Spanish army, after in vain refusing a combat and endeavouring to escape, had literally bitten the dust before one fourth of its own number. And this effect was a permanent one. Thenceforth for foreign powers to talk of mediation between the republic and the ancient master, to suggest schemes of reconciliation and of a return to obedience, was to offer gratuitous and trivial insult, and we shall very soon have occasion to mark the simple eloquence with which the thirty-eight Spanish standards of Turnhout, hung up in the old hall of the Hague, were made to reply to the pompous rhetoric of an interfering ambassador.

This brief episode was not immediately followed by other military events of importance in the provinces during what remained of the winter. Very early in the spring, however, it was probable that the campaign might open simultaneously in France and on the frontiers of Flanders. Of all the cities in the north of France there was none, after Rouen, so important, so populous, so wealthy as Amiens. Situate in fertile fields, within three days march of Paris, with no intervening forests or other impediments of a physical nature to free communication, it was the key to the gates of the capital. It had no garrison, for the population numbered fifteen thousand men able to bear arms, and the inhabitants valued themselves on the prowess of their trained militiamen, five thousand of whom they boasted to be able to bring into the field at an hour's notice—and they were perfectly loyal to Henry.

One morning in March there came a party of peasants, fifteen or twenty in number, laden with sacks of chestnuts and walnuts, to the northernmost gate of the town. They offered them for sale, as usual, to the soldiers at the guard-house, and chaffered and jested—as boors and soldiers are wont to do—over their wares. It so happened that in the course of the bargaining one of the bags became untied, and its contents, much to the dissatisfaction of the proprietor, were emptied on the ground. There was a scramble for the walnuts, and much shouting, kicking, and squabbling ensued, growing almost into a quarrel between the burgher-soldiers and the peasants. As the altercation was at its height a heavy wagon, laden with long planks, came towards the gate for the use of carpenters and architects within the town. The portcullis was drawn up to admit this lumbering vehicle, but in the confusion caused by the chance medley going on at the guard-house, the gate dropped again before the wagon had fairly got through the passage, and remained resting upon the timber with which it was piled.

At that instant a shrill whistle was heard; and as if by magic the twenty chestnut-selling peasants were suddenly transformed to Spanish and Walloon soldiers armed to the teeth, who were presently reinforced by as many more of their comrades, who sprang from beneath the plank-work by which the real contents of the wagon had thus been screened. Captain Dognano, his brother the sergeant-major, Captain d'Arco, and other officers of a Walloon regiment stationed in Dourlans, were the leaders of the little party, and while they were busily occupied in putting the soldiers of the watch, thus taken unawares, to death, the master-spirit of the whole adventure suddenly made his appearance and entered the city at the head of fifteen hundred men. This was an extremely small, yellow, dried up, energetic Spanish captain, with a long red beard, Hernan Tello de Porto Carrero by came, governor of the neighbouring city of Dourlens, who had conceived this plan for obtaining possession of Amiens. Having sent these disguised soldiers on before him, he had passed the night with his men in ambush until the signal should sound. The burghers of the town were mostly in church; none were dreaming of an attack, as men rarely do—for otherwise how should they ever be surprised—and in half an hour Amiens was the property of Philip of Spain. There were not very many lives lost, for the resistance was small, but great numbers were tortured for ransom and few women escaped outrage. The sack was famous, for the city was rich and the captors were few in number, so that each soldier had two or three houses to plunder for his own profit.

When the work was done, the faubourgs were all destroyed, for it was the intention of the conquerors to

occupy the place, which would be a most convenient basis of operations for any attack upon Paris, and it was desirable to contract the limits to be defended. Fifteen hundred houses, many of them beautiful villas surrounded with orchards and pleasure gardens,—were soon in flames, and afterwards razed to the ground. The governor of the place, Count St. Pol, managed to effect his escape. His place was now supplied by the Marquis of Montenegro, an Italian in the service of the Spanish king. Such was the fate of Amiens in the month of March, 1597; such the result of the refusal by the citizens to accept the garrison urged upon them by Henry.

It would be impossible to exaggerate the consternation produced. throughout France by this astounding and altogether unlooked for event. "It seemed," said President De Thou, "as if it had extinguished in a moment the royal majesty and the French name." A few nights later than the date of this occurrence, Maximilian de Bethune (afterwards Duke of Sully, but then called Marquis de Rosny) was asleep in his bed in Paris. He had returned, at past two o'clock in the morning, from a magnificent ball given by the Constable of France. The capital had been uncommonly brilliant during the winter with banquets and dances, tourneys and masquerades, as if to cast a lurid glare over the unutterable misery of the people and the complete desolation of the country; but this entertainment—given by Montmorency in honour of a fair dame with whom he supposed himself desperately in love, the young bride of a very ancient courtier—surpassed in splendour every festival that had been heard of for years. De Bethune had hardly lost himself in slumber when he was startled by Beringen, who, on drawing his curtains in this dead hour of the night, presented such a ghastly visage that the faithful friend of Henry instantly imagined some personal disaster to his well-beloved sovereign. "Is the King dead?" he cried.

Being re-assured as to, this point and told to hasten to the Louvre, Rosny instantly complied with the command. When he reached the palace he was admitted at once to the royal bed-chamber, where he found the king in the most unsophisticated of costumes, striding up and down the room, with his hands clasped together behind his head, and with an expression of agony upon his face: Many courtiers were assembled there, stuck all of them like images against the wall, staring before them in helpless perplexity.

Henry rushed forward as Rosny entered, and wringing him by the hand, exclaimed, "Ah, my friend, what a misfortune, Amiens is taken!"

"Very well," replied the financier, with unperturbed visage; "I have just completed a plan which will restore to your Majesty not only Amiens but many other places."

The king drew a great sigh of relief and asked for his project. Rosny, saying that he would instantly go and fetch his papers, left the apartment for an interval, in order to give vent to the horrible agitation which he had been enduring and so bravely concealing ever since the fatal words had been spoken. That a city so important, the key to Paris, without a moment's warning, without the semblance of a siege, should thus fall into the hands of the enemy, was a blow as directly to the heart of De Bethune as it could have been to any other of Henry's adherents. But while they had been distracting the king by unavailing curses or wailings, Henry, who had received the intelligence just as he was getting into bed, had sent for support and consolation to the tried friend of years, and he now reproachfully contrasted their pusillanimity with De Rosny's fortitude.

A great plan for reorganising the finances of the kingdom was that very night submitted by Rosny to the king, and it was wrought upon day by day thereafter until it was carried into effect.

It must be confessed that the crudities and immoralities which the project revealed do not inspire the political student of modern days with so high a conception of the financial genius of the great minister as his calm and heroic deportment on trying occasions, whether on the battle-field or in the council-chamber, does of his natural authority over his fellow-men. The scheme was devised to put money in the king's coffers, which at that moment were completely empty. Its chief features were to create a great many new offices in the various courts of justice and tribunals of administration, all to be disposed of by sale to the highest bidder; to extort a considerable loan from the chief courtiers and from the richest burghers in the principal towns; to compel all the leading peculators—whose name in the public service was legion—to disgorge a portion of their ill-gotten gains, on being released from prosecution; and to increase the tax upon salt.

Such a project hardly seems a masterpiece of ethics or political economy, but it was hailed with rapture by the needy monarch. At once there was a wild excitement amongst the jobbers and speculators in places. The creation of an indefinite number of new judgeships and magistracies, to be disposed of at auction, was a tempting opportunity even in that age of corruption. One of the most notorious traders in the judicial ermine, limping Robin de Tours by name, at once made a private visit to Madame de Rosny and offered seventy-two thousand crowns for the exclusive right to distribute these new offices. If this could be managed to his satisfaction, he promised to give her a diamond worth two thousand crowns, and another, worth six thousand, to her husband. The wife of the great minister, who did not comprehend the whole amount of the insult, presented Robin to her husband. She was enlightened, however, as to the barefaced iniquity of the offer, when she heard De Bethune's indignant. reply, and saw the jobber limp away, crest-fallen and amazed. That a financier or a magistrate should decline a bribe or interfere with the private sale of places, which were after all objects of merchandise, was to him incomprehensible. The industrious Robin, accordingly, recovering from his discomfiture, went straightway to the chancellor, and concluded the same bargain in the council chamber which had been rejected by De Bethune, with the slight difference that the distribution of the places. was assigned to the speculator for seventy-five thousand instead of seventy-two thousand crowns. It was with great difficulty that De Bethune, who went at once to the king with complaints and insinuations as to the cleanness of the chancellor's hands, was able to cancel the operation. The day was fast approaching when the universal impoverishment of the great nobles and landholders—the result of the long, hideous, senseless massacres called the wars of religion—was to open the way for the labouring classes to acquire a property in the soil. Thus that famous fowl in every pot was to make its appearance, which vulgar tradition ascribes to the bounty of a king who hated everything like popular rights, and loved nothing but his own glory and his own amusement. It was not until the days of his grandchildren and great-grandchildren that Privilege could renew those horrible outrages on the People, which were to be avenged by a dread series of wars, massacres, and crimes, compared to which even the religious conflicts of the sixteenth century grow pale.

Meantime De Bethune comforted his master with these financial plans, and assured him in the spirit of prophecy that the King of Spain, now tottering as it was thought to his grave, would soon be glad to make a favourable peace with France even if he felt obliged to restore not only Amiens but every other city or stronghold that he had ever conquered in that kingdom. Time would soon show whether this prediction were correct or delusive; but while the secret negotiations between Henry and the Pope were vigorously proceeding for that peace with Spain which the world in general and the commonwealth of the Netherlands in particular thought to be farthest from the warlike king's wishes, it was necessary to set about the siege of Amiens.

Henry assembled a force of some twelve or fifteen thousand men for that purpose, while the cardinal-archduke, upon his part, did his best to put an army in the field in order to relieve the threatened city so recently acquired by a coarse but successful artifice.

But Albert was in even a worse plight than that in which his great antagonist found himself. When he had first arrived in the provinces, his exchequer was overflowing, and he was even supposed to devote a considerable portion of the military funds to defray the expenses of his magnificent housekeeping at Brussels. But those halcyon days were over. A gigantic fraud, just perpetrated by Philip; had descended like a thunderbolt upon the provinces and upon all commercial Europe, and had utterly blasted the unfortunate viceroy. In the latter days of the preceding year the king had issued a general repudiation of his debts.

He did it solemnly, too, and with great religious unction, for it was a peculiarity of this remarkable sovereign that he was ever wont to accomplish his darkest crimes, whether murders or stratagems, as if they were acts of virtue. Perhaps he really believed them to be such, for a man, before whom so many millions of his fellow worms had been writhing for half a century in the dust, might well imagine himself a deity.

So the king, on the 20th November, 1596, had publicly revoked all the assignments, mortgages, and other deeds by which the royal domains; revenues, taxes, and other public property had been transferred or pledged for moneys already advanced to merchants, banker, and other companies or individuals, and formally took them again into his own possession, on the ground that his exertions in carrying on this long war to save Christianity from destruction had reduced him to beggary, while the money-lenders, by charging him exorbitant interest, had all grown rich at his expense.

This was perfectly simple. There was no attempt to disguise the villany of the transaction. The massacre of so many millions of Protestants, the gigantic but puerile attempts to subjugate the Dutch republic, and to annex France, England, and the German empire to his hereditary dominions, had been attended with more expense than Philip had calculated upon. The enormous wealth which a long series of marriages, inheritances, conquests, and maritime discoveries had heaped upon Spain had been exhausted by the insane ambition of the king to exterminate heresy throughout the world, and to make himself the sovereign of one undivided, universal, catholic monarchy. All the gold and silver of America had not sufficed for this purpose, and he had seen, with an ever rising indignation, those very precious metals which, in his ignorance of the laws of trade, he considered his exclusive property flowing speedily into the coffers of the merchants of Europe, especially those of the hated commonwealth of the rebellious Netherlands.

Therefore he solemnly renounced all his contracts, and took God to witness that it was to serve His Divine will. How else could he hope to continue his massacre of the Protestants?

The effect of the promulgation of this measure was instantaneous. Two millions and a half of bills of exchange sold by the Cardinal Albert came back in one day protested. The chief merchants and bankers of Europe suspended payment. Their creditors became bankrupt. At the Frankfort fair there were more failures in one day than there had ever been in all the years since Frankfort existed. In Genoa alone a million dollars of interest were confiscated. It was no better in Antwerp; but Antwerp was already ruined. There was a general howl of indignation and despair upon every exchange, in every counting-room, in every palace, in every cottage of Christendom. Such a tremendous repudiation of national debts was never heard of before. There had been debasements of the currency, petty frauds by kings upon their unfortunate peoples, but such a crime as this had never been conceived by human heart before.

The archduke was fain to pawn his jewelry, his plate, his furniture, to support the daily expenses of his household. Meantime he was to set an army in the field to relieve a city, beleaguered by the most warlike monarch in Christendom. Fortunately for him, that prince was in very similar straits, for the pressure upon the public swindlers and the auction sales of judicial ermine throughout his kingdom were not as rapidly productive as had been hoped.

It was precisely at this moment, too, that an incident of another nature occurred in Antwerp, which did not tend to make the believers in the possibility of religious or political freedom more in love with the system of Spain and Rome. Those blood-dripping edicts against heresy in the Netherlands, of which enough has been said in previous volumes of this history, and which had caused the deaths, by axe, faggot, halter, or burial alive, of at least fifty thousand human creatures—however historical scepticism may shut its eyes to evidence—had now been, dormant for twenty years. Their activity had ceased with the pacification of Ghent; but the devilish spirit which had inspired them still lived in the persons of the Jesuits, and there were now more Jesuits in the obedient provinces than there had been for years. We have seen that Champagny's remedy for the ills the country was enduring was "more Jesuits." And this, too, was Albert's recipe. Always "more Jesuits." And now the time had come when the Jesuits thought that they might step openly with their works into the daylight again. Of late years they had shrouded themselves in comparative mystery, but from their seminaries and colleges had gone forth a plentiful company of assassins against Elizabeth and Henry, Nassau, Barneveld, and others who, whether avowedly or involuntarily, were prominent in the party of human progress. Some important murders had already been accomplished, and the prospect was fair that still others might follow, if the Jesuits persevered. Meantime those ecclesiastics thought that a wholesome example might be by the spectacle of a public execution.

Two maiden ladies lived on the north rampart of Antwerp. They had formerly professed the Protestant religion, and had been thrown into prison for that crime; but the fear of further persecution, human weakness, or perhaps sincere conviction, had caused them to renounce the error of their ways, and they now

went to mass. But they had a maidservant, forty years of age, Anna van den Hove by name, who was staunch in that reformed faith in which she had been born and bred. The Jesuits denounced this maid-servant to the civil authority, and claimed her condemnation and execution under the edicts of 1540, decrees which every one had supposed as obsolete as the statutes of Draco, which they had so entirely put to shame.

The sentence having been obtained from the docile and priest-ridden magistrates, Anna van den Hove was brought to Brussels and informed that she was at once to be buried alive. At the same time, the Jesuits told her that by converting herself to the Church she might escape punishment.

When King Henry IV. was summoned to renounce that same Huguenot faith, of which he was the political embodiment and the military champion, the candid man answered by the simple demand to be instructed. When the proper moment came, the instruction was accomplished by an archbishop with the rapidity of magic. Half an hour undid the work of half a life-time. Thus expeditiously could religious conversion be effected when an earthly crown was its guerdon. The poor serving-maid was less open to conviction. In her simple fanaticism she too talked of a crown, and saw it descending from Heaven on her poor forlorn head as the reward, not of apostasy, but of steadfastness. She asked her tormentors how they could expect her to abandon her religion for fear of death. She had read her Bible every day, she said, and had found nothing there of the pope or purgatory, masses, invocation of saints, or the absolution of sins except through the blood of the blessed Redeemer. She interfered with no one who thought differently; she quarrelled with no one's religious belief. She had prayed for enlightenment from Him, if she were in error, and the result was that she felt strengthened in her simplicity, and resolved to do nothing against her conscience. Rather than add this sin to the manifold ones committed by her, she preferred, she said, to die the death. So Anna van den Hove was led, one fine midsummer morning, to the hayfield outside of Brussels, between two Jesuits, followed by a number of a peculiar kind of monks called love-brothers. Those holy men goaded her as she went, telling her that she was the devil's carrion, and calling on her to repent at the last moment, and thus save her life and escape eternal damnation beside. But the poor soul had no ear for them, and cried out that, like Stephen, she saw the heavens opening, and the angels stooping down to conduct her far away from the power of the evil one. When they came to the hay-field they found the pit already dug, and the maid-servant was ordered to descend into it. The executioner then covered her with earth up to the waist, and a last summons was made to her to renounce her errors. She refused, and then the earth was piled upon her, and the hangman jumped upon the grave till it was flattened and firm.

Of all the religious murders done in that hideous sixteenth century in the Netherlands; the burial of the Antwerp servantmaid was the last and the worst. The worst, because it was a cynical and deliberate attempt to revive the demon whose thirst for blood had been at last allayed, and who had sunk into repose. And it was a spasmodic revival only, for, in the provinces at least, that demon had finished his work.

Still, on the eastern borders of what was called civilization, Turk and Christian were contending for the mastery. The great battle of Koveso had decided nothing, and the crescent still shone over the fortified and most important Hungarian stronghold of Raab, within arm's length of Vienna. How rapidly might that fatal and menacing emblem fill its horns, should it once be planted on the walls of the Imperial capital! It was not wonderful that a sincere impatience should be felt by all the frontier States for the termination of the insurrection of the Netherlands. Would that rebellious and heretical republic only consent to go out of existence, again bow its stubborn knee to Philip and the Pope, what a magnificent campaign might be made against Mahomet! The King of Spain was the only potentate at all comparable in power to the grand Turk. The King of France, most warlike of men, desired nothing better, as he avowed, than to lead his brave nobles into Hungary to smite the unbelievers. Even Prince Maurice, it was fondly hoped, might be induced to accept a high command in the united armies of Christendom, and seek for glory by campaigning, in alliance with Philip; Rudolph, and Henry, against the Ottoman, rather than against his natural sovereign. Such were the sagacity, the insight, the power of forecasting the future possessed in those days by monarchs, statesmen, and diplomatists who were imagining that they held the world's destiny in their hands.

There was this summer a solemn embassy from the emperor to the States-General proposing mediation referring in the usual conventional phraseology to the right of kings to command, and to the duty of the people to submit, and urging the gentle-mindedness and readiness to forgive which characterised the sovereign of the Netherlands and of Spain.

And the statesmen of the republic had answered as they always did, showing with courteous language, irresistible logic, and at, unmerciful length, that there never had been kings in the Netherlands at all, and that the gentle-mindedness of Philip had been exhibited in the massacre of a hundred thousand Netherlanders in various sieges and battles, and in the murder, under the Duke of Alva alone, of twenty thousand human beings by the hangman.

They liked not such divine right nor such gentle-mindedness. They recognised no duty on their part to consent to such a system. Even the friendly King of Denmark sent a legation for a similar purpose, which was respectfully but very decidedly allowed to return as it came; but the most persistent in schemes of interference for the purpose of putting an end to the effusion of blood in the Netherlands was Sigismund of Poland. This monarch, who occupied two very incompatible positions, being sovereign at once of fanatically Protestant Sweden and of orthodox Poland, and who was, moreover, son-in-law of Archduke Charles of Styria whose other daughter was soon to be espoused by the Prince of Spain—was personally and geographically interested in liberating Philip from the inconvenience of his Netherland war. Only thus could he hope to bring the Spanish power to the rescue of Christendom against the Turk. Troubles enough were in store for Sigismund in his hereditary northern realms, and he was to learn that his intermarriage with the great Catholic and Imperial house did not enable him to trample out Protestantism in those hardy Scandinavian and Flemish regions where it had taken secure root. Meantime he despatched, in solemn mission to the republic and to the heretic queen, a diplomatist whose name and whose oratorical efforts have by a caprice of history been allowed to endure to our times.

Paul Dialyn was solemnly received at the Hague on the 21st July. A pragmatical fop, attired in a long, magnificent Polish robe, covered with diamonds and other jewels, he was yet recognised by some of those present as having been several years before a student at Leyden under a different name, and with far less

gorgeous surroundings. He took up his position in the council-chamber, in the presence of the stadholder and the leading members of the States-General, and pronounced a long Latin oration, in the manner, as it was said, of a monk delivering a sermon from the pulpit. He kept his eyes steadily fixed on the ceiling, never once looking at the men whom he was addressing, and speaking in a loud, nasal, dictatorial tone, not at all agreeable to the audience. He dwelt in terms of extravagant eulogy on the benignity and gentleness of the King of Spain—qualities in which he asserted that no prince on earth could be compared to him—and he said this to the very face of Maurice of Nassau. That the benignant and gentle king had caused the stadholder's father to be assassinated, and that he had rewarded the murderer's family with a patent of nobility, and with an ample revenue taken from the murdered man's property, appeared of no account to the envoy in the full sweep of his rhetoric. Yet the reminiscence caused a shudder of disgust in all who heard him.

He then stated the wish of his master the Polish king to be that, in regard to the Turk, the provinces might reconcile themselves to their natural master, who was the most powerful monarch in Christendom, and the only one able to make head against the common foe. They were solemnly warned of the enormous power and resources of the great king, with whom it was hopeless for them to protract a struggle sure to end at last in their uttermost destruction. It was for kings to issue commands; he said, and for the people to obey; but Philip was full of sweetness, and would accord them full forgiveness for their manifold sins against him. The wish to come to the rescue of Christendom, in this extreme peril from the Turk, was with him paramount to all other considerations.

Such; in brief, was the substance of the long Latin harangue by which it was thought possible to induce those sturdy republicans and Calvinists to renounce their vigorous national existence and to fall on their knees before the most Catholic king. This was understood to be mediation, statesmanship, diplomacy, in deference to which the world was to pause and the course of events to flow backwards. Truly, despots and their lackeys were destined to learn some rude lessons from that vigorous little commonwealth in the North Sea, before it should have accomplished its mission on earth.

The States-General dissembled their disgust, however, for it was not desirable to make open enemies of Sigismund or Rudolph. They refused to accept a copy of the oration, but they promised to send him a categorical answer to it in writing. Meantime the envoy had the honour of walking about the castle with the stadholder, and, in the course of their promenade, Maurice pointed to the thirty-eight standards taken at the battle of Turnhout, which hung from the cedarn rafters of the ancient banquetting hall. The mute eloquence of those tattered banners seemed a not illogical reply to the diplomatic Paul's rhetoric in regard to the hopelessness of a contest with Spanish armies.

Next, Van der Werken—pensionary of Leyden, and a classical scholar—waited upon the envoy with a Latin reply to his harangue, together with a courteous letter for Sigismund. Both documents were scathing denunciations of the policy pursued by the King of Spain and by all his aiders and abettors, and a distinct but polished refusal to listen to a single word in favour of mediation or of peace.

Paul Dialyn then received a courteous permission to leave the territory of the republic, and was subsequently forwarded in a States' vessel of war to England.

His reception, about a month later, by Queen Elizabeth is an event on which all English historians are fond of dwelling. The pedant, on being presented to that imperious and accomplished sovereign, deported himself with the same ludicrous arrogance which had characterised him at the Hague. His Latin oration, which had been duly drawn up for him by the Chancellor of Sweden, was quite as impertinent as his harangue to the States-General had been, and was delivered with the same conceited air. The queen replied on the instant in the same tongue. She was somewhat in a passion, but spoke with majestic moderation?

"Oh, how I have been deceived!" she exclaimed. "I expected an ambassador, and behold a herald! In all my life I never heard of such an oration. Your boldness and unadvised temerity I cannot sufficiently admire. But if the king your master has given you any such thing in charge—which I much doubt—I believe it is because, being but a young man, and lately advanced to the crown, not by ordinary succession of blood, but by election, he understandeth not yet the way of such affairs." And so on—for several minutes longer.

Never did envoy receive such a setting down from sovereign.

"God's death, my lords!" said the queen to her ministers; as she concluded, "I have been enforced this day to scour up my old Latin that hath lain long in rusting."

This combination of ready wit, high spirit, and good Latin, justly excited the enthusiasm of the queen's subjects, and endeared her still more to every English heart. It may, however, be doubted whether the famous reply was in reality so entirely extemporaneous as it has usually been considered. The States-General had lost no time in forwarding to England a minute account of the proceedings of Paul Dialyn at the Hague, together with a sketch of his harangue and of the reply on behalf of the States. Her Majesty and her counsellors therefore, knowing that the same envoy was on his way to England with a similar errand, may be supposed to have had leisure to prepare the famous impromptu. Moreover, it is difficult to understand, on the presumption that these classic utterances were purely extemporaneous, how they have kept their place in all chronicles and histories from that day to the present, without change of a word in the text. Surely there was no stenographer present to take down the queen's words as they fell from her lips.

The military events of the year did not testify to a much more successful activity on the part of the new league in the field than it had displayed in the sphere of diplomacy. In vain did the envoy of the republic urge Henry and his counsellors to follow up the crushing blow dealt to the cardinal at Turnhout by vigorous operations in conjunction with the States' forces in Artois and Hainault. For Amiens had meantime been taken, and it was now necessary for the king to employ all his energy and all his resources to recover that important city. So much damage to the cause of the republic and of the new league had the little yellow Spanish captain inflicted in an hour, with his bags of chestnuts and walnuts. The siege of Amiens lasted nearly six months, and was the main event of the campaign, so far as Henry was concerned. It is true—as the reader has already seen, and as will soon be more clearly developed—that Henry's heart had been fixed on peace from the moment that he consented in conjunction with the republic to declare war, and that he had entered into secret and separate negotiations for that purpose with the agents of Philip so soon as he had

bound himself by solemn covenant with Elizabeth to have no negotiations whatever with him except with her full knowledge and consent.

The siege of Amiens, however, was considered a military masterpiece, and its whole progress showed the revolution which the stadholder of Holland had already effected in European warfare. Henry IV. beleaguered Amiens as if he were a pupil of Maurice, and contemporaries were enthusiastic over the science, the patience, the inventive ingenuity which were at last crowned with success. The heroic Hernan Tello de Porto Carrero was killed in a sortie during the defence of the place which he had so gallantly won, and when the city was surrendered to the king on the 19th of September it was stipulated in the first article of the capitulation that the tomb, epitaph, and trophies, by which his memory was honoured in the principal church, should not be disturbed, and that his body might be removed whenever and whither it seemed good to his sovereign. In vain the cardinal had taken the field with an army of eighteen thousand foot and fifteen hundred light cavalry. The king had learned so well to entrench himself and to moderate his ardour for inopportune pitched battles, that the relieving force could find, no occasion to effect its purpose. The archduke retired. He came to Amiens like a soldier, said Henry, but he went back like a priest. Moreover, he was obliged to renounce, besides the city, a most tempting prize which he thought that he had secured within the city. Alexander Farnese, in his last French campaign, had procured and sent to his uncle the foot of St. Philip and the head of St. Lawrence; but what was Albert's delight when he learned that in Amiens cathedral there was a large piece of the head of John the Baptist! "There will be a great scandal about it in this kingdom," he wrote to Philip, "if I undertake to transport it out of the country, but I will try to contrive it as your Majesty desires."

But the military events of the year prevented the cardinal from gratifying the king in regard to these choice curiosities.

After the reduction of the city Henry went a considerable distance with his army towards the frontier of Flanders, in order to return, as he said, "his cousin's visit." But the recovery of Amiens had placed too winning a card in the secret game which he was then playing to allow him to push his nominal adversary to extremities.

The result, suspected very early in the year by the statesmen of the republic, was already very plainly foreshadowing itself as the winter advanced.

Nor had the other two members of the league affected much in the field. Again an expedition had been fitted forth under Essex against the Spanish coast to return the compliment which Philip had intended with the unlucky armada under Santa Gadea; and again Sir Francis Vere, with two thousand veterans from the Netherlands, and the Dutch admirals, with ten ships of war and a large number of tenders and transports, had faithfully taken part in the adventure.

The fleet was tempest-tossed for ten days, during which it reached the threatened coast and was blown off again. It returned at last into the English ports, having accomplished nothing, and having expended superfluously a considerable amount of money and trouble. Essex, with a few of the vessels, subsequently made a cruise towards the Azores, but, beyond the capture of a Spanish merchantman or two, gained no glory and inflicted no damage.

Nothing could be feebler than the military operations of the three confederated powers ever since they had so solemnly confederated themselves.

Sick at heart with the political intrigues of his allies which had—brought a paralysis upon his arms which the blows of the enemy could hardly have effected, Maurice took the field in August: for an autumnal campaign on the eastern frontier of the republic. Foiled in his efforts for a combined attack by the whole force of the league upon Philip's power in the west, he thought it at least expedient to liberate the Rhine, to secure the important provinces of Zutphen, Gelderland, and Overyssel from attack, and to provide against the dangerous intrigues and concealed warfare carried on by Spain in the territories of the mad Duke of Juliers, Clever and Berg. For the seeds of the Thirty Years' War of Germany were already sown broadcast in those fatal duchies, and it was the determination of the agents of Spain to acquire the mastery of that most eligible military position, that excellent 'sedes belli,' whenever Protestantism was to be assailed in England, the Netherlands, or Germany.

Meantime the Hispaniolated counsellors of Duke John had strangled—as it was strongly suspected—his duchess, who having gone to bed in perfect health one evening was found dead in her bed next morning, with an ugly mark on her throat; and it was now the purpose of these statesmen to find a new bride for their insane sovereign in the ever ready and ever orthodox house of Lorrain. And the Protestant brothers-in-law and nephews and nieces were making every possible combination in order to check such dark designs, and to save these important territories from the ubiquitous power of Spain.

The stadholder had also family troubles at this period. His sister Emilia had conceived a desperate passion for Don Emmanuel, the pauper son of the forlorn pretender to Portugal, Don Antonio, who had at last departed this life. Maurice was indignant that a Catholic, an outcast, and, as it was supposed, a bastard, should dare to mate with the daughter of William of Orange-Nassau; and there were many scenes of tenderness, reproaches, recriminations, and 'hysterica passio,' in which not only the lovers, the stadholder and his family, but also the high and mighty States-General, were obliged to enact their parts. The chronicles are filled with the incidents, which, however, never turned to tragedy, nor even to romance, but ended, without a catastrophe, in a rather insipid marriage. The Princess Emilia remained true both to her religion and her husband during a somewhat obscure wedded life, and after her death Don Emmanuel found means to reconcile himself with the King of Spain and to espouse, in second nuptials, a Spanish lady. On the 4th of August, Maurice arrived at Arnhem with a force of seven thousand foot and twelve hundred horse. Hohenlo was with him, and William Lewis, and there was yet another of the illustrious house of Nassau in the camp, Frederick Henry, a boy in his thirteenth year, the youngest born of William the Silent, the grandson of Admiral de Coligny, now about; in this his first campaign, to take the first step in a long and noble career.

Having reduced the town and castle of Alphen, the stadholder came before Rheinberg, which he very expeditiously invested. During a preliminary skirmish William Lewis received a wound in the leg, while during

the brief siege Maurice had a narrow escape from death, a cannon-ball passing through his tent and over his head as he lay taking a brief repose upon his couch.

On the 19th, Rheinberg, the key to that portion of the river, surrendered. On the 31st the stadholder opened his batteries upon the city of Meurs, which capitulated on the 2nd of September; the commandant, Andrew Miranda, stipulating that he should carry off an old fifty-pounder, the only piece of cannon in the place. Maurice gave his permission with a laugh, begging Miranda not to batter down any cities with his big gun.

On the 8th September the stadholdet threw a bridge over the Rhine, and crossing that river and the Lippe, came on the 11th before Grol. There was no Christopher Mondragon now in his path to check his progress and spoil his campaign, so that in seventeen days the city, being completely surrounded with galleries and covered ways up to its walls, surrendered. Count van Stirum, royal governor of the place, dined with the stadholder on that day, and the garrison, from twelve hundred to fifteen hundred strong; together with such of the townsfolk as chose to be subjects of Philip rather than citizens of the republic, were permitted to depart in peace.

On the 9th October the town and castle of Brevoort were taken by storm and the town was burned.

On the 18th October, Maurice having summoned Enschede, the commandant requested permission to examine the artillery by which it was proposed to reduce the city. Leave being granted, two captains were deputed accordingly as inspectors, who reported that resistance was useless. The place accordingly capitulated at once.

Here, again, was an improvement on the heroic practice of Alva and Romero.

On the 21st and 22nd October, Ootmarsum and Oldenzaal were taken, and on the 28th the little army came before Lingen. This important city surrendered after a fortnight's siege.

Thus closed a sagacious, business-like, three-months' campaign, in the course of which the stadholder, although with a slender force, had by means of his excellent organization and his profound practical science, achieved very considerable results. He had taken nine strongly-fortified cities and five castles, opened the navigation of the Rhine, and strengthened the whole eastern bulwarks of the republic. He was censured by the superficial critics of the old school for his humanity towards the conquered garrisons. At least it was thought quite superfluous to let these Spanish soldiers go scot free. Five thousand veterans had thus been liberated to swell the ranks of the cardinal's army, but the result soon proved the policy of Maurice to be, in many ways, wholesome. The great repudiation by Philip, and the consequent bankruptcy of Alberta converted large numbers of the royal troops into mutineers, and these garrisons from the eastern frontier were glad to join in the game.

After the successful siege of Hulst in the previous year the cardinal had reduced the formidable mutiny which had organized itself at Tirlemont and Chapelle in the days of his luckless predecessor. Those rebels had been paid off and had mainly returned to Italy and other lands to spend their money. But soon a new rebellion in all the customary form's established itself in Antwerp citadel during the temporary absence of Mexia, the governor, and great was the misery of the unhappy burghers thus placed at the mercy of the guns of that famous pentagon. They were obliged to furnish large sums to the whole garrison, paying every common foot-soldier twelve stivers a day and the officers in proportion, while the great Eletto demanded, beside his salary, a coach and six, a state bed with satin curtains and fine linen, and the materials for banquetting sumptuously every day. At the slightest demur to these demands the bombardment from the citadel would begin, and the accurate artillery practice of those experienced cannoneers soon convinced the loyal citizens of the propriety of the arrangement. The example spread. The garrison of Ghent broke into open revolt, and a general military rebellion lasted for more than a year.

While the loyal cities of the obedient provinces were thus enjoying the fruits of their loyalty and obedience, the rebellious capital of the republic was receiving its stadholder with exuberant demonstrations of gratitude. The year, begun with the signal victory of Turnhout, had worthily terminated, so far as military events were concerned, with the autumnal campaign on the Rhine, and great were the rejoicings throughout the little commonwealth.

Thus, with diminished resources, had the republic been doing its share of the work which the anti-Spanish league had been called into existence to accomplish. But, as already intimated, this league was a mere fraud upon the Netherlands, which their statesmen were not slow in discovering. Of course it was the object of Philip and of the pope to destroy this formidable triple alliance as soon as formed, and they found potent assistance, not only in Henry's counsellors, but in the bosom of that crafty monarch himself. Clement hated Philip as much as he feared him, so that the prospect both of obtaining Henry as a counterpoise to his own most oppressive and most Catholic protector, and of breaking up the great convert's alliance with the heretic queen and the rebellious republic, was a most tempting one to his Holiness. Therefore he employed, indefatigably, the matchless powers of intrigue possessed by Rome to effect this great purpose. As for Elizabeth, she was weary of the war, most anxious to be reimbursed her advances to the States, and profoundly jealous of the rising commercial and naval greatness of the new commonwealth. If the league therefore proved impotent from the beginning, certainly it was not the fault of the United Netherlands. We have seen how much the king deplored, in intimate conversation with De Bethune, his formal declaration of war against Spain which the Dutch diplomatists had induced him to make; and indeed nothing can be more certain than that this public declaration of war, and this solemn formation of the triple alliance against Philip, were instantly accompanied on Henry's part by secret peace negotiations with Philip's agents. Villeroy, told Envoy Calvaert that as for himself he always trembled when he thought on what he had done, in seconding the will of his Majesty in that declaration at the instance of the States-General, of which measure so many losses and such bitter fruits had been the result. He complained, too, of the little assistance or co-operation yielded by England. Calvaert replied that he had nothing to say in defence of England, but that certainly the king could have no cause to censure the States. The republic, however, had good ground, he said, to complain that nothing had been done by France, that all favourable occasions had been neglected, and that there was a perpetual change of counsels. The envoy, especially, and justly, reproached the royal government for having

taken no advantage of the opportunity offered by the victory of Turnhout, in which the republic had utterly defeated the principal forces of the common enemy. He bluntly remarked, too, that the mysterious comings and goings of Balvena had naturally excited suspicions in the Netherlands, and that it would be better that all such practices should be at once abandoned. They did his Majesty no service, and it was no wonder that they caused uneasiness to his allies. Villeroy replied that the king had good reasons to give satisfaction to those who were yearning for peace.

As Henry himself was yearning in this regard as much as any of his subjects, it was natural enough that he should listen to Balvena and all other informal negotiators whom Cardinal Ilbert might send from Brussels or Clement from Rome. It will be recollected that Henry's parting words to Balvena at Rouen had been: "Tell the archduke that I am very much his friend. Let him arrange a peace. Begone. Be diligent."

But the king's reply to Calvaert, when, after the interview with Villeroy, that envoy was admitted to the royal dressing room for private conversation and took the occasion to remonstrate with his Majesty on these intrigues with the Spanish agent, was that he should send off Balvena in such fashion that it would take from the cardinal-archduke all hope of troubling him with any further propositions.

It has been seen, too, with what an outbreak of wrath the proposition, made by Elizabeth through Robert Sydney, that she should succour Calais on condition of keeping it for herself, had been received by Henry. At a somewhat later moment, when Calais had passed entirely into the possession of Spain, the queen offered to lay siege to that city with twelve thousand men, but with the understanding that the success was to be entirely for her own profit. Again the king bad expressed great astonishment and indignation at the proposition.

Nevertheless, after Amiens had been lost, Henry had sent Fonquerolles on a special mission to England, asking Elizabeth's assistance in the siege for its recovery, and offering that she should keep Calais as a pledge for expenses thus incurred, on the same terms as those on which she held the Brill and Flushing in the Netherlands. This proposal, however, to make a considerable campaign in Picardy, and to be indemnified by Henry for her trouble with the pledge of a city which was not his property, did not seem tempting to Elizabeth: The mission of Fonquerolles was fruitless, as might have been supposed. Nothing certainly in the queen's attitude, up to that moment, could induce the supposition that she would help to reduce Amiens for the sake of the privilege of conquering Calais if she could.

So soon as her refusal was made certain, Henry dropped the mask. Buzanval, the regular French envoy at the Hague—even while amazing the States by rebukes for their short-comings in the field and by demands for immediate co-operation in the king's campaign, when the king was doing nothing but besiege Amiens—astonished the republican statesmen still further by telling them—that his master was listening seriously to the pope's secret offers.

His Holiness had assured the king, through the legate at Paris, that he could easily bring about a peace between him and Philip, if Henry would agree to make it alone, and he would so manage it that the king's name should not be mixed up with the negotiations, and that he should not appear as seeking for peace. It was to be considered however—so Henry's envoy intimated both at Greenwich and the Hague—that if the king should accept the pope's intervention he would be obliged to exclude from a share in it the queen and all others not of the Catholic religion, and it was feared that the same necessity which had compelled him to listen to these overtures would force him still further in the same path. He dreaded lest, between peace and war, he might fall into a position in which the law would be dictated to him either by the enemy or by those who had undertaken to help him out of danger.

Much more information to this effect did Buzanval communicate to the States on the authority of a private letter from the king, telling him of the ill-success of the mission of Fonquerolles. That diplomatist had brought back nothing from England, it appeared, save excuses, general phrases, and many references to the troubles in Ireland and to the danger of a new Spanish Armada.

It was now for the first time, moreover, that the States learned how they had been duped both by England and France in the matter of the League. To their surprise they were informed that while they were themselves furnishing four thousand men, according to the contract signed by the three powers, the queen had in reality only agreed to contribute two thousand soldiers, and these only for four months' service, within a very strict territorial limit, and under promise of immediate reimbursement of the expenses thus incurred.

These facts, together with the avowal that their magnanimous ally had all along been secretly treating for peace with the common enemy, did not make a cheerful impression upon those plain-spoken republicans, nor was it much consolation to them to receive the assurance that "after the king's death his affection and gratitude towards the States would be found deeply engraved upon his heart."

The result of such a future autopsy might seem a matter of comparative indifference, since meantime the present effect to the republic of those deep emotions was a treacherous desertion. Calvaert, too, who had so long haunted the king like his perpetual shadow, and who had believed him—at least so far as the Netherlands were concerned—to be almost without guile, had been destined after all to a rude awakening. Sick and suffering, he did not cease, so long as life was in him, to warn the States-General of the dangers impending over them from the secret negotiations which their royal ally was doing his best to conceal from them, and as to which he had for a time succeeded so dexterously in hoodwinking their envoy himself. But the honest and energetic agent of the republic did not live to see the consummation of these manoeuvres of Henry and the pope. He died in Paris during the month of June of this year.

Certainly the efforts of Spanish and Papal diplomacy had not been unsuccessful in bringing about a dissolution of the bonds of amity by which the three powers seemed so lately to be drawing themselves very closely together. The republic and Henry IV. were now on a most uncomfortable footing towards each other. On the other hand, the queen was in a very ill humour with the States and very angry with Henry. Especially the persistent manner in which the Hollanders carried on trade with Spain and were at the same time making fortunes for themselves and feeding the enemy, while Englishmen, on pain of death, were debarred from participation in such traffic, excited great and general indignation in England. In vain was it represented that this trade, if prohibited to the commonwealth would fall into the hands of neutral powers, and that Spain

would derive her supplies from the Baltic and other regions as regularly as ever, while the republic, whose whole life was in her foreign commerce, would not only become incapable of carrying on the war but would perish of inanition. The English statesmen threatened to declare all such trade contraband, and vessels engaging in it lawful prize to English cruisers.

Burghley declared, with much excitement, to Canon, that he, as well as all the council, considered the conduct of the Hollanders so unjustifiable as to make them regret that their princess had ever embarked with a State which chose to aid its own enemies in the destruction of itself and its allies. Such conduct was so monstrous that those who were told of it would hardly believe it.

The Dutch envoy observed that there were thirty thousand sailors engaged in this trade, and he asked the Lord Treasurer whether he proposed that these people should all starve or be driven into the service of the enemy. Burghley rejoined that the Hollanders had the whole world beside to pursue their traffic in, that they did indeed trade over the whole world, and had thereby become so extraordinarily, monstrously rich that there was no believing it.

Caron declared his sincere wish that this was true, but said, on the contrary, that he knew too well what extreme trouble and labour the States-General had in providing for the expenses of the war and in extracting the necessary funds from the various communities. This would hardly be the case were such great wealth in the land as was imagined. But still the English counsellors protested that they would stop this trading with the enemy at every hazard.

On the question of peace or war itself the republican diplomatists were often baffled as to the true intentions of the English Government. "As the queen is fine and false," said Marquis Havre, observing and aiding in the various intrigues which were weaving at Brussels, "and her council much the same, she is practising towards the Hollanders a double stratagem. On the one hand she induces them to incline to a general peace. On the other, her adherents, ten or twelve in number of those who govern Holland and have credit with the people, insist that the true. interest of the State is in a continuation of the war."

But Havre, adept in diplomatic chicane as he undoubtedly was, would have found it difficult to find any man of intelligence or influence in that rebellious commonwealth, of which he was once a servant, who had any doubt on that subject. It needed no English argument to persuade Olden-Barneveld, and the other statesmen who guided the destiny of the republic, that peace would be destruction. Moreover, there is no question that both the queen and Burghley would have been truly grateful had the States-General been willing to make peace and return to the allegiance which they had long since spurned.

Nevertheless it is difficult to say whether there were at this moment more of animosity in Elizabeth's mind towards her backsliding ally, with whom she had so recently and so pompously sworn an eternal friendship, or towards her ancient enemy. Although she longed for peace, she hardly saw her way to it, for she felt that the secret movements of Henry had in a manner barred the path. She confessed to the States' envoy that it was as easy for her to make black white as to make peace with Spain. To this Caron cordially assented, saying with much energy, "There is as much chance for your Majesty and for us to make peace, during the life of the present King of Spain, as to find redemption in hell."

To the Danish ambassadors, who had come to England with proposals of mediation, the queen had replied that the King of Spain had attacked her dominions many times, and had very often attempted her assassination, that after long patience she had begun to defend herself, and had been willing to show him that she had the courage and the means, not only to maintain herself against his assaults, but also to invade his realms; that, therefore, she was not disposed to speak first; nor to lay down any conditions. Yet, if she saw that the King of Spain had any remorse for his former offences against her, and wished to make atonement for them, she was willing to declare that her heart was not so alienated from peace; but that she could listen to propositions on the subject.

She said, too, that such a peace must be a general one, including both the King of France and the States of the Netherlands, for with these powers she had but lately made an offensive and defensive league against the King of Spain, from which she protested that for no consideration in the world would she ever swerve one jot.

Certainly these were words of Christian charity and good faith, but such professions are the common staple of orations and documents for public consumption. As the accounts became more and more minute, however, of Henry's intrigues with Albert, Philip, and Clement, the queen grew more angry.

She told Caron that she was quite aware that the king had long been in communication with the cardinal's emissaries, and that he had even sent some of his principal counsellors to confer with the cardinal himself at Arras, in direct violation of the stipulations of the league. She expressed her amazement at the king's conduct; for she knew very well, she said, that the league had hardly been confirmed and sworn to, before he was treating with secret agents sent to him by the cardinal. "And now," she continued, "they propose to send an ambassador to inform me of the whole proceeding, and to ask my advice and consent in regard to negotiations which they have, perchance, entirely concluded."

She further informed the republican envoy that the king had recently been taking the ground in these dealings with the common enemy; that the two kingdoms of France and England must first be provided for; that when the basis between these powers and Spain had been arranged, it would be time to make arrangements for the States, and that it would probably be found advisable to obtain a truce of three or four years between them and Spain, in which interval the government of the provinces might remain on its actual footing. During this armistice the King of Spain was to withdraw all Spanish troops from the Netherlands, in consequence of which measure all distrust would by degrees vanish, and the community, becoming more and more encouraged, would in time recognise the king for their sovereign once more.

This, according to the information received by Elizabeth from her resident minister in France, was Henry's scheme for carrying out the principles of the offensive and defensive league, which only the year before he had so solemnly concluded with the Dutch republic. Instead of assisting that commonwealth in waging her war of independence against Spain, he would endeavour to make it easy for her to return peacefully to her ancient thraldom.

The queen asked Caron what he thought of the project. How could that diplomatist reply but with polite

scorn? Not a year of such an armistice would elapse, he said, before the Spanish partisans would have it all their own way in the Netherlands, and the King of Spain would be master of the whole country. Again and again he repeated that peace, so long as Philip lived, was an impossibility for the States. No doubt that monarch would gladly consent to the proposed truce, for it, would be indeed strange if by means of it he could not so establish himself in the provinces as to easily overthrow the sovereigns who were thus helping him to so advantageous a position.

The queen listened patiently to a long and earnest remonstrance in this vein made by the envoy, and assured him that not even to gain another kingdom would she be the cause of a return of the provinces to the dominion of Spain. She would do her best to dissuade the king from his peace negotiations; but she would listen to De Maisae, the new special envoy from Henry, and would then faithfully report to Caron, by word of mouth, the substance of the conversation. The States-General did not deserve to be deceived, nor would she be a party to any deception, unless she were first cheated herself. "I feel indeed," she added, "that matters are not always managed as they should be by your Government, and that you have not always treated princes, especially myself, as we deserve to be treated. Nevertheless, your State is not a monarchy, and so we must take all things into consideration, and weigh its faults against its many perfections."

With this philosophical—and in the mouth of Elizabeth Tudor, surely very liberal—reflection, the queen terminated the interview with the republican envoy.

Meantime the conferences with the special ambassador of France proceeded. For, so soon as Henry had completed all his arrangements, and taken his decision to accept the very profitable peace offered to him by Spain, he assumed that air of frankness which so well became him, and candidly avowed his intention of doing what he had already done. Hurault de Maisse arrived in England not long before the time when the peace-commissioners were about assembling at Vervins. He was instructed to inform her Majesty that he had done his best to bring about a general alliance of the European powers from which alone the league concluded between England, France, and the Netherlands would have derived substantial strength.

But as nothing was to be hoped for from Germany, as England offered but little assistance, and as France was exhausted by her perpetual conflicts, it had become necessary for the king to negotiate for a peace. He now wished to prove, therefore, to the queen, as to a sister to whom he was under such obligations, that the interests of England were as dear to him as those of France.

The proof of these generous sentiments did not, however, seem so clear as could be wished, and there were very stormy debates, so soon as the ambassador found himself in conference with her Majesty's counsellors. The English statesmen bitterly reproached the French for having thus lightly thrown away the alliance between the two countries, and they insisted upon the duty of the king to fulfil his solemn engagements.

The reply was very frank and very decided. Kings, said De Maisse, never make treaties except with the tacit condition to embrace every thing that may be useful to them, and carefully to avoid every thing prejudicial to their interests.

The corollary from this convenient and sweeping maxim was simple enough. The king could not be expected, by his allies to reject an offered peace which was very profitable, nor to continue a war which, was very detrimental. All that they could expect was that he should communicate his intentions to them, and this he was now very cheerfully doing. Such in brief were the statements of De Maisse.

The English were indignant. They also said a stout word for the provinces, although it has been made sufficiently clear that they did not love that upstart republic. But the French ambassador replied that his, master really meant secretly to assist the States in carrying on the war until they should make an arrangement. He should send them very powerful succours for this purpose, and he expected confidently that England would assist him in this line of conduct. Thus Henry was secretly pledging himself, to make underhand but substantial war against Spain, with which power he was at that instant concluding peace, while at the same time he was abandoning his warlike league with the queen and the republic, in order to affect that very pacification. Truly the morality of the governing powers of the earth was not entirely according to the apostolic standard.

The interviews between the queen and the new ambassador were, of course, on his part, more courteous in tone than those with the counsellors, but mainly to the same effect. De Maisse stated that the Spanish king had offered to restore every place that he held in France, including Calais, Brittany, and the Marquisate of Saluces, and as he likewise manifested a willingness to come to favourable terms with her Majesty and with the States, it was obviously the duty of Henry to make these matters known to her Majesty, in whose hands was thus placed the decision between peace or continuation of the war. The queen asked what was the authority for the supposition that England was to be included by Spain in the pacification. De Maisse quoted President Richardot. In that case, the queen remarked, it was time for her to prepare for a third Spanish armada. When a former envoy from France had alluded to Richardot as expressing the same friendly sentiments on the part of his sovereign and himself, she had replied by referring to the sham negotiations of Bourbourg, by which the famous invasion of 1588 had been veiled, and she had intimated her expectation that another Spanish fleet would soon be at her throat. And within three weeks of the utterance of her prophecy the second armada, under Santa Gadea, had issued from Spain to assail her realms. Now then, as Richardot was again cited as a peace negotiator, it was time to look for a third invasion. It was an impertinence for Secretary of State Villeroy to send her word about Richardot. It was not an impertinence in King Henry, who understood war-matters better than he did affairs of state, in which kings were generally governed by their counsellors and secretaries, but it was very strange that Villeroy should be made quiet with a simple declaration of Richardot.

The queen protested that she would never consent to a peace with Spain, except with the knowledge and consent of the States. De Maisse replied that the king was of the same mind, upon which her Majesty remarked that in that case he had better have apprised her and the States of his intentions before treating alone and secretly with the enemy. The envoy denied that the king had been treating. He had only been listening to what the King of Spain had to propose, and suggesting his own wishes and intentions. The queen rejoined that this was treating if anything was, and certainly her Majesty was in the right if the term has any

meaning at all.

Elizabeth further reproachfully observed, that although the king talked about continuing the war, he seemed really tired of that dangerous pursuit, in which he had exercised himself so many long years, and that he was probably beginning to find a quiet and agreeable life more to his taste. She expressed the hope, however, that he would acquit himself honourably towards herself and her allies, and keep the oaths which he had so solemnly sworn before God.

Such was the substance of the queen's conversations with De Maisse, as she herself subsequently reported them to the States' envoy.

The republican statesmen had certainly cause enough to suspect Henry's intentions, but they did not implicitly trust Elizabeth. They feared that both king and queen were heartily sick of the war, and disposed to abandon the league, while each was bent on securing better terms than the other in any negotiations for peace. Barneveld—on the whole the most sagacious of the men then guiding the affairs of Europe, although he could dispose of but comparatively slender resources, and was merely the chief minister of a scarcely-born little commonwealth of some three million souls—was doing his best to save the league and to divert Henry from thoughts of peace. Feeling that the queen, notwithstanding her professions to Caron and others, would have gladly entered into negotiations with Philip, had she found the door as wide open as Henry had found it, he did his best to prevent both his allies from proceeding farther in that direction. He promised the French envoy at the Hague that not only would the republic continue to furnish the four thousand soldiers as stipulated in the league, but that if Henry would recommence active operations, a States' army of nine thousand foot and two thousand horse should at once take the field on the Flemish frontier of France, and aid in the campaign to the full extent of their resources. If the king were disposed to undertake the siege of Calais, the Advocate engaged that he should be likewise energetically assisted in that enterprise.

Nor was it suggested in case the important maritime stronghold were recovered that it should be transferred, not to the sovereign of France, but to the dominions of the republic. That was the queen's method of assisting an ally, but it was not the practice of the States. Buzanval, who was quite aware of his master's decision to conclude peace, suggested Henry's notion of a preliminary and general truce for six months. But of course Barneveld rejected the idea with horror. He felt, as every intelligent statesman of the commonwealth could not but feel, that an armistice would be a death-blow. It would be better, he said, for the States to lose one or two towns than to make a truce, for there were so many people in the commonwealth sure to be dazzled by the false show of a pacification, that they would be likely, after getting into the suburbs, to wish to enter the heart of the city. "If," said the Advocate, "the French and the English know what they are doing when they are, facilitating the Spanish dominion in the provinces, they would prefer to lose a third of their own kingdoms to seeing the Spaniard absolute master here."

It was determined, in this grave position of affairs, to send a special mission both to France and to England with the Advocate as its chief. Henry made no objections to this step, but, on the contrary, affected much impatience for the arrival of the envoys, and ascribed the delay to the intrigues of Elizabeth. He sent word to Prince Maurice and to Barneveld that he suspected the queen of endeavouring to get before him in negotiating with Spain in order to obtain Calais for herself. And, in truth, Elizabeth very soon afterwards informed Barneveld that she might really have had Calais, and have got the better of the king in these secret transactions.

Meantime, while the special mission to France and England was getting ready to depart, an amateur diplomatist appeared in Brussels, and made a feeble effort to effect a reconciliation between the republic and the cardinal.

This was a certain Van der Meulen, an Antwerp merchant who, for religious reasons, had emigrated to Leyden, and who was now invited by the cardinal archduke to Brussels to confer with his counsellors as to the possibility of the rebellious States accepting his authority. For, as will soon be indicated, Philip had recently resolved on a most important step. He was about to transfer the sovereignty of all the Netherlands to his daughter Isabella and her destined husband, Cardinal Albert. It would, obviously, therefore, be an excessively advantageous arrangement for those new sovereigns if the rebellious States would join hands with the obedient provinces, accept the dominion of Albert and Isabella and give up their attempt to establish a republican government. Accordingly the cardinal had intimated that the States would be allowed the practice of their religion, while the military and civil functionaries might retain office. He even suggested that he would appoint Maurice of Nassau his stadholder for the northern provinces, unless he should prefer a high position in the Imperial armies. Such was the general admiration felt in Spain and elsewhere for the military talents of the prince, that he would probably be appointed commander-in-chief of the forces against Mahomet. Van der Meulen duly reported all these ingenious schemes to the States, but the sturdy republicans only laughed at them. They saw clearly enough through such slight attempts to sow discord in their commonwealth, and to send their great chieftain to Turkey.

A most affectionate letter, written by the cardinal-archduke to the States-General, inviting them to accept his sovereignty, and another from the obedient provinces to the united States of the same purport, remained unanswered.

But the Antwerp merchant, in his interviews with the crafty politicians who surrounded the cardinal, was able at least to obtain some insight into the opinions prevalent at Brussels; and these were undoubtedly to the effect that both England and France were willing enough to abandon the cause of the Netherlands, provided only that they could obtain satisfactory arrangements for themselves.

Van der Meulen remarked to Richardot that in all their talk about a general peace nothing had been said of the Queen of England, to whom the States were under so great obligations, and without whom they would never enter into any negotiations.

Richardot replied that the queen had very sagaciously provided for the safety of her own kingdom, and had kept up the fire everywhere else in order to shelter herself. There was more difficulty for this lady, he said, than for any of the rest. She had shown herself very obstinate, and had done them a great deal of mischief. They knew very well that the King of France did not love her. Nevertheless, as they had resolved upon a

general peace, they were willing to treat with her as well as with the others.

ETEXT EDITOR'S BOOKMARKS:

Auction sales of judicial ermine
Decline a bribe or interfere with the private sale of places
Famous fowl in every pot
Fellow worms had been writhing for half a century in the dust
For his humanity towards the conquered garrisons (censured)
Historical scepticism may shut its eyes to evidence
Imagining that they held the world's destiny in their hands
King had issued a general repudiation of his debts
Loud, nasal, dictatorial tone, not at all agreeable
Peace would be destruction
Repudiation of national debts was never heard of before
Some rude lessons from that vigorous little commonwealth
Such a crime as this had never been conceived (bankruptcy)
They liked not such divine right nor such gentle-mindedness
Whether murders or stratagems, as if they were acts of virtue

CHAPTER XXXIV. 1598

Mission of the States to Henry to prevent the consummation of peace with Spain—Proposal of Henry to elevate Prince Maurice to the sovereignty, of the States—Embarkation of the States' envoys for England—Their interview with Queen Elizabeth—Return of the envoys from England—Demand of Elizabeth for repayment of her advances to the republic—Second embassy to England—Final arrangement between the Queen and the States.

The great Advocate was now to start on his journey in order to make a supreme effort both with Henry and with Elizabeth to prevent the consummation of this fatal peace. Admiral Justinus of Nassau, natural son of William the Silent, was associated with Barneveld in the mission, a brave fighting man, a staunch patriot, and a sagacious counsellor; but the Advocate on this occasion, as in other vital emergencies of the commonwealth, was all in all.

The instructions of the envoys were simple. They were to summon the king to fulfil his solemnly sworn covenants with the league. The States-General had never doubted, they said, that so soon as the enemy had begun to feel the effects, of that league he would endeavour to make a composition with one or other of the parties in order to separate them, and to break up that united strength which otherwise he could never resist. The king was accordingly called upon to continue the war against the common enemy, and the States-General offered, over and above the four hundred and fifty thousand florins promised by them for the support of the four thousand infantry for the year 1598, to bring their whole military power, horse and foot, into the field to sustain his Majesty in the war, whether separately or in conjunction, whether in the siege of cities or in open campaigns. Certainly they could hardly offer fairer terms than these.

Henry had complained, and not unreasonably, that Elizabeth had made no offers of assistance for carrying on the war either to Fonquerolles or to Hurault de Maisse; but he certainly could make no reproach of that nature against the republic, nor assign their lukewarmness as an excuse for his desertion.

The envoys were ready to take their departure for France on the last day of January.

It might be a curious subject to consider how far historical events are modified and the world's destiny affected by the different material agencies which man at various epochs has had at his disposal. The human creature in his passions and ambitions, his sensual or sordid desires, his emotional and moral nature, undergoes less change than might be hoped from age to age. The tyrant; the patriot, the demagogue, the voluptuary, the peasant, the trader, the intriguing politician, the hair-splitting diplomatist, the self-sacrificing martyr, the self-seeking courtier, present essentially one type in the twelfth, the sixteenth, the nineteenth, or any other century. The human tragi-comedy seems ever to repeat itself with the same bustle, with the same excitement for immediate interests, for the development of the instant plot or passing episode, as if the universe began and ended with each generation—as in reality it would appear to do for the great multitude of the actors. There seems but a change of masks, of costume, of phraseology, combined with a noisy but eternal monotony. Yet while men are produced and are whirled away again in endless succession, Man remains, and to all appearance is perpetual and immortal even on this earth. Whatever science acquires man inherits. Whatever steadfastness is gained for great moral truths which change not through the ages—however they may be thought, in dark or falsely brilliant epochs, to resolve themselves into elemental vapour—gives man a securer foothold in his onward and upward progress. The great, continuous history of that progress is not made up of the reigns of kings or the lives of politicians, with whose names history has often found it convenient to mark its epochs. These are but milestones on the turnpike. Human progress is over a vast field, and it is only at considerable intervals that a retrospective view enables us to discern whether the movement has been slow or rapid, onward or retrograde.

The record of our race is essentially unwritten. What we call history is but made up of a few scattered fragments, while it is scarcely given to human intelligence to comprehend the great whole. Yet it is strange to reflect upon the leisurely manner in which great affairs were conducted in the period with which we are now occupied, as compared with the fever and whirl of our own times, in which the stupendous powers of steam and electricity are ever-ready to serve the most sublime or the most vulgar purposes of mankind. Whether there were ever a critical moment in which a rapid change might have been effected in royal or national councils, had telegraphic wires and express trains been at the command of Henry, or Burghley, or Barneveld, or the Cardinal Albert, need not and cannot be decided. It is almost diverting, however, to see how closely the

intrigues of cabinets, the movements of armies, the plans of patriots, were once dependent on those natural elements over which man has now gained almost despotic control.

Here was the republic intensely eager to prevent, with all speed, the consummation of a treaty between its ally and its enemy—a step which it was feared might be fatal to its national existence, and concerning which there seemed a momentary hesitation. Yet Barneveld and Justinus of Nassau, although ready on the last day of January, were not able to sail from the Brill to Dieppe until the 18th March, on account of a persistent south-west wind.

After forty-six days of waiting, the envoys, accompanied by Buzanval, Henry's resident at the Hague, were at last, on the 18th March, enabled to set sail with a favourable breeze. As it was necessary for travellers in that day to provide themselves with every possible material for their journey—carriages, horses, hosts of servants, and beds, fortunate enough if they found roads and occasionally food—Barneveld and Nassau were furnished with three ships of war, while another legation on its way to England had embarked in two other vessels of the same class. A fleet of forty or fifty merchantmen sailed under their convoy. Departing from the Brill in this imposing manner, they sailed by Calais, varying the monotony of the voyage by a trifling sea-fight with some cruisers from that Spanish port, neither side receiving any damage.

Landing at Dieppe on the morning of the 20th, the envoys were received with much ceremony at the city gates by the governor of the place, who conducted them in a stately manner to a house called the king's mansion, which he politely placed at their disposal. "As we learned, however," says Barneveld, with grave simplicity; "that there was no furniture whatever in that royal abode, we thanked his Excellency, and declared that we would rather go to a tavern."

After three days of repose and preparation in Dieppe, they started at dawn on their journey to Rouen, where they arrived at sundown.

On the next morning but one they set off again on their travels, and slept that night at Louviers. Another long day's journey brought them to Evreux. On the 27th they came to Dreux, on the 28th to Chartres, and on the 29th to Chateaudun. On the 30th, having started an hour before sunrise, they were enabled after a toilsome journey to reach Blois at an hour after dark. Exhausted with fatigue, they reposed in that city for a day, and on the 1st April proceeded, partly by the river Loire and partly by the road, as far as Tours. Here they were visited by nobody, said Barneveld, but fiddlers and drummers, and were execrably lodged. Nevertheless they thought the town in other respects agreeable, and apparently beginning to struggle out of the general desolation of, France. On the end April they slept at Langeais, and on the night of the 3rd reached Saumur, where they were disappointed at the absence of the illustrious Duplessis Mornay, then governor of that city. A glance at any map of France will show the course of the journey taken by the travellers, which, after very hard work and great fatigue, had thus brought them from Dieppe to Saumur in about as much time as is now consumed by an average voyage from Europe to America. In their whole journey from Holland to Saumur, inclusive of the waiting upon the wind and other enforced delays, more than two months had been consumed. Twenty-four hours would suffice at present for the excursion.

At Saumur they received letters informing them that the king was "expecting them with great devotion at Angiers." A despatch from Cecil, who was already with Henry, also apprised them that he found "matters entirely arranged for a peace." This would be very easily accomplished, he said, for France and England, but the great difficulty was for the Netherlands. He had come to France principally for the sake of managing affairs for the advantage of the States, but he begged the envoys not to demean themselves as if entirely bent on war.

They arrived at Angiers next day before dark, and were met at a league's distance from the gates by the governor of the castle, attended by young Prince Frederic Henry of Nassau; followed by a long train of nobles and mounted troops. Welcomed in this stately manner on behalf of the king, the envoys were escorted to the lodgings provided for them in the city. The same evening they waited on the widowed princess of Orange, Louisa of Coligny, then residing temporarily with her son in Angiera, and were informed by her that the king's mind was irrevocably fixed on peace. She communicated, however, the advice of her step-son in law, the Duke of Bouillon, that they should openly express their determination to continue the war, notwithstanding that both their Majesties of England and France wished to negotiate. Thus the counsels of Bouillon to the envoys were distinctly opposed to those of Cecil, and it was well known to them that the duke was himself sincerely anxious that the king should refuse the pacific offers of Spain.

Next morning, 5th April, they were received at the gates of the castle by the governor of Anjou and the commandant of the citadel of Angiers, attended by a splendid retinue, and were conducted to the king, who was walking in the garden of the fortress. Henry received them with great demonstrations of respect, assuring them that he considered the States-General the best and most faithful friends that he possessed in the world, and that he had always been assisted by them in time of his utmost need with resoluteness and affection.

The approach of the English ambassador, accompanied by the Chancellor of France and several other persons, soon brought the interview to a termination. Barneveld then presented several gentlemen attached to the mission, especially his son and Hugo Grotius, then a lad of fifteen, but who had already gained such distinction at Leyden that Scaliger, Pontanus; Heinsius, Dousa, and other professors, foretold that he would become more famous than Erasmus. They were all very cordially received by the king, who subsequently bestowed especial marks of his consideration upon the youthful Grotius.

The same day the betrothal of Monsieur Caesar with the daughter of the Duke of Mercoeur was celebrated, and there was afterwards much dancing and banqueting at the castle. It was obvious enough to the envoys that the matter of peace and war was decided. The general of the Franciscans, sent by the pope, had been flitting very busily for many months between Rome, Madrid, Brussels, and Paris, and there could be little doubt that every detail of the negotiations between France and Spain had been arranged while Olden-Barneveld and his colleague had been waiting for the head-wind to blow itself out at the Brill.

Nevertheless no treaty had as yet been signed, and it was the business of the republican diplomatists to prevent the signature if possible. They felt, however, that they were endeavouring to cause water to run up

hill. Villeroy, De Maisse, and Buzanval came to them to recount, by the king's order, everything that had taken place. This favour was, however, the less highly appreciated by them, as they felt that the whole world was in a very short time to be taken as well into the royal confidence.

These French politicians stated that the king, after receiving the most liberal offers of peace on the part of Spain, had communicated all the facts to the queen, and had proposed, notwithstanding these most profitable overtures, to continue the war as long as her Majesty and the States-General would assist him in it. De Maisse had been informed, however, by the queen that she had no means to assist the king withal, and was, on the contrary, very well disposed to make peace. The lord treasurer had avowed the same opinions as his sovereign, had declared himself to be a man of peace, and had exclaimed that peace once made he would sing "Nunc dimitte servum tuum Domine." Thereupon, at the suggestion of the legate, negotiations had begun at Vervins, and although nothing was absolutely concluded, yet Sir Robert Cecil, having just been sent as special ambassador from the queen, had brought no propositions whatever of assistance in carrying on the war, but plenty of excuses about armadas, Irish rebellions, and the want of funds. There was nothing in all this, they said, but want of good will. The queen had done nothing and would do nothing for the league herself, nor would she solicit for it the adherence of other kings and princes. The king, by making peace, could restore his kingdom to prosperity, relieve the distress of his subjects, and get back all his lost cities—Calais, Ardres, Dourlens, Blavet, and many more—without any expense of treasure or of blood.

Certainly there was cogency in this reasoning from the point of view of the French king, but it would have been as well to state, when he was so pompously making a league for offensive and defensive war, that his real interests and his real purposes were peace. Much excellent diplomacy, much ringing of bells, firing of artillery, and singing of anthems in royal chapels, and much disappointment to honest Dutchmen, might have thus been saved. It is also instructive to observe the difference between the accounts of De Maisse's negotiations in England given by that diplomatist himself, and those rendered by the queen to the States' envoy.

Of course the objurgations of the Hollanders that the king, in a very fallacious hope of temporary gain to himself, was about to break his solemn promises to his allies and leave them to their fate, drew but few tears down the iron cheeks of such practised diplomatists as Villeroy and his friends.

The envoys visited De Rosuy, who assured them that he was very much their friend, but gave them to understand that there was not the slightest possibility of inducing the king to break off the negotiations.

Before taking final leave of his Majesty they concluded, by advice of the Princess of Orange and of Buzanval, to make the presents which they had brought with them from the States-General. Accordingly they sent, through the hands of the princess, four pieces of damask linen and two pieces of fine linen to the king's sister, Madame Catherine, two pieces of linen to Villeroy, and two to the beautiful Gabrielle. The two remaining pieces were bestowed upon Buzanval for his pains in accompanying them on the journey and on their arrival at court.

The incident shows the high esteem in which the Netherland fabrics were held at that period.

There was a solemn conference at last between the leading counsellors of the king, the chancellor, the Dukes of Espernon and Bouillon, Count Schomberg, and De Sancy, Plessis, Buzanval, Maisse, the Dutch envoys, and the English ambassador and commissioner Herbert. Cecil presided, and Barneveld once more went over the whole ground, resuming with his usual vigour all the arguments by which the king's interest and honour were proved to require him to desist from the peace negotiations. And the orator had as much success as is usual with those who argue against a foregone conclusion. Everyone had made up his mind. Everyone knew that peace was made. It is unnecessary, therefore, to repeat the familiar train of reasoning. It is superfluous to say that the conference was barren. On the same evening Villeroy called on the States' envoys, and informed them plainly, on the part of the king, that his Majesty had fully made up his mind.

On the 23rd April—three mortal weeks having thus been wasted in diplomatic trilling—Barneveld was admitted to his Majesty's dressing-room. The Advocate at the king's request came without his colleague, and was attended only by his son. No other persons were present in the chamber save Buzanval and Beringen. The king on this occasion confirmed what had so recently been stated by Villeroy. He had thoroughly pondered, he said, all the arguments used by the States to dissuade him from the negotiation, and had found them of much weight. The necessities of his kingdom, however, compelled him to accept a period of repose. He would not, however, in the slightest degree urge the States to join in the treaty. He desired their security, and would aid in maintaining it. What had most vexed him was that the Protestants with great injustice accused him of intending to make war upon them. But innumerable and amazing reports were flying abroad, both among his own subjects, the English, and the enemies' spies, as to these secret conferences. He then said that he would tell the Duke of Bouillon to speak with Sir Robert Cecil concerning a subject which now for the first time he would mention privately to Olden-Barneveld.

The king then made a remarkable and unexpected suggestion. Alluding to the constitution of the Netherlands, he remarked that a popular government in such emergencies as those then existing was subject to more danger than monarchies were, and he asked the Advocate if he thought there was no disposition to elect a prince. Barneveld replied that the general inclination was rather for a good republic. The government, however, he said, was not of the people, but aristocratic, and the state was administered according to laws and charters by the principal inhabitants, whether nobles or magistrates of cities. Since the death of the late Prince of Orange, and the offer made to the King of France, and subsequently to the Queen of England, of the sovereignty, there had been no more talk on that subject, and to discuss again so delicate a matter might cause divisions and other difficulties in the State.

Henry then spoke of Prince Maurice, and asked whether, if he should be supported by the Queen of England and the King of France, it would not be possible to confer the sovereignty upon him.

Here certainly was an astounding question to be discharged like a pistol-shot full in the face of a republican minister.

The answer of the Advocate was sufficiently adroit if not excessively sincere.

If your Majesty, said he, together with her Majesty the queen, think the plan expedient, and are both willing

on this footing to continue the war, to rescue all the Netherlands from the hands of the Spaniards and their adherents, and thus render the States eternally obliged to the sovereigns and kingdoms of France and England, my lords the States-General would probably be willing to accept this advice.

But the king replied by repeating that repose was indispensable to him.

Without inquiring for the present whether the project of elevating Maurice to the sovereignty of the Netherlands, at the expense of the republican constitution, was in harmony or not with the private opinions of Barneveld at that period, it must be admitted that the condition he thus suggested was a very safe one to offer. He had thoroughly satisfied himself during the period in which he had been baffled by the southwest gales at the Brill and by the still more persistent head-winds which he had found prevailing at the French court, that it was hopeless to strive for that much-desired haven, a general war. The admiral and himself might as well have endeavoured to persuade Mahomet III. and Sigismund of Poland to join the States in a campaign against Cardinal Albert, as to hope for the same good offices from Elizabeth and Henry.

Having received exactly the answer which he expected, he secretly communicated, next day, to Cecil the proposition thus made by the king. Subsequently he narrated the whole conversation to the Queen of England.

On the 27th April both Barneveld and Nassau were admitted to the royal dressing-room in Nantes citadel for a final audience. Here, after the usual common places concerning his affection for the Netherlands, and the bitter necessity which compelled him to desert the alliance, Henry again referred to his suggestion in regard to Prince Maurice; urging a change from a republican to a monarchical form of government as the best means of preserving the State.

The envoys thanked the king for all the honours conferred upon them, but declared themselves grieved to the heart by his refusal to grant their request. The course pursued by his Majesty, they said, would be found very hard of digestion by the States, both in regard to the whole force of the enemy which would now come upon their throats, and because of the bad example thus set for other powers.

They then took leave, with the usual exchange of compliments. At their departure his Majesty personally conducted them through various apartments until they came to the chamber of his mistress, the Duchess of Beaufort, then lying in childbed. Here he drew wide open the bed-curtains, and bade them kiss the lady. They complied, and begging the duchess to use her influence in their behalf, respectfully bade her farewell. She promised not to forget their request, and thanked them for the presents of damask and fine linen.

Such was the result of the mission of the great Advocate and his colleague to Henry IV., from which so much had been hoped; and for anything useful accomplished, after such an expenditure of time, money, and eloquence, the whole transaction might have begun and ended in this touching interview with the beautiful Gabrielle.

On the 19th of May the envoys embarked at Dieppe for England, and on the 25th were safely lodged with the resident minister of the republic, Noel de Caron, at the village of Clapham.

Having so ill-succeeded in their attempts to prevent the treaty between France and Spain, they were now engaged in what seemed also a forlorn hope, the preservation of their offensive and defensive alliance with England. They were well aware that many of the leading counsellors of Elizabeth, especially Burghley and Buckhurst, were determined upon peace. They knew that the queen was also heartily weary of the war and of the pugnacious little commonwealth which had caused her so much expense. But they knew, too, that Henry, having now secured the repose of his own kingdom, was anything but desirous that his deserted allies should enjoy the same advantage. The king did not cease to assure the States that he would secretly give them assistance in their warfare against his new ally, while Secretary of State Villeroy, as they knew, would place every possible impediment in the way of the queen's negotiations with Spain.

Elizabeth, on her part, was vexed with everybody. What the States most feared was that she might, in her anger or her avarice, make use of the cautionary towns in her negotiations with Philip. At any rate, said Francis Aerssens, then States' minister in France, she will bring us to the brink of the precipice, that we may then throw ourselves into her arms in despair.

The queen was in truth resolved to conclude a peace if a peace could be made. If not, she was determined to make as good a bargain with the States as possible, in regard to the long outstanding account of her advances. Certainly it was not unreasonable that she should wish to see her exchequer reimbursed by people who, as she believed, were rolling in wealth, the fruit of a contraband commerce which she denied to her own subjects, and who were in honour bound to pay their debts to her now, if they wished her aid to be continued. Her subjects were impoverished and panting for peace, and although, as she remarked, "their sense of duty restrained them from the slightest disobedience to her absolute commands," still she could not forgive herself for thus exposing them to perpetual danger.

She preferred on the whole, however, that the commonwealth should consent to its own dissolution; for she thought it unreasonable that—after this war of thirty years, during fifteen of which she had herself actively assisted them—these republican Calvinists should, refuse to return to the dominion of their old tyrant and the pope. To Barneveld, Maurice of Nassau, and the States-General this did not seem a very logical termination to so much hard fighting.

Accordingly, when on the 26th of May the two envoys fell on their knees—as the custom was—before the great queen, and had been raised by her to their feet again, they found her Majesty in marvellously ill-humour. Olden-Barneveld recounted to her the results of their mission to France, and said that from beginning to end it had been obvious that there could be no other issue. The king was indifferent, he had said, whether the States preferred peace or war, but in making his treaty he knew that he had secured a profit for himself, inflicted damage on his enemy, and done no harm to his friends.

Her Majesty then interrupted the speaker by violent invectives against the French king for his treachery. She had written with her own hand, she said, to tell him that she never had believed him capable of doing what secretaries and other servants had reported concerning him, but which had now proved true.

Then she became very abusive to the Dutch envoys, telling them that they were quite unjustifiable in not

following Sir Robert Cecil's advice, and in not engaging with him at once in peace negotiations; at least so far as to discover what the enemy's intentions might be. She added, pettishly, that if Prince Maurice and other functionaries were left in the enjoyment of their offices, and if the Spaniards were sent out of the country, there seemed no reason why such terms should not be accepted.

Barneveld replied that such accommodation was of course impossible, unless they accepted their ancient sovereign as prince. Then came the eternal two points—obedience to God, which meant submission to the pope; and obedience to the king, that was to say, subjection to his despotic authority. Thus the Christian religion would be ruined throughout the provinces, and the whole land be made a bridge and a ladder for Spanish ambition.

The queen here broke forth into mighty oaths, interrupting the envoy's discourse, protesting over and over again by the living God that she would not and could not give the States any further assistance; that she would leave them to their fate; that her aid rendered in their war had lasted much longer than the siege of Troy did, and swearing that she had been a fool to help them and the king of France as she had done, for it was nothing but evil passions that kept the States so obstinate.

The envoy endeavoured to soothe her, urging that as she had gained the reputation over the whole world of administering her affairs with admirable, yea with almost divine wisdom, she should now make use of that sagacity in the present very difficult matter. She ought to believe that it was not evil passion, nor ambition, nor obstinacy that prevented the States from joining in these negotiations, but the determination to maintain their national existence, the Christian religion, and their ancient liberties and laws. They did not pretend, he said, to be wiser than great monarch or their counsellors, but the difference between their form of government and a monarchy must be their excuse.

Monarchs, when they made treaties, remained masters, and could protect their realms and their subjects from danger. The States-General could not accept a prince without placing themselves under his absolute authority, and the Netherlanders would never subject themselves to their deadly enemy, whom they had long ago solemnly renounced.

Surely these remarks of the Advocate should have seemed entirely unanswerable. Surely there was no politician in Europe so ignorant as not to know that any treaty of peace between Philip and the States meant their unconditional subjugation and the complete abolition of the Protestant religion. Least of all did the Queen of England require information on this great matter of state. It was cruel trifling therefore, it was inhuman insolence on her part, to suggest anything like a return of the States to the dominion of Spain.

But her desire for peace and her determination to get back her money overpowered at that time all other considerations.

The States wished to govern themselves, she said; why then could they not make arrangements against all dangers, and why could they not lay down conditions under which the king would not really be their master; especially if France and England should guarantee them against any infraction of their rights. By the living God! by the living God! by the living God! she swore over and over again as her anger rose, she would never more have anything to do with such people; and she deeply regretted having thrown away her money and the lives of her subjects in so stupid a manner.

Again the grave and experienced envoy of the republic strove with calm and earnest words to stay the torrent of her wrath; representing that her money and her pains had by no means been wasted, that the enemy had been brought to shame and his finances to confusion; and urging her, without paying any heed to the course pursued by the King of France, to allow the republic to make levies of troops, at its own expense, within her kingdom.

But her Majesty was obdurate. "How am I to defend myself?" she cried; "how are the affairs of Ireland to be provided for? how am I ever to get back my money? who is to pay the garrisons of Brill and Flushing?" And with this she left the apartment, saying that her counsellors would confer with the envoys.'

From the beginning to the end of the interview the queen was in a very evil temper, and took no pains to conceal her dissatisfaction with all the world.

Now there is no doubt whatever that the subsidies furnished by England to the common cause were very considerable, amounting in fourteen years, according to the queen's calculation, to nearly fourteen hundred thousand pounds sterling. But in her interviews with the republican statesmen she was too prone to forget that it was a common cause, to forget that the man who had over and over again attempted her assassination, who had repeatedly attempted the invasion of her realms with the whole strength of the most powerful military organization in the world, whose dearest wish on earth was still to accomplish her dethronement and murder, to extirpate from England the religion professed by the majority of living Englishmen, and to place upon her vacant throne a Spanish, German, or Italian prince, was as much her enemy as he was the foe of his ancient subjects in the Netherlands. At that very epoch Philip was occupied in reminding the pope that the two had always agreed as to the justice of the claims of the Infanta Isabella to the English crown, and calling on his Holiness to sustain those pretensions, now that she had been obliged, in consequence of the treaty with the Prince of Bearne, to renounce her right to reign over France.

Certainly it was fair enough for the queen and her, counsellors to stand out for an equitable arrangement of the debt; but there was much to dispute in the figures. When was ever an account of fifteen years' standing adjusted, whether between nations or individuals, without much wrangling? Meantime her Majesty held excellent security in two thriving and most important Netherland cities. But had the States consented to re-establish the Spanish authority over the whole of their little Protestant republic, was there an English child so ignorant of arithmetic or of history as not to see how vast would be the peril, and how incalculable the expense, thus caused to England?

Yet besides the Cecils and the lord high admiral, other less influential counsellors of the crown—even the upright and accomplished Buckhurst, who had so often proved his friendship for the States—were in favour of negotiation. There were many conferences with meagre results. The Englishmen urged that the time had come for the States to repay the queen's advances, to relieve her from future subsidies, to assume the payment of the garrisons in the cautionary towns, and to furnish a force in defence of England when

attacked. Such was the condition of the kingdom, they said—being, as it was, entirely without fortified cities—that a single battle would imperil the whole realm, so that it was necessary to keep the enemy out of it altogether.

These arguments were not unreasonable, but the inference was surely illogical. The special envoys from the republic had not been instructed to treat about the debt. This had been the subject of perpetual negotiation. It was discussed almost every day by the queen's commissioners at the Hague and by the States' resident minister at London. Olden-Barneveld and the admiral had been sent forth by the Staten in what in those days was considered great haste to prevent a conclusion of a treaty between their two allies and the common enemy. They had been too late in France, and now, on arriving in England, they found that government steadily drifting towards what seemed the hopeless shipwreck of a general peace.

What must have been the grief of Olden-Barneveld when he heard from the lips of the enlightened Buckhurst that the treaty of 1585 had been arranged to expire—according to the original limitation—with a peace, and that as the States could now make peace and did not choose to do so, her Majesty must be considered as relieved from her contract of alliance, and as justified in demanding repayment of her advances!

To this perfidious suggestion what could the States' envoy reply but that as a peace such as the treaty of 1585 presupposed—to wit, with security for the Protestant religion and for the laws and liberties of the provinces—was impossible, should the States now treat with the king or the cardinal?

The envoys had but one more interview with, the queen, in which she was more benignant in manner but quite as peremptory in her demands. Let the States either thoroughly satisfy her as to past claims and present necessities, or let them be prepared for her immediate negotiation with the enemy. Should she decide to treat, she would not be unmindful of their interests, she said, nor deliver them over into the enemy's hands. She repeated, however, the absurd opinion that there were means enough of making Philip nominal sovereign of all the Netherlands, without allowing him to exercise any authority over them. As if the most Catholic and most absolute monarch that ever breathed could be tied down by the cobwebs of constitutional or treaty stipulations; as if the previous forty years could be effaced from the record of history.

She asked, too, in case the rumours of the intended transfer of the Netherlands to the cardinal or the Infanta should prove true, which she doubted, whether this arrangement would make any difference in the sentiments of the States.

Barneveld replied that the transfer was still uncertain, but that they had no more confidence in the cardinal or the Infants than in the King of Spain himself.

On taking leave of the queen the envoys waited upon Lord Burghley, whom they found sitting in an arm-chair in his bedchamber, suffering from the gout and with a very fierce countenance. He made no secret of his opinions in favour of negotiation, said that the contracts made by monarchs should always be interpreted reasonably, and pronounced a warm eulogy on the course pursued by the King of France. It was his Majesty's duty, he said, to seize the best opportunity for restoring repose to his subjects and his realms, and it was the duty of other sovereigns to do the same.

The envoys replied that they were not disposed at that moment to sit in judgment upon the king's actions. They would content themselves with remarking that in their opinion even kings and princes were bound by their contracts, oaths, and pledges before God and man; and with this wholesome sentiment they took leave of the lord high treasurer.

They left London immediately, on the last day of May, without, passports. or despatches of recal, and embarked at Gravesend in the midst of a gale of wind.

Lord Essex, the sincere friend of the republic, was both surprised and disturbed at their sudden departure, and sent a special courier, after them to express his regrets at the unsatisfactory termination to their mission: "My mistress knows very well," said he, "that she is an absolute princess, and that, when her ministers have done their extreme duty, she wills what she wills."

The negotiations between England and Spain were deferred, however, for a brief space, and a special message was despatched to the Hague as to the arrangement of the debt. "Peace at once with Philip," said the queen, "or else full satisfaction of my demands."

Now it was close dealing between such very thrifty and acute bargainers as the queen and the Netherland republic.

Two years before, the States had offered to pay twenty thousand pounds a year on her Majesty's birthday so long as the war should last, and after a peace, eighty thousand pounds annually for four years. The queen, on her part, fixed the sum total of the debt at nearly a million and a half sterling, and required instant payment of at least one hundred thousand pounds on account, besides provision for a considerable annual refunding, assumption by the States of the whole cost of the garrisons in the cautionary towns, and assurance of assistance in case of an attack upon England. Thus there was a whole ocean between the disputants.

Vere and Gilpin were protocolling and marshalling accounts at the Hague, and conducting themselves with much arrogance and bitterness, while, meantime, Barneveld had hardly had time to set his foot on his native shores before he was sent back again to England at the head of another solemn legation. One more effort was to be made to arrange this financial problem and to defeat the English peace party.

The offer of the year 1596 just alluded to was renewed and instantly rejected. Naturally enough, the Dutch envoys were disposed, in the exhausting warfare which was so steadily draining their finances, to pay down as little as possible on the nail, while providing for what they considered a liberal annual sinking fund.

The English, on the contrary, were for a good round sum in actual cash, and held the threatened negotiation with Spain over the heads of the unfortunate envoys like a whip.

So the queen's counsellors and the republican envoys travelled again and again over the well-worn path.

On the 29th June, Buckhurst took Olden-Barneveld into his cabinet, and opened his heart to him, not as a servant of her Majesty, he said, but as a private Englishman. He was entirely for peace. Now that peace was offered to her Majesty, a continuance of the war was unrighteous, and the Lord God's blessing could not be

upon it. Without God's blessing no resistance could be made by the queen nor by the States to the enemy, who was ten times more powerful than her Majesty in kingdoms, provinces, number of subjects, and money. He had the pope, the emperor, the Dukes of Savoy and Lorraine, and the republic of Genoa, for his allies. He feared that the war might come upon England, and that they might be fated on one single day to win or lose all. The queen possessed no mines, and was obliged to carry on the war by taxing her people. The king had ever-flowing fountains in his mines; the queen nothing but a stagnant pool, which, when all the water was pumped out, must in the end be dry. He concluded, therefore, that as her Majesty had no allies but the Netherlands, peace was best for England, and advisable for the provinces. Arrangements could easily be made to limit the absolute authority of Spain.

This highly figurative view of the subject—more becoming to the author of Ferrex and Porrex than to so, experienced a statesman as Sackville had become since his dramatic days—did not much impress Barneveld. He answered that, although the King of Spain was unquestionably very powerful, the Lord God was still stronger; that England and the Netherlands together could maintain the empire of the seas, which was of the utmost importance, especially for England; but that if the republic were to make her submission to Spain, and become incorporate with that power, the control of the seas was lost for ever to England.

The Advocate added the unanswerable argument that to admit Philip as sovereign, and then to attempt a limitation of his despotism was a foolish dream.

Buckhurst repeated that the republic was the only ally of England, that there was no confidence to be placed by her in any other power, and that for himself, he was, as always, very much the friend of the States.

Olden-Barneveld might well have prayed, however, to be delivered from such friends. To thrust one's head into the lion's mouth, while one's friends urge moderation on the noble animal, can never be considered a cheerful or prudent proceeding.

At last, after all offers had been rejected which the envoys had ventured to make, Elizabeth sent for Olden-Barneveld and Caron and demanded their ultimatum within twenty-four hours. Should it prove unsatisfactory, she would at once make peace with Spain.

On the 1st August the envoys accordingly proposed to Cecil and the other ministers to pay thirty thousand pounds a year, instead of twenty thousand, so long as the war should last, but they claimed the right of redeeming the cautionary towns at one hundred thousand pounds each. This seemed admissible, and Cecil and his colleagues pronounced the affair arranged. But they had reckoned without the queen after all.

Elizabeth sent for Caron as soon as she heard of the agreement, flew into a great rage, refused the terms, swore that she would instantly make peace with Spain, and thundered loudly against her ministers.

"They were great beasts," she said, "if they had stated that she would not treat with the enemy. She had merely intended to defer the negotiations."

So the whole business was to be done over again. At last the sum claimed by the queen, fourteen hundred thousand pounds, was reduced by agreement to eight hundred thousand, and one-half of this the envoys undertook on the part of the States to refund in annual payments of thirty thousand pounds, while the remaining four hundred thousand should be provided for by some subsequent arrangement. All attempts, however, to obtain a promise from the queen to restore the cautionary towns to the republic in case of a peace between Spain and England remained futile.

That was to be a bone of contention for many years.

It was further agreed by the treaty, which was definitely signed on the 16th August, that, in case England were invaded by the common enemy, the States should send to the queen's assistance at least thirty ships of war, besides five thousand infantry and five squadrons of horse.

CHAPTER XXXV.

Negotiations between France and Spain—Conclusion of the treaty of peace—Purchase of the allegiance of the French nobles—Transfer of the Netherlands to Albert and Isabella—Marriage of the Infante and the Infanta—Illness of Philip II.—Horrible nature of his malady—His last hours and death—Review of his reign—Extent of the Spanish dominions—Causes of the greatness of Spain, and of its downfall—Philip's wars and their expenses—The Crown revenues of Spain—Character of the people—Their inordinate self-esteem—Consequent deficiency of labour—Ecclesiastical Government—Revenues of the Church—Characteristics of the Spanish clergy—Foreign commerce of Spain—Governmental system of Philip II.—Founded on the popular ignorance and superstition—Extinction of liberty in Spain—The Holy Inquisition—The work and character of Philip.

While the utterly barren conferences had been going on at Angiers and Nantes between Henry IV. and the republican envoys, the negotiations had been proceeding at Vervins.

President Richardot on behalf of Spain, and Secretary of State Villeroy as commissioner of Henry, were the chief negotiators.

Two old acquaintances, two ancient Leaguers, two bitter haters of Protestants and rebels, two thorough adepts in diplomatic chicane, they went into this contest like gladiators who thoroughly understood and respected each other's skill.

Richardot was recognized by all as the sharpest and most unscrupulous politician in the obedient Netherlands. Villeroy had conducted every intrigue of France during a whole generation of mankind. They scarcely did more than measure swords and test each other's objects, before arriving at a conviction as to the inevitable result of the encounter.

It was obvious at once to Villeroy that Philip was determined to make peace with France in order that the triple alliance might be broken up. It was also known to the French diplomatist that the Spanish king was ready for, almost every concession to Henry, in order that this object might be accomplished.

All that Richardot hoped to save out of the various conquests made by Spain over France was Calais.

But Villeroy told him that it was useless to say a word on that subject. His king insisted on the restoration of the place. Otherwise he would make no peace. It was enough, he said, that his Majesty said nothing about Navarre.

Richardot urged that at the time when the English had conquered Calais it had belonged to Artois, not to France. It was no more than equitable, then, that it should be retained by its original proprietor.

The general of the Franciscans, who acted as a kind of umpire in the transactions, then took each negotiator separately aside and whispered in his ear.

Villeroy shook his head, and said he had given his ultimatum. Richardot acknowledged that he had something in reserve, upon which the monk said that it was time to make it known.

Accordingly—the two being all ears—Richardot observed that what he was about to state he said with fear and trembling. He knew not what the King of Spain would think of his proposition, but he would, nevertheless, utter the suggestion that Calais should be handed over to the pope.

His Holiness would keep the city in pledge until the war with the rebels was over, and then there would be leisure enough to make definite arrangements on the subject.

Now Villeroy was too experienced a practitioner to be imposed upon, by this ingenious artifice. Moreover, he happened to have an intercepted letter in his possession in which Philip told the cardinal that Calais was to be given up if the French made its restitution a sine qua non. So Villeroy did make it a sine qua non, and the conferences soon after terminated in an agreement on the part of Spain to surrender all its conquests in France.

Certainly no more profitable peace than this could have been made by the French king under such circumstances, and Philip at the last moment had consented to pay a heavy price for bringing discord between the three friends. The treaty was signed at Vervins on the 2nd May, and contained thirty-five articles. Its basis was that of the treaty of Cateau Cambresis of 1559. Restitution of all places conquered by either party within the dominions of the other since the day of that treaty was stipulated. Henry recovered Calais, Ardres, Dourlens, Blavet, and many other places, and gave up the country of Charolois. Prisoners were to be surrendered on both sides without ransom, and such of those captives of war as had been enslaved at the galleys should be set free.

The pope, the emperor, all states, and cities under their obedience or control, the Duke of Savoy, the King of Poland and Sweden, the Kings of Denmark and Scotland, the Dukes of Lorraine and Tuscany, the Doge of Venice, the republic of Genoa, and many lesser states and potentates, were included in the treaty. The famous Edict of Nantes in favour of the Protestant subjects of the French king was drawn up and signed in the city of which it bears the name at about the same time with these negotiations. Its publication was, however, deferred until after the departure of the legate from France in the following year.

The treaty of Cateau Cambresis had been pronounced the most disgraceful and disastrous one that had ever been ratified by a French monarch; and surely Henry had now wiped away that disgrace and repaired that disaster. It was natural enough that he should congratulate himself on the rewards which he had gathered by deserting his allies.

He had now sufficient occupation for a time in devising ways and means, with the aid of the indefatigable Bethune, to pay the prodigious sums with which he had purchased the allegiance of the great nobles and lesser gentlemen of France. Thirty-two millions of livres were not sufficient to satisfy the claims of these patriots, most of whom had been drawing enormous pensions from the King of Spain up to the very moment, or beyond it, when they consented to acknowledge the sovereign of their own country. Scarcely a great name in the golden book of France but was recorded among these bills of sale.

Mayenne, Lorraine, Guise, Nemours, Mercoeur, Montpensier, Joyeuse, Epernon, Brissac, D'Arlincourt, Balagny, Rochefort, Villeroy, Villars, Montespan, Leviston, Beauvillars, and countless others, figured in the great financier's terrible account-book, from Mayenne, set down at the cool amount of three and a half millions, to Beauvoir or Beauvillars at the more modest price of a hundred and sixty thousand livres. "I should appal my readers," said De Bethune, "if I should show to them that this sum makes but a very small part of the amounts demanded from the royal treasury, either by Frenchmen or by strangers, as pay and pension, and yet the total was thirty-two millions's."

And now the most Catholic king, having brought himself at last to exchange the grasp of friendship with the great ex-heretic, and to recognize the Prince of Bearne as the legitimate successor of St. Louis, to prevent which consummation he had squandered so many thousands of lives, so many millions of treasure, and brought ruin to so many prosperous countries, prepared himself for another step which he had long hesitated to take.

He resolved to transfer the Netherlands to his daughter Isabella and to the Cardinal Archduke Albert, who, as the king had now decided, was to espouse the Infanta.

The deed of cession was signed at Madrid on the 6th May, 1598. It was accompanied by a letter of the same date from the Prince Philip, heir apparent to the crown.

On the 30th May the Infanta executed a procuration by which she gave absolute authority to her future husband to rule over the provinces of the Netherlands, Burgundy, and Charolois, and to receive the oaths of the estates and of public functionaries.

[See all the deeds and documents in Bor, IV. 461-466. Compare Herrera, iii. 766-770. Very elaborate provisions were made in regard to the children and grand-children to spring from this marriage, but it was generally understood at the time that no issue was to be expected. The incapacity of the cardinal seems to have been revealed by an indiscretion of the General of Franciscans—

diplomatist and father confessor—and was supported by much collateral evidence. Hence all these careful stipulations were a solemn jest, like much of the diplomatic work of this reign.]

It was all very systematically done. No transfer of real estate, no 'donatio inter vivos' of mansions and messuages, parks and farms, herds and flocks, could have been effected in a more business-like manner than the gift thus made by the most prudent king to his beloved daughter.

The quit-claim of the brother was perfectly regular.

So also was the power of attorney, by which the Infanta authorised the middle-aged ecclesiastic whom she was about to espouse to take possession in her name of the very desirable property which she had thus acquired.

It certainly never occurred, either to the giver or the receivers, that the few millions of Netherlanders, male and female, inhabiting these provinces in the North Sea, were entitled to any voice or opinion as to the transfer of themselves and their native land to a young lady living in a remote country. For such was the blasphemous system of Europe at that day. Property had rights. Kings, from whom all property emanated, were enfeoffed directly from the Almighty; they bestowed certain privileges on their vassals, but man had no rights at all. He was property, like the ox or the ass, like the glebe which he watered with the sweat of his brow.

The obedient Netherlands acquiesced obediently in these new arrangements. They wondered only that the king should be willing thus to take from his crown its choicest jewels—for it is often the vanity of colonies and dependencies to consider themselves gems.

The republican Netherlanders only laughed at these arrangements, and treated the invitation to transfer themselves to the new sovereigns of the provinces with silent contempt.

The cardinal-archduke left Brussels in September, having accomplished the work committed to him by the power of attorney, and having left Cardinal Andrew of Austria, bishop of Constantia, son of the Archduke Ferdinand, to administer affairs during his absence. Francis de Mendoza, Admiral of Arragon, was entrusted with the supreme military command for the same interval.

The double marriage of the Infante of Spain with the Archduchess Margaret of Austria, and of the unfrocked Cardinal Albert of Austria with the Infanta Clara Eugenia Isabella, was celebrated by proxy, with immense pomp, at Ferrara, the pope himself officiating with the triple crown upon his head.

Meantime, Philip II., who had been of delicate constitution all his life, and who had of late years been a confirmed valetudinarian, had been rapidly failing ever since the transfer of the Netherlands in May. Longing to be once more in his favourite retirement of the Escorial, he undertook the journey towards the beginning of June, and was carried thither from Madrid in a litter borne by servants, accomplishing the journey of seven leagues in six days.

When he reached the palace cloister, he was unable to stand. The gout, his life-long companion, had of late so tortured him in the hands and feet that the mere touch of a linen sheet was painful to him. By the middle of July a low fever had attacked him, which rapidly reduced his strength. Moreover, a new and terrible symptom of the utter disintegration of his physical constitution had presented itself. Imposthumes, from which he had suffered on the breast and at the joints, had been opened after the usual ripening applications, and the result was not the hoped relief, but swarms of vermin, innumerable in quantities, and impossible to extirpate, which were thus generated and reproduced in the monarch's blood and flesh.

The details of the fearful disorder may have attraction for the pathologist, but have no especial interest for the general reader. Let it suffice, that no torture ever invented by Torquemada or Peter Titelman to serve the vengeance of Philip and his ancestors or the pope against the heretics of Italy or Flanders, could exceed in acuteness the agonies which the most Catholic king was now called upon to endure. And not one of the long line of martyrs, who by decree of Charles or Philip had been strangled, beheaded, burned, or buried alive, ever faced a death of lingering torments with more perfect fortitude, or was sustained by more ecstatic visions of heavenly mercy, than was now the case with the great monarch of Spain.

That the grave-worms should do their office before soul and body were parted, was a torment such as the imagination of Dante might have invented for the lowest depths of his "Inferno."

[A great English poet has indeed expressed the horrible thought:—

"It is as if the dead could feel
The icy worm about them steal:"—BYRON.]

On the 22nd July, the king asked Dr. Mercado if his sickness was likely to have a fatal termination. The physician, not having the courage at once to give the only possible reply, found means to evade the question. On the 1st August his Majesty's confessor, father Diego de Yepes, after consultation with Mercado, announced to Philip that the only issue to his malady was death. Already he had been lying for ten days on his back, a mass of sores and corruption, scarcely able to move, and requiring four men to turn him in his bed.

He expressed the greatest satisfaction at the sincerity which had now been used, and in the gentlest and most benignant manner signified his thanks to them for thus removing all doubts from his mind, and for giving him information which it was of so much importance for his eternal welfare to possess.

His first thought was to request the papal nuncio, Gaetano, to despatch a special courier to Rome to request the pope's benediction. This was done, and it was destined that the blessing of his Holiness should arrive in time.

He next prepared himself to make a general confession, which lasted three days, father Diego having drawn up at his request a full and searching interrogatory. The confession may have been made the more simple, however, by the statement which he made to the priest, and subsequently repeated to the Infante his son, that in all his life he had never consciously done wrong to any one. If he had ever committed an act of injustice, it was unwittingly, or because he had been deceived in the circumstances. This internal conviction of general righteousness was of great advantage to him in the midst of his terrible sufferings, and accounted

in great degree for the gentleness, thoughtfulness for others, and perfect benignity, which, according to the unanimous testimony of many witnesses, characterised his conduct during this whole sickness.

After he had completed his long general confession, the sacrament of the Lord's Supper was administered to him. Subsequently, the same rites were more briefly performed every few days.

His sufferings were horrible, but no saint could have manifested in them more gentle resignation or angelic patience. He moralized on the condition to which the greatest princes might thus be brought at last by the hand of God, and bade the prince observe well his father's present condition, in order that, when he too should be laid thus low, he might likewise be sustained by a conscience void of offence. He constantly thanked his assistants and nurses for their care, insisted upon their reposing themselves after their daily fatigues, and ordered others to relieve them in their task.

He derived infinite consolation from the many relics of saints, of which, as has been seen, he had made plentiful prevision during his long reign. Especially a bone of St. Alban, presented to him by Clement VIII., in view of his present straits, was of great service. With this relic, and with the arm of St. Vincent of Ferrara, and the knee-bone of St. Sebastian, he daily rubbed his sores, keeping the sacred talismans ever in his sight on the altar, which was not far from his bed. He was much pleased when the priests and other bystanders assured him that the remains of these holy men would be of special efficacy to him, because he had cherished and worshipped them in times when misbelievers and heretics had treated them with disrespect.

On a sideboard in his chamber a human skull was placed, and upon this skull—in ghastly mockery of royalty, in truth, yet doubtless in the conviction that such an exhibition showed the superiority of anointed kings even over death—he ordered his servants to place a golden crown. And thus, during the whole of his long illness, the Antic held his state, while the poor mortal representative of absolute power lay living still, but slowly mouldering away.

With perfect composure, and with that minute attention to details which had characterised the king all his lifetime, and was now more evident than ever, he caused the provisions for his funeral obsequies to be read aloud one day by Juan Ruys de Velasco, in order that his children, his ministers, and the great officers of state who were daily in attendance upon him, might thoroughly learn their lesson before the time came for performing the ceremony.

"Having governed my kingdom for forty years," said he, "I now give it back, in the seventy-first year of my age, to God Almighty, to whom it belongs, recommending my soul into His blessed hands, that His Divine Majesty may do what He pleases therewith."

He then directed that after his body should have been kept as long as the laws prescribed, it should be buried thus:—

The officiating bishop was to head the procession, bearing the crucifix, and followed by the clergy.

The Adelantado was to come next, trailing the royal standard along the ground. Then the Duke of Novara was to appear, bearing the crown on an open salver, covered with a black cloth, while the Marquis of Avillaer carried the sword of state.

The coffin was to be borne by eight principal grandees, clad in mourning habiliments, and holding lighted torches.

The heir apparent was to follow, attended by Don Garcia de Loyasa, who had just been consecrated, in the place of Cardinal Albert, as Archbishop of Toledo.

The body was to be brought to the church, and placed in the stately tomb already prepared for its reception. "Mass being performed," said the king, "the prelate shall place me in the grave which shall be my last house until I go to my eternal dwelling. Then the prince, third king of my name, shall go into the cloister of St. Jerome at Madrid, where he shall keep nine days mourning. My daughter, and her aunt—my sister, the ex-empress—shall for the same purpose go to the convent of the grey sisters."

The king then charged his successor to hold the Infanta in especial affection and consideration; "for," said he, "she has been my mirror, yea; the light of my eyes." He also ordered that the Marquis of Mondejar be taken from prison and set free, on condition never to show himself at Court. The wife of Antonio Perez was also to be released from prison, in order that she might be immured in a cloister, her property being bestowed upon her daughters.

As this unfortunate lady's only crime consisted in her husband's intrigue with the king's mistress, Princess Eboli, in which she could scarcely be considered an accomplice, this permission to exchange one form of incarceration for another did not seem an act of very great benignity.

Philip further provided that thirty thousand masses should be said for his soul, five hundred slaves liberated from the galleys, and five hundred maidens provided with marriage portions.

After these elaborate instructions had been read, the king ordered a certain casket to be brought to him and opened in his presence. From this he took forth a diamond of great price and gave it to the Infanta, saying that it had belonged to her mother, Isabella of France. He asked the prince if he consented to the gift. The prince answered in the affirmative.

He next took from the coffer a written document, which he handed to his son, saying, "Herein you will learn how to govern your kingdoms."

Then he produced a scourge, which he said was the instrument with which his father, the emperor, had been in the habit of chastising himself during his retreat at the monastery of Juste. He told the by-standers to observe the imperial blood by which the lash was still slightly stained.

As the days wore on he felt himself steadily sinking, and asked to receive extreme unction. As he had never seen that rite performed he chose to rehearse it beforehand, and told Ruys Velasco; who was in constant attendance upon him, to go for minute instructions on the subject to the Archbishop of Toledo. The sacrament having been duly. administered; the king subsequently, on the 1st September, desired to receive it once more. The archbishop, fearing that the dying monarch's strength would be insufficient for the repetition of the function, informed him that the regulations of the Church required in such cases only a compliance with certain trifling forms, as the ceremony had been already once thoroughly carried out. But the king expressed

himself as quite determined that the sacrament should be repeated in all its parts; that he should once more —be anointed—to use the phrase of brother Francis Neyen—with the oil which holy athletes require in their wrestle with death.

This was accordingly done in the presence of his son and daughter, and, of his chief secretaries, Christopher de Moura and John de Idiaquez, besides the Counts Chinchon, Fuensalido, and several other conspicuous personages. He was especially desirous that his son should be present, in order that; when he too should come to die, he might not find himself, like his father, in ignorance of the manner in which this last sacrament was to be performed.

When it was finished he described himself as infinitely consoled, and as having derived even more happiness from the rite than he had dared to anticipate.

Thenceforth he protested that he would talk no more of the world's affairs. He had finished with all things below, and for the days or hours still remaining to him he would keep his heart exclusively fixed upon Heaven. Day by day as he lay on his couch of unutterable and almost unexampled misery, his confessors and others read to him from religious works, while with perfect gentleness he would insist that one reader should relieve another, that none might be fatigued.

On the 11th September he dictated these words to Christopher de Moura, who was to take them to Diego de Yepes, the confessor:—

"Father Confessor, you are in the place of God, and I protest thus before His presence that I will do all that you declare necessary for my salvation. Thus upon you will be the responsibility for my omissions, because I am ready to do all."

Finding that the last hour was approaching, he informed Don Fernando de Toledo where: he could find some candles of our lady of Montserrat, one of which he desired to keep in his hand at the supreme moment. He also directed Ruys de Velasco to take from a special shrine—which he had indicated to him six years before—a crucifix which the emperor his father had held upon his death-bed. All this was accomplished according to his wish.

He had already made arrangements for his funeral procession, and had subsequently provided all the details of his agony. It was now necessary to give orders as to the particulars of his burial.

He knew that decomposition had made such progress even while he was still living as to render embalming impossible: He accordingly instructed Don Christopher to see his body wrapped in a shroud just as it lay, and to cause it to be placed in a well-soldered metallic coffin already provided. The coffin of state, in which the leaden one was to be enclosed, was then brought into the chamber by his command, that he might see if it was entirely to his taste. Having examined it, he ordered that it should be lined with white satin and ornamented with gold nails and lace-work. He also described a particular brocade of black and gold, to be found in the jewelroom, which he desired for the pall.

Next morning he complained to Don Christopher that the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper had not been administered to him for several days. It was urged that his strength was deemed insufficient, and that, as he had received that rite already four times during his illness, and extreme unction twice, it was thought that the additional fatigue might be spared him. But as the king insisted, the sacrament was once more performed and prayers were read. He said with great fervour many times, "Pater, non mea voluntas, sed tux fiat." He listened, too, with much devotion to the Psalm, "As the hart panteth for the water-brooks;" and he spoke faintly at long intervals of the Magdalen, of the prodigal son, and of the paralytic.

When these devotional exercises had been concluded, father Diego expressed the hope to him that he might then pass away, for it would be a misfortune by temporary convalescence to fall from the exaltation of piety which he had then reached. The remark was heard by Philip with an expression of entire satisfaction.

That day both the Infanta and the prince came for the last time to his bedside to receive his blessing. He tenderly expressed his regret to his daughter that he had not been permitted to witness her marriage, but charged her never to omit any exertion to augment and sustain the holy Roman Catholic religion in the Netherlands. It was in the interest of that holy Church alone that he had endowed her with those provinces, and he now urged it upon her with his dying breath to impress upon her future husband these his commands to both.

His two children took leave of him with tears and sobs: As the prince left the chamber he asked Don Christopher who it was that held the key to the treasury.

The secretary replied, "It is I, Sir." The prince demanded that he should give it into his hands. But Don Christopher excused himself, saying that it had been entrusted to him by the king, and that without his consent he could not part with it. Then the prince returned to the king's chamber, followed by the secretary, who narrated to the dying monarch what had taken place.

"You have done wrong," said Philip; whereupon Don Christopher, bowing to the earth, presented the key to the prince.

The king then feebly begged those about his bedside to repeat the dying words of our Saviour on the cross, in order that he might hear them and repeat them in his heart as his soul was taking flight.

His father's crucifix was placed in his hands, and he said distinctly, "I die like a good Catholic, in faith and obedience to the holy Roman Church." Soon after these last words had been spoken, a paroxysm, followed by faintness, came over him, and he lay entirely still.

They had covered his face with a cloth, thinking that he had already expired, when he suddenly started, with great energy, opened his eyes, seized the crucifix again from the hand of Don Fernando de Toledo, kissed it, and fell back again into agony.

The archbishop and the other priests expressed the opinion that he must have had, not a paroxysm, but a celestial vision, for human powers would not have enabled him to arouse himself so quickly and so vigorously as he had done at that crisis.

He did not speak again, but lay unconsciously dying for some hours, and breathed his last at five in the morning of Sunday the 13th September.

His obsequies were celebrated according to the directions which he had so minutely given.

These volumes will have been written in vain if it be now necessary to recal to my readers the leading events in the history of the man who had thus left the world where, almost invisible himself, he had so long played a leading part. It may not be entirely useless, however, to throw a parting glance at a character which it has been one of the main objects of this work, throughout its whole course, to portray. My theme has been the reign of Philip II., because, as the less is included in the greater, the whole of that reign, with the exception of a few episodes, is included in the vast movement out of which the Republic of the United Netherlands was born and the assailed independence of France and England consolidated. The result of Philip's efforts to establish a universal monarchy was to hasten the decline of the empire which he had inherited, by aggravating the evils which had long made that downfall inevitable.

It is from no abstract hatred to monarchy that I have dwelt with emphasis upon the crimes of this king, and upon the vices of the despotic system, as illustrated during his lifetime. It is not probable that the military, monarchical system—founded upon conquests achieved by barbarians and pirates of a distant epoch over an effete civilization and over antique institutions of intolerable profligacy—will soon come to an end in the older world. And it is the business of Europeans so to deal with the institutions of their inheritance or their choice as to ensure their steady melioration and to provide for the highest interests of the people. It matters comparatively little by what name a government is called, so long as the intellectual and moral development of mankind, and the maintenance of justice among individuals, are its leading principles. A government, like an individual, may remain far below its ideal; but, without an ideal, governments and individuals are alike contemptible. It is tyranny only—whether individual or popular—that utters its feeble sneers at the ideologists, as if mankind were brutes to whom instincts were all in all and ideas nothing. Where intellect and justice are enslaved by that unholy trinity—Force; Dogma, and Ignorance—the tendency of governments, and of those subjected to them, must of necessity be retrograde and downward.

There can be little doubt to those who observe the movements of mankind during the course of the fourteen centuries since the fall of the Roman Empire—a mere fragment of human history—that its progress, however concealed or impeded, and whether for weal or woe, is towards democracy; for it is the tendency of science to liberate and to equalize the physical and even the intellectual forces of humanity. A horse and a suit of armour would now hardly enable the fortunate possessor of such advantages to conquer a kingdom, nor can wealth and learning be monopolised in these latter days by a favoured few. Yet veneration for a crown and a privileged church—as if without them and without their close connection with each other law and religion were impossible—makes hereditary authority sacred to great masses of mankind in the old world. The obligation is the more stringent, therefore, on men thus set apart as it were by primordial selection for ruling and instructing their fellow-creatures, to keep their edicts and their practice in harmony with divine justice. For these rules cannot be violated with impunity during along succession of years, and it is usually left for a comparatively innocent generation, to atone for the sins of their forefathers. If history does not teach this it teaches nothing, and as the rules of morality; whether for individuals or for nations, are simple and devoid of mystery; there is the less excuse for governments which habitually and cynically violate the eternal law.

Among self-evident truths not one is more indisputable than that which, in the immortal words of our Declaration of Independence, asserts the right of every human being to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; but the only happiness that can be recognised by a true statesman as the birthright of mankind is that which comes from intellectual and moral development, and from the subjugation of the brutal instincts.

A system according to which clowns remain clowns through all the ages, unless when extraordinary genius or fortunate accident enables an exceptional individual to overleap the barrier of caste, necessarily retards the result to which the philosopher looks forward with perfect faith.

For us, whose business it is to deal with, and, so far as human fallibility will permit, to improve our inevitable form of government-which may degenerate into the most intolerable of polities unless we are ever mindful that it is yet in its rudimental condition; that, although an immense step has been taken in the right direction by the abolition of caste, the divorce of Church and State, and the limitation of intrusion by either on the domain of the individual, it is yet only a step from which, without eternal vigilance, a falling back is very easy; and that here, more than in other lands, ignorance of the scientific and moral truths on—which national happiness and prosperity depend, deserves bitter denunciation—for us it is wholesome to confirm our faith in democracy, and to justify our hope that the People will prove itself equal to the awful responsibility of self-government by an occasional study of the miseries which the opposite system is capable of producing. It is for this reason that the reign of the sovereign whose closing moments have just been recorded is especially worthy of a minute examination, and I still invite a parting glance at the spectacle thus presented, before the curtain falls.

The Spanish monarchy in the reign of Philip II. was not only the most considerable empire then existing, but probably the most powerful and extensive empire that had ever been known. Certainly never before had so great an agglomeration of distinct and separate sovereignties been the result of accident. For it was owing to a series of accidents—in the common acceptation of that term—that Philip governed so mighty a realm. According to the principle that vast tracts: of the earth's surface, with the human beings feeding upon: them, were transferable in fee-simple from one man or woman to another by marriage, inheritance, or gift, a heterogeneous collection of kingdoms, principalities, provinces, and: wildernesses had been consolidated, without geographical continuity, into an artificial union—the populations differing from each other as much as human beings can differ, in race, language, institutions, and historical traditions, and resembling each other in little, save in being the property alike of the same fortunate individual.

Thus the dozen kingdoms of Spain, the seventeen provinces of the Netherlands, the kingdoms of the Two Sicilies, the duchy of Milan, and certain fortresses and districts of Tuscany, in Europe; the kingdom of Barbary, the coast of Guinea, and an indefinite and unmeasured expanse. of other territory, in Africa; the controlling outposts and cities all along the coast of the two Indian peninsulas, with as much of the country as it seemed good to occupy, the straits and the great archipelagoes, so far as they had—been visited by

Europeans, in Asia; Peru, Brazil, Mexico, the Antilles—the whole recently discovered fourth quarter of the world in short, from the "Land of Fire" in the South to the frozen regions of the North—as much territory as the Spanish and Portuguese sea-captains could circumnavigate and the pope in the plentitude of his power and his generosity could bestow on his fortunate son, in America; all this enormous proportion of the habitable globe was the private property, of Philip; who was the son of Charles, who was the son of Joanna, who was the daughter of Isabella, whose husband was Ferdinand. By what seems to us the most whimsical of political arrangements, the Papuan islander, the Calabrian peasant, the Amsterdam merchant, the semi-civilized Aztec, the Moor of Barbary, the Castilian grandee, the roving Camanche, the Guinea negro, the Indian Brahmin, found themselves—could they but have known it—fellow-citizens of one commonwealth. Statutes of family descent, aided by fraud, force, and chicane, had annexed the various European sovereignties to the crown of Spain; the genius of a Genoese sailor had given to it the New World, and more recently the conquest of Portugal, torn from hands not strong enough to defend the national independence, had vested in the same sovereignty those Oriental possessions which were due to the enterprise of Vasco de Gama, his comrades and successors. The voyager, setting forth from the straits of Gibraltar, circumnavigating the African headlands and Cape Comorin, and sailing through the Molucca channel and past the isles which bore the name of Philip in the Eastern sea, gave the hand at last to his adventurous comrade, who, starting from the same point, and following westward in the track of Magellaens and under the Southern Cross, coasted the shore of Patagonia, and threaded his path through unmapped and unnumbered clusters of islands in the Western Pacific; and during this spanning of the earth's whole circumference not an inch of land or water was traversed that was not the domain of Philip.

For the sea, too, was his as well as the dry land.

From Borneo to California the great ocean was but a Spanish lake, as much the king's private property as his fish-ponds at the Escorial with their carp and perch. No subjects but his dared to navigate those sacred waters. Not a common highway of the world's commerce, but a private path for the gratification of one human being's vanity, had thus been laid out by the bold navigators of the sixteenth century.

It was for the Dutch rebels to try conclusions upon this point, as they had done upon so many others, with the master of the land and sea. The opening scenes therefore in the great career of maritime adventure and discovery by which these republicans were to make themselves famous will soon engage the reader's attention.

Thus the causes of what is called the greatness of Spain are not far to seek. Spain was not a nation, but a temporary and factitious conjunction of several nations, which it was impossible to fuse into a permanent whole, but over whose united resources a single monarch for a time disposed. And the very concentration of these vast and unlimited, powers, fortuitous as it was, in this single hand, inspiring the individual, not unnaturally, with a consciousness of superhuman grandeur; impelled him to those frantic and puerile efforts to achieve the impossible which resulted, in the downfall of Spain. The man who inherited so much material greatness believed himself capable of destroying the invisible but omnipotent spirit of religious and political liberty in the Netherlands, of trampling out the national existence of France and of England, and of annexing those realms to his empire: It has been my task to relate, with much minuteness, how miserably his efforts failed.

But his resources were great. All Italy was in his hands, with the single exception of the Venetian republic; for the Grand Duke of Florence and the so-called republic of Genoa were little more than his vassals, the pope was generally his other self, and the Duke of Savoy was his son-in-law. Thus his armies, numbering usually a hundred thousand men, were supplied from the best possible sources. The Italians were esteemed the best soldiers for siege; assault, light skirmishing. The German heavy troopers and arquebuseers were the most effective for open field-work, and these were to be purchased at reasonable prices and to indefinite amount from any of the three or four hundred petty sovereigns to whom what was called Germany belonged. The Sicilian and Neapolitan pikemen, the Milanese light-horse, belonged exclusively to Philip, and were used, year after year, for more than a generation of mankind, to fight battles in which they had no more interest than had their follow-subjects in the Moluccas or in Mexico, but which constituted for them personally as lucrative a trade on the whole as was afforded them at that day by any branch of industry.

Silk, corn, wine, and oil were furnished in profusion from these favoured regions, not that the inhabitants might enjoy life, and, by accumulating wealth, increase the stock of human comforts and contribute to intellectual and scientific advancement, but in order that the proprietor of the soil might feed those eternal armies ever swarming from the south to scatter desolation over the plains of France, Burgundy, Flanders, and Holland, and to make the crown of Spain and the office of the Holy Inquisition supreme over the world. From Naples and Sicily were derived in great plenty the best materials and conveniences for ship-building and marine equipment. The galleys and the galley-slaves furnished by these subject realms formed the principal part of the royal navy. From distant regions, a commerce which in Philip's days had become oceanic supplied the crown with as much revenue as could be expected in a period of gross ignorance as to the causes of the true grandeur and the true wealth of nations. Especially from the mines of Mexico came an annual average of ten or twelve millions of precious metals, of which the king took twenty-five per cent. for himself.

It would be difficult and almost superfluous to indicate the various resources placed in the hands of this one personage, who thus controlled so large a portion of the earth. All that breathed or grew belonged to him, and most steadily was the stream of blood and treasure poured through the sieve of his perpetual war. His system was essentially a gigantic and perpetual levy of contributions in kind, and it is only in this vague and unsatisfactory manner that the revenues of his empire can be stated. A despot really keeps no accounts, nor need to do so, for he is responsible to no man for the way in which he husbands or squanders his own. Moreover, the science of statistics had not a beginning of existence in those days, and the most common facts can hardly be obtained, even by approximation. The usual standard of value, the commodity which we call money—gold or silver—is well known to be at best a fallacious guide for estimating the comparative wealth—of individuals or of nations at widely different epochs. The dollar of Philip's day was essentially the same bit of silver that it is in our time in Spain, Naples, Rome, or America, but even should an elaborate calculation be made as to the quantity of beef, or bread or broadcloth to be obtained for that bit of silver in this or that place

in the middle of the sixteenth century, the result, as compared with prices now prevalent, would show many remarkable discrepancies. Thus a bushel of wheat at Antwerp during Philip's reign might cost a quarter of a dollar, in average years, and there have been seasons in our own time when two bushels of wheat could have been bought for a quarter of a dollar in Illinois. Yet if, notwithstanding this, we should allow a tenfold value in exchange to the dollar of Philip's day, we should be surprised at the meagreness of his revenues, of his expenditures, and of the debts which at the close of his career brought him to bankruptcy; were the sums estimated in coin.

Thus his income was estimated by careful contemporary statesmen at what seemed to them the prodigious annual amount of sixteen millions of dollars. He carried on a vast war without interruption during the whole of his forty-three years' reign against the most wealthy and military nations of Christendom not recognising his authority, and in so doing he is said to have expended a sum total of seven hundred millions of dollars—a statement which made men's hair stand on their heads. Yet the American republic, during its civil war to repress the insurrection of the slaveholders, has spent nominally as large a sum as this every year; and the British Empire in time of profound peace spends half as much annually. And even if we should allow sixteen millions to have represented the value of a hundred and sixty millions—a purely arbitrary supposition—as compared with our times, what are a hundred and sixty, millions of dollars, or thirty-three millions of pounds sterling—as the whole net revenue of the greatest empire that had ever existed in the world, when compared with the accumulated treasures over which civilized and industrious countries can now dispose? Thus the power of levying men and materials in kind constituted the chief part of the royal power, and, in truth, very little revenue in money was obtained from Milan or Naples, or from any of the outlying European possessions of the crown.

Eight millions a year were estimated as the revenue from the eight kingdoms incorporated under the general name of Castile, while not more than six hundred thousand came from the three kingdoms which constituted Arragon. The chief sources of money receipts were a tax of ten per cent. upon sales, paid by the seller, called Alcavala, and the Almoxarifalgo or tariff upon both imports and exports. Besides these imposts he obtained about eight hundred thousand dollars a year by selling to his subjects the privilege of eating eggs upon fast-days, according to the permission granted him by the pope, in the bull called the Cruzada. He received another annual million from the Sussidio and the Excusado. The first was a permission originally given by the popes to levy six hundred thousand dollars a year upon ecclesiastical property for equipment of a hundred war-galleys against the Saracens, but which had more recently established itself as a regular tax to pay for naval hostilities against Dutch and English heretics—a still more malignant species of unbelievers in the orthodox eyes of the period. The Excusado was the right accorded to the king always to select from the Church possessions a single benefice and to appropriate its fruit—a levy commuted generally for four hundred thousand dollars a year. Besides these regular sources of income, large but irregular amounts of money were picked up by his Majesty in small sums, through monks sent about the country simply as beggars, under no special license, to collect alms from rich and poor for sustaining the war against the infidels of England and Holland. A certain Jesuit, father Sicily by name, had been industrious enough at one period in preaching this crusade to accumulate more than a million and a half, so that a facetious courtier advised his sovereign to style himself thenceforth king, not of the two, but of the three Sicilies, in honour of the industrious priest.

It is worthy of remark that at different periods during Philip's reign, and especially towards its close, the whole of his regular revenue was pledged to pay the interest, on his debts, save only the Sussidio and the Cruzada. Thus the master of the greatest empire of the earth had at times no income at his disposal except the alma he could solicit from his poorest subjects to maintain his warfare against foreign miscreants, the levy on the Church for war-galleys; and the proceeds of his permission to eat meat on Fridays. This sounds like an epigram, but it is a plain, incontestable fact.

Thus the revenues of his foreign dominions being nearly consumed by their necessary expenses, the measure of his positive wealth was to be found in the riches of Spain. But Spain at that day was not an opulent country. It was impossible that it should be rich, for nearly every law, according to which the prosperity of a country becomes progressive; was habitually violated. It is difficult to state even by approximation the amount of its population, but the kingdoms united under the crown of Castile were estimated by contemporaries to contain eight millions, while the kingdom of Portugal, together with those annexed to Arragon and the other provinces of the realm, must have numbered half as many. Here was a populous nation in a favoured land, but the foundation of all wealth was sapped by a perverted moral sentiment.

Labour was esteemed dishonourable. The Spaniard, from highest to lowest, was proud, ignorant, and lazy. For a people endowed by nature with many noble qualities—courage, temperance, frugality, endurance, quickness of perception; a high sense of honour, a reverence for law—the course of the national history had proved as ingeniously bad a system of general education as could well be invented.

The eternal contests, century after century, upon the soil of Spain between the crescent and the cross, and the remembrance of the ancient days in which Oriental valour and genius had almost extirpated Germanic institutions and Christian faith from the peninsula, had inspired one great portion of the masses with a hatred, amounting almost to insanity, towards every form of religion except the Church of Rome, towards every race of mankind except the Goths and Vandals. Innate reverence for established authority had expanded into an intensity of religious emotion and into a fanaticism of loyalty which caused the anointed monarch leading true believers against infidels to be accepted as a god. The highest industrial and scientific civilization that had been exhibited upon Spanish territory was that of Moors and Jews. When in the course of time those races had been subjugated, massacred, or driven into exile, not only was Spain deprived of its highest intellectual culture and its most productive labour, but intelligence, science, and industry were accounted degrading, because the mark of inferior and detested peoples.

The sentiment of self-esteem, always a national characteristic, assumed an almost ludicrous shape. Not a ragged Biscayan muleteer, not a swineherd of Estremadura, that did not imagine himself a nobleman because he was not of African descent. Not a half-starved, ignorant brigand, gaining his living on the highways and

byways by pilfering or assassination, that did not kneel on the church pavement and listen to orisons in an ancient tongue, of which he understood not a syllable, with a sentiment of Christian self-complacency to which Godfrey of Bouillon might have been a stranger. Especially those born towards the northern frontier, and therefore farthest removed from Moorish contamination, were proudest of the purity of their race. To be an Asturian or a Gallician, however bronzed by sun and wind, was to be furnished with positive proof against suspicion of Moorish blood; but the sentiment was universal throughout the peninsula.

It followed as a matter of course that labour of any kind was an impeachment against this gentility of descent. To work was the province of Moors, Jews, and other heretics; of the Marani or accursed, miscreants and descendants of miscreants; of the Sanbeniti or infamous, wretches whose ancestors had been convicted by the Holy Inquisition of listening, however secretly, to the Holy Scriptures as expounded by other lips than those of Roman priests. And it is a remarkable illustration of this degradation of labour and of its results, that in the reign of Philip twenty-five thousand individuals of these dishonoured and comparatively industrious classes, then computed at four millions in number in the Castilian kingdoms alone, had united in a society which made a formal offer to the king to pay him two thousand dollars a head if the name and privileges of hidalgo could be conferred upon them. Thus an inconsiderable number of this vilest and most abject of the population—oppressed by taxation which was levied exclusively upon the low, and from which not only the great nobles but mechanics and other hidalgos were, exempt—had been able to earn and to lay by enough to offer the monarch fifty millions of dollars to purchase themselves out of semi-slavery into manhood, and yet found their offer rejected by an almost insolvent king. Nothing could exceed the idleness and the frivolity of the upper classes, as depicted by contemporary and not unfriendly observers. The nobles were as idle and as ignorant as their inferiors. They were not given to tournays nor to the delights of the chase and table, but were fond of brilliant festivities, dancing, gambling, masquerading, love-making, and pompous exhibitions of equipage, furniture, and dress. These diversions—together with the baiting of bulls and the burning of Protestants—made up their simple round of pleasures. When they went to the wars they scorned all positions but that of general, whether by land or sea, and as war is a trade which requires an apprenticeship; it is unnecessary to observe that these grandees were rarely able to command, having never learned to obey. The poorer Spaniards were most honourably employed perhaps—so far as their own mental development was concerned—when they were sent with pike and arquebus to fight heretics in France and Flanders. They became brave and indomitable soldiers when exported to the seat of war, and thus afforded proof—by strenuously doing the hardest physical work that human beings can be called upon to perform, campaigning year after year amid the ineffable deprivations, dangers, and sufferings which are the soldier's lot—that it was from no want of industry or capacity that the lower masses of Spaniards in that age were the idle, listless, dice-playing, begging, filching vagabonds into which cruel history and horrible institutions had converted them at home.

It is only necessary to recal these well-known facts to understand why one great element of production—human labour—was but meagrely supplied. It had been the deliberate policy of the Government for ages to extirpate the industrious classes, and now that a great portion of Moors and Jews were exiles and outcasts, it was impossible to supply their place by native workmen. Even the mechanics, who condescended to work with their hands in the towns, looked down alike upon those who toiled in the field and upon those who, attempted to grow rich by traffic. A locksmith or a wheelwright who could prove four descents of western, blood called himself a son of somebody—a hidalgo—and despised the farmer and the merchant. And those very artisans were careful not to injure themselves by excessive industry, although not reluctant by exorbitant prices to acquire in one or-two days what might seem a fair remuneration for a week, and to impress upon their customers that it was rather by way of favour that they were willing to serve them at all.

Labour being thus deficient, it is obvious that there could hardly have been a great accumulation, according to modern ideas, of capital. That other chief element of national wealth, which is the result of generations of labour and of abstinence, was accordingly not abundant. And even those accretions of capital, which in the course of centuries had been inevitable, were as clumsily and inadequately diffused as the most exquisite human perverseness could desire. If the object of civil and political institutions had been to produce the greatest ill to the greatest number, that object had been as nearly attained at last in Spain as human imperfection permits; the efforts of government and of custom coming powerfully to the aid of the historical evils already indicated.

It is superfluous to say that the land belonged not to those who lived upon it—but subject to the pre-eminent right of the crown—to a small selection of the human species. Moderate holdings, small farms, peasant proprietorship's, were unknown. Any kind of terrestrial possession; in short, was as far beyond the reach of those men who held themselves so haughtily and esteemed themselves so inordinately, as were the mountains in the moon.

The great nobles—and of real grandees of Spain there were but forty-nine, although the number of titled families was much larger—owned all the country, except that vast portion of it which had reposed for ages in the dead-hand of the Church. The law of primogeniture, strictly enforced, tended with every generation to narrow the basis of society. Nearly every great estate was an entail, passing from eldest son to eldest son, until these were exhausted, in which case a daughter transferred the family possessions to a new house. Thus the capital of the country—meagre at best in comparison with what it might have been, had industry been honoured instead of being despised, had the most intelligent and most diligent classes been cherished rather than hunted to death or into obscure dens like vermin—was concentrated in very few hands. Not only was the accumulation less than it should have been, but the slenderness of its diffusion had nearly amounted to absolute stagnation. The few possessors of capital wasted their revenues in unproductive consumption. The millions of the needy never dreamed of the possibility of deriving benefit from the capital of the rich, nor would have condescended to employ it, nor known how to employ it, had its use in any form been vouchsafed to them. The surface of Spain, save only around the few royal residences, exhibited no splendour of architecture, whether in town or country, no wonders of agricultural or horticultural skill, no monuments of engineering and constructive genius in roads, bridges, docks, warehouses, and other ornamental and useful fabrics, or in any of the thousand ways in which man facilitates intercourse among his kind and subdues nature to his will.

Yet it can never be too often repeated that it, is only the Spaniard of the sixteenth century, such as extraneous circumstances had made him, that is here depicted; that he, even like his posterity and his ancestors, had been endowed by Nature with some of her noblest gifts. Acuteness of intellect, wealth of imagination, heroic qualities of heart, and hand, and brain, rarely surpassed in any race, and manifested on a thousand battle-fields, and in the triumphs of a magnificent and most original literature, had not been able to save a whole nation from the disasters and the degradation which the mere words Philip II, and the Holy Inquisition suggest to every educated mind.

Nor is it necessary for my purpose to measure exactly the space which separated Spain from the other leading monarchies of the day. That the standard of civilization was a vastly higher one in England, Holland, or even France—torn as they all were with perpetual civil war—no thinker will probably deny; but as it is rather my purpose at this moment to exhibit the evils which may spring from a perfectly bad monarchical system, as administered by a perfectly bad king, I prefer not to wander at present from the country which was ruled for almost half a century by Philip II.

Besides the concentration of a great part of the capital of the country in a very small number of titled families, still another immense portion of the national wealth belonged, as already intimated, to the Church.

There were eleven archbishops, at the head of whom stood the Archbishop of Toledo, with the enormous annual revenue of three hundred thousand dollars. Next to him came the Archbishop of Seville, with one hundred and fifty thousand dollars yearly, while the income of the others varied from fifty thousand to twenty thousand dollars respectively.

There were sixty-two bishops, with annual incomes ranging from fifty thousand to six thousand dollars. The churches, also, of these various episcopates were as richly endowed as the great hierarchs themselves. But without fatiguing the reader with minute details, it is sufficient to say that one-third of the whole annual income of Spain and Portugal belonged to the ecclesiastical body. In return for this enormous proportion of the earth's fruits, thus placed by the caprice of destiny at their disposal, these holy men did very little work in the world. They fed their flocks neither with bread nor with spiritual food. They taught little, preached little, dispensed little in charity. Very few of the swarming millions of naked and hungry throughout the land were clothed or nourished out of these prodigious revenues of the Church. The constant and avowed care of those prelates was to increase their worldly, possessions, to build up the fortunes of their respective families, to grow richer and richer at the expense of the people whom for centuries they had fleeced. Of gross crime, of public ostentatious immorality, such as had made the Roman priesthood of that and preceding ages loathsome in the sight of man and God, the Spanish Church-dignitaries were innocent. Avarice; greediness, and laziness were their characteristics. It is almost superfluous to say that, while the ecclesiastical princes were rolling in this almost fabulous wealth, the subordinate clergy, the mob of working priests, were needy, half-starved mendicants.

From this rapid survey of the condition of the peninsula it will seem less surprising than it might do at first glance that the revenue of the greatest monarch of the world was rated at the small amount—even after due allowance for the difference of general values between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries—of sixteen millions of dollars. The King of Spain was powerful and redoubtable at home and abroad, because accident had placed the control of a variety of separate realms in his single hand. At the same time Spain was poor and weak, because she had lived for centuries in violation of the principles on which the wealth and strength of nations depend. Moreover, every one of those subject and violently annexed nations hated Spain with undying fervour, while an infernal policy—the leading characteristics of which were to sow dissensions among the nobles, to confiscate their property on all convenient occasions, and to bestow it upon Spaniards and other foreigners; to keep the discontented masses in poverty, but to deprive them of the power or disposition to unite with their superiors in rank in demonstrations against the crown—had sufficed to suppress any extensive revolt in the various Italian states united under Philip's sceptre. Still more intense than the hatred of the Italians was the animosity which was glowing in every Portuguese breast against the Spanish sway; while even the Arragonese were only held in subjection by terror, which, indeed, in one form or another, was the leading instrument of Philip's government.

It is hardly necessary to enlarge upon the regulations of Spain's foreign commerce; for it will be enough to repeat the phrase that in her eyes the great ocean from east to west was a Spanish lake, sacred to the ships of the king's subjects alone. With such a simple code of navigation coming in aid of the other causes which impoverished the land, it may be believed that the maritime traffic of the country would dwindle into the same exiguous proportions which characterised her general industry.

Moreover, it should never be forgotten that, although the various kingdoms of Spain were politically conjoined by their personal union under one despot, they were commercially distinct. A line of custom-houses separated each province from the rest, and made the various inhabitants of the peninsula practically strangers to each other. Thus there was less traffic between Castile, Biscay, and Arragon than there was between any one of them and remote foreign nations. The Biscayans, for example, could even import and export commodities to and from remote countries by sea, free of duty, while their merchandize to and from Castile was crushed by imposts. As this ingenious perversity of positive arrangements came to increase the negative inconveniences caused by the almost total absence of tolerable roads, canals, bridges, and other means of intercommunication, it may be imagined that internal traffic—the very life-blood of every prosperous nation—was very nearly stagnant in Spain. As an inevitable result, the most thriving branch of national industry was that of the professional smuggler, who, in the pursuit of his vocation, did his best to aid Government in sapping the wealth of the nation.

The whole accumulated capital of Spain, together with the land—in the general sense which includes not only the soil but the immovable property of a country being thus exclusively owned by the crown, the church, and a very small number of patrician families, while the supply of labour owing to the special causes which had converted the masses of the people into paupers ashamed to work but not unwilling to beg or to rob—was incredibly small, it is obvious that, so long as the same causes continued in operation, the downfall of the country was a logical result from which there was no escape. Nothing but a general revolution of mind and hand against the prevalent system, nothing but some great destructive but regenerating catastrophe, could

redeem the people.

And it is the condition of the people which ought always to be the prominent subject of interest to those who study the records of the Past. It is only by such study that we can derive instruction from history, and enable ourselves, however dimly and feebly, to cast the horoscope of younger nations. Human history, so far as it has been written, is at best a mere fragment; for the few centuries or year-thousands of which there is definite record are as nothing compared to the millions of unnumbered years during which man has perhaps walked the earth. It may be as practicable therefore to derive instruction from a minute examination in detail of a very limited period of time and space, and thus to deduce general rules for the infinite future, during which our species may be destined to inhabit this planet, as by a more extensive survey, which must however be at best a limited one. Men die, but Man is immortal, and it would be a sufficiently forlorn prospect for humanity if we were not able to discover causes in operation which would ultimately render the system of Philip II. impossible in any part of the globe. Certainly, were it otherwise, the study of human history would be the most wearisome and unprofitable of all conceivable occupations. The festivities of courts, the magnificence of an aristocracy, the sayings and doings of monarchs and their servants, the dynastic wars, the solemn treaties; the Ossa upon Pelion of diplomatic and legislative rubbish by which, in the course of centuries, a few individuals or combinations of individuals have been able to obstruct the march of humanity, and have essayed to suspend the operation of elemental laws—all this contains but little solid food for grown human beings. The condition of the brave and quickwitted Spanish people in the latter half of the sixteenth century gives more matter for reflection and possible instruction.

That science is the hope of the world, that ignorance is the real enslaver of mankind, and therefore the natural ally of every form of despotism, may be assumed as an axiom, and it was certainly the ignorance and superstition of the people upon which the Philippian policy was founded.

A vast mass, entirely uneducated, half fed, half clothed, unemployed; and reposing upon a still lower and denser stratum—the millions namely of the "Accursed," of the Africans, and last and vilest of all, the "blessed" descendants of Spanish protestants whom the Holy Office had branded with perpetual infamy because it had burned their progenitors—this was the People; and it was these paupers and outcasts, nearly the whole nation, that paid all the imposts of which the public revenue was composed. The great nobles, priests, and even the hidalgos, were exempt from taxation. Need more be said to indicate the inevitable ruin of both government and people?

And it was over such a people, and with institutions like these, that Philip II. was permitted to rule during forty-three years. His power was absolute. With this single phrase one might as well dismiss any attempt at specification. He made war or peace at will with foreign nations. He had power of life and death over all his subjects. He had unlimited control of their worldly goods. As he claimed supreme jurisdiction over their religious opinions also, he was master of their minds, bodies, and estates. As a matter of course, he nominated and removed at will every executive functionary, every judge, every magistrate, every military or civil officer; and moreover, he not only selected, according to the license tacitly conceded to him by the pontiff, every archbishop, bishop, and other Church dignitary, but, through his great influence at Rome, he named most of the cardinals, and thus controlled the election of the popes. The whole machinery of society, political, ecclesiastical, military, was in his single hand. There was a show of provincial privilege here and there in different parts of Spain, but it was but the phantom of that ancient municipal liberty which it had been the especial care of his father and his great-grandfather to destroy. Most patiently did Philip, by his steady inactivity, bring about the decay of the last ruins of free institutions in the peninsula. The councils and legislative assemblies were convoked and then wearied out in waiting for that royal assent to their propositions and transactions, which was deferred intentionally, year after year, and never given. Thus the time of the deputies was consumed in accomplishing infinite nothing, until the moment arrived when the monarch, without any violent stroke of state, could feel safe in issuing decrees and pragmatic edicts; thus reducing the ancient legislative and consultative bodies to nullity, and substituting the will of an individual for a constitutional fabric. To criticise the expenses of government or to attempt interference with the increase of taxation became a sorry farce. The forms remained in certain provinces after the life had long since fled. Only in Arragon had the ancient privileges seemed to defy the absolute authority of the monarch; and it was reserved for Antonio Perez to be the cause of their final extirpation. The grinning skulls of the Chief Justice of that kingdom and of the boldest and noblest advocates and defenders of the national liberties, exposed for years in the market-place, with the record of their death-sentence attached, informed the Spaniards, in language which the most ignorant could read, that the crime of defending a remnant of human freedom and constitutional law was sure to draw down condign punishment. It was the last time in that age that even the ghost of extinct liberty was destined to revisit the soil of Spain. It mattered not that the immediate cause for pursuing Perez was his successful amour with the king's Mistress, nor that the crime of which he was formally accused was the deadly offence of Calvinism, rather than his intrigue with the Eboli and his assassination of Escovedo; for it was in the natural and simple sequence of events that the last vestige of law or freedom should be obliterated wherever Philip could vindicate his sway. It must be admitted, too, that the king seized this occasion to strike a decisive blow with a promptness very different from his usual artistic sluggishness. Rarely has a more terrible epigram been spoken by man than the royal words which constituted the whole trial and sentence of the Chief Justice of Arragon, for the crime of defending the law of his country: "You will take John of Lanuza, and you will have his head cut off." This was the end of the magistrate and of the constitution which he had defended.

His power, was unlimited. A man endowed with genius and virtue, and possessing the advantages of a consummate education, could have perhaps done little more than attempt to mitigate the general misery, and to remove some of its causes. For it is one of the most pernicious dogmas of the despotic system, and the one which the candid student of history soonest discovers to be false, that the masses of mankind are to look to any individual, however exalted by birth or intellect, for their redemption. Woe to the world if the nations are never to learn that their fate is and ought to be in their own hands; that their institutions, whether liberal or despotic, are the result of the national biography and of the national character, not the work of a few individuals whose names have been preserved by capricious Accident as heroes and legislators. Yet there is no doubt that, while comparatively powerless for good, the individual despot is capable of almost infinite

mischief. There have been few men known to history who have been able to accomplish by their own exertions so vast an amount of evil as the king who had just died. If Philip possessed a single virtue it has eluded the conscientious research of the writer of these pages. If there are vices—as possibly there are from which he was exempt, it is because it is not permitted to human nature to attain perfection even in evil. The only plausible explanation—for palliation there is none—of his infamous career is that the man really believed himself not a king but a god. He was placed so high above his fellow-creatures as, in good faith perhaps, to believe himself incapable of doing wrong; so that, whether indulging his passions or enforcing throughout the world his religious and political dogmas, he was ever conscious of embodying divine inspirations and elemental laws. When providing for the assassination of a monarch, or commanding the massacre of a townfull of Protestants; when trampling on every oath by which a human being can bind himself; when laying desolate with fire and sword, during more than a generation, the provinces which he had inherited as his private property, or in carefully maintaining the flames of civil war in foreign kingdoms which he hoped to acquire; while maintaining over all Christendom a gigantic system of bribery, corruption, and espionage, keeping the noblest names of England and Scotland on his pension-lists of traitors, and impoverishing his exchequer with the wages of iniquity paid in France to men of all degrees, from princes of blood like Guise and Mayenne down to the obscurest of country squires, he ever felt that these base or bloody deeds were not crimes, but the simple will of the godhead of which he was a portion. He never doubted that the extraordinary theological system which he spent his life in enforcing with fire and sword was right, for it was a part of himself. The Holy Inquisition, thoroughly established as it was in his ancestral Spain, was a portion of the regular working machinery by which his absolute kingship and his superhuman will expressed themselves. A tribunal which performed its functions with a celerity, certainty, and invisibility resembling the attributes of Omnipotence; which, like the pestilence, entered palace or hovel at will, and which smote the wretch guilty or suspected of heresy with a precision against which no human ingenuity or sympathy could guard—such an institution could not but be dear to his heart. It was inevitable that the extension and perpetuation of what he deemed its blessings throughout his dominions should be his settled purpose. Spain was governed by an established terrorism. It is a mistake to suppose that Philip was essentially beloved in his native land, or that his religious and political system was heartily accepted because consonant to the national character. On the contrary, as has been shown, a very large proportion of the inhabitants were either secretly false to the Catholic faith, or descended at least from those who had expiated their hostility to it with their lives. But the Grand Inquisitor was almost as awful a personage; as the king or the pope. His familiars were in every village and at every fireside, and from their fangs there was no escape. Millions of Spaniards would have rebelled against the crown or accepted the reformed religion, had they not been perfectly certain of being burned or hanged at the slightest movement in such a direction. The popular force in the course of the political combinations of centuries seemed at last to have been eliminated. The nobles, exempt from taxation, which crushed the people to the earth, were the enemies rather than the chieftains and champions of the lower classes in any possible struggle with a crown to which they were united by ties of interest as well as of affection, while the great churchmen, too, were the immediate dependants and of course the firm supporters of the king. Thus the people, without natural leaders, without organisation, and themselves divided into two mutually hostile sections, were opposed by every force in the State. Crown, nobility, and clergy; all the wealth and all that there was of learning, were banded together to suppress the democratic principle. But even this would hardly have sufficed to extinguish every spark of liberty, had it not been for the potent machinery of the Inquisition; nor could that perfection of terrorism have become an established institution but for the extraordinary mixture of pride and superstition of which the national character had been, in the course of the national history, compounded. The Spanish portion of the people hated the nobles, whose petty exactions and oppressions were always visible; but they had a reverential fear of the unseen monarch, as the representative both of the great unsullied Christian nation to which the meanest individual was proud to belong, and of the God of wrath who had decreed the extermination of all unbelievers. The "accursed" portion of the people were sufficiently disloyal at heart, but were too much crushed by oppression and contempt to imagine themselves men. As to the Netherlanders, they did not fight originally for independence. It was not until after a quarter of a century of fighting that they ever thought of renouncing their allegiance to Philip. They fought to protect themselves against being taxed by the king without the consent of those constitutional assemblies which he had sworn to maintain, and to save themselves and their children from being burned alive if they dared to read the Bible. Independence followed after nearly a half-century of fighting, but it would never have been obtained, or perhaps demanded, had those grievances of the people been redressed.

Of this perfect despotism Philip was thus the sole administrator. Certainly he looked upon his mission with seriousness, and was industrious in performing his royal functions. But this earnestness and seriousness were, in truth, his darkest vices; for the most frivolous voluptuary that ever wore a crown would never have compassed a thousandth part of the evil which was Philip's life-work. It was because he was a believer in himself, and in what he called his religion, that he was enabled to perpetrate such a long catalogue of crimes. When an humble malefactor is brought before an ordinary court of justice, it is not often, in any age or country, that he escapes the pillory or the gallows because, from his own point of view, his actions, instead of being criminal, have been commendable, and because the multitude and continuity of his offences prove him to have been sincere. And because anointed monarchs are amenable to no human tribunal, save to that terrible assize which the People, bursting its chain from time to time in the course of the ages, sets up for the trial of its oppressors, and which is called Revolution, it is the more important for the great interests of humanity that before the judgment-seat of History a crown should be no protection to its wearer. There is no plea to the jurisdiction of history, if history be true to itself.

As for the royal criminal called Philip II., his life is his arraignment, and these volumes will have been written in vain if a specification is now required.

Homicide such as was hardly ever compassed before by one human being was committed by Philip when in the famous edict of 1568 he sentenced every man, woman, and child in the Netherlands to death. That the whole of this population, three millions or more, were not positively destroyed was because no human energy could suffice to execute the diabolical decree. But Alva, toiling hard, accomplished much of this murderous work. By the aid of the "Council of Blood," and of the sheriffs and executioners of the Holy Inquisition, he was

able sometimes to put eight hundred human beings to death in a single week for the crimes of Protestantism or of opulence, and at the end of half a dozen years he could boast of having strangled, drowned, burned, or beheaded somewhat more than eighteen thousand of his fellow-creatures. These were some of the non-combatant victims; for of the tens of thousands who perished during his administration alone, in siege and battle, no statistical record has been preserved.

In face of such wholesale crimes, of these forty years of bloodshed, it is superfluous to refer to such isolated misdeeds as his repeated attempts to procure the assassination of the Prince of Orange, crowned at last by the success of Balthazar Gerard, nor to his persistent efforts to poison the Queen of England; for the enunciation of all these murders or attempts at murder would require a repetition of the story which it has been one of the main purposes of these volumes to recite.

For indeed it seems like mere railing to specify his crimes. Their very magnitude and unbroken continuity, together with their impunity, give them almost the appearance of inevitable phenomena. The horrible monotony of his career stupefies the mind until it is ready to accept the principle of evil as the fundamental law of the world.

His robberies, like his murders, were colossal. The vast, system of confiscation set up in the Netherlands was sufficient to reduce unnumbered innocent families to beggary, although powerless to break the spirit of civil and religious liberty or to pay the expenses of subjugating a people. Not often in the world's history have so many thousand individual been plundered by a foreign tyrant for no crime, save that they were rich enough to be worth robbing. For it can never be too often repeated that those confiscations and extortions were perpetrated upon Catholics as well as Protestants, monarchists as well as rebels; the possession of property making proof of orthodoxy or of loyalty well-nigh impossible.

Falsehood was the great basis of the king's character, which perhaps derives its chief importance, as a political and psychological study, from this very fact. It has been shown throughout the whole course of this history, by the evidence of his most secret correspondence, that he was false, most of all, to those to whom he gave what he called his heart. Granvelle, Alva, Don John, Alexander Farnese, all those, in short, who were deepest in his confidence experienced in succession his entire perfidy, while each in turn was sacrificed to his master's sleepless suspicion. The pope himself was often as much the dupe of the Catholic monarch's faithlessness as the vilest heretic had ever been. Could the great schoolmaster of iniquity for the sovereigns and politicians of the south have lived to witness the practice of the monarch who had most laid to heart the precepts of the "Prince," he would have felt that he had not written in vain, and that his great paragon of successful falsehood, Ferdinand of Arragon, had been surpassed by the great grandson. For the ideal perfection of perfidy, foreshadowed by the philosopher who died in the year of Philip's birth, was thoroughly embodied at last by this potentate. Certainly Nicholas Macchiavelli could have hoped for no more docile pupil. That all men are vile, that they are liars; scoundrels, poltroons, and idiots alike—ever ready to deceive and yet easily to be duped, and that he only is fit to be king who excels his kind in the arts of deception; by this great maxim of the Florentine, Philip was ever guided. And those well-known texts of hypocrisy, strewn by the same hand, had surely not fallen on stony ground when received into Philip's royal soul.

"Often it is necessary, in order to maintain power, to act contrary to faith, contrary to charity, contrary to humanity, contrary to religion. . . . A prince ought therefore to have great care that from his mouth nothing should ever come that is not filled with those five qualities, and that to see and hear him he should appear all piety, all faith, all integrity, all humanity, all religion. And nothing is more necessary than to seem to have this last-mentioned quality. Every one sees what you seem, few perceive what you are."

Surely this hand-book of cant had been Philip's 'vade mecum' through his life's pilgrimage.

It is at least a consolation to reflect that a career controlled by such principles came to an ignominious close. Had the mental capacity of this sovereign been equal to his criminal intent, even greater woe might have befallen the world. But his intellect was less than mediocre. His passion for the bureau, his slavery to routine, his puerile ambition personally to superintend details which could have been a thousand times better administered by subordinates, proclaimed every day the narrowness of his mind. His diligence in reading, writing, and commenting upon despatches may excite admiration only where there has been no opportunity of judging of his labours by personal inspection. Those familiar with the dreary displays of his penmanship must admit that such work could have been at least as well done by a copying clerk of average capacity. His ministers were men of respectable ability, but he imagined himself, as he advanced in life, far superior to any counsellor that he could possibly select, and was accustomed to consider himself the first statesman in the world.

His reign was a thorough and disgraceful failure. Its opening scene was the treaty of Catean Cambresis, by which a triumph over France had been achieved for him by the able generals and statesmen of his father, so humiliating and complete as to make every French soldier or politician gnash his teeth. Its conclusion was the treaty of Vervins with the same power, by which the tables were completely turned, and which was as utterly disgraceful to Spain as that of Cateau Cambresis had been to France. He had spent his life in fighting with the spirit of the age—that invincible power of which he had not the faintest conception—while the utter want of adaptation of his means to his ends often bordered, not on the ludicrous, but the insane.

He attempted to reduce the free Netherlands to slavery and to papacy. Before his death they had expanded into an independent republic, with a policy founded upon religious toleration and the rights of man. He had endeavoured all his life to exclude the Bearnese from his heritage and to place himself or his daughter on the vacant throne; before his death Henry IV. was the most powerful and popular sovereign that had ever reigned in France. He had sought to invade and to conquer England, and to dethrone and assassinate its queen. But the queen outwitted, outgeneralled, and outlived, him; English soldiers and sailors, assisted. by their Dutch comrades in arms, accomplished on the shores of Spain what the Invincible Armada had in vain essayed against England and Holland; while England, following thenceforth the opposite system to that of absolutism and the Inquisition, became, after centuries of struggles towards the right, the most powerful, prosperous, and enlightened kingdom in the world.

His exchequer, so full when he ascended the throne as to excite the awe of contemporary financiers, was

reduced before his death to a net income of some four millions of dollars. His armies; which had been the wonder of the age in the earlier period of his reign for discipline, courage, and every quality on which military efficiency depends, were in his later years a horde of starving, rebellious brigands, more formidable to their commanders than to the foe. Mutiny was the only organised military institution that was left in his dominions, while the Spanish Inquisition, which it was the fell purpose of his life from youth upwards to establish over the world, became a loathsome and impossible nuisance everywhere but in its natal soil.

If there be such a thing as historical evidence, then is Philip II., convicted before the tribunal of impartial posterity of every crime charged in his indictment. He lived seventy-one years and three months, he reigned forty-three years. He endured the martyrdom of his last illness with the heroism of a saint, and died in the certainty of immortal bliss as the reward of his life of evil.

ETEXT EDITOR'S BOOKMARKS:

A despot really keeps no accounts, nor need to do so
All Italy was in his hands
Every one sees what you seem, few perceive what you are
God of wrath who had decreed the extermination of all unbeliever
Had industry been honoured instead of being despised
History is but made up of a few scattered fragments
Hugo Grotius
Idle, listless, dice-playing, begging, filching vagabonds
Ignorance is the real enslaver of mankind
Innocent generation, to atone for the sins of their forefathers
Intelligence, science, and industry were accounted degrading
Labour was esteemed dishonourable
Man had no rights at all He was property
Matters little by what name a government is called
Moral nature, undergoes less change than might be hoped
Names history has often found it convenient to mark its epochs
National character, not the work of a few individuals
Proceeds of his permission to eat meat on Fridays
Rarely able to command, having never learned to obey
Rich enough to be worth robbing
Seems but a change of masks, of costume, of phraseology
Selling the privilege of eating eggs upon fast-days
Sentiment of Christian self-complacency
Spain was governed by an established terrorism
That unholy trinity—Force; Dogma, and Ignorance
The great ocean was but a Spanish lake
The most thriving branch of national industry (Smuggler)
The record of our race is essentially unwritten
Thirty thousand masses should be said for his soul
Those who argue against a foregone conclusion
Three or four hundred petty sovereigns (of Germany)
Utter want of adaptation of his means to his ends
While one's friends urge moderation
Whole revenue was pledged to pay the interest, on his debts

CHAPTER XXXVI. 1598-1599

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 from 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-manoeuvre, 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 afflicting 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 listening 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.

Volume IV.

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

ETEXT EDITOR'S BOOKMARKS, ENTIRE 1590-99 UNITED NETHERLANDS:

A pusillanimous peace, always possible at any period
A despot really keeps no accounts, nor need to do so
Accustomed to the faded gallantries
Alexander's exuberant discretion
All Italy was in his hands
All fellow-worms together
Allow her to seek a profit from his misfortune
Anatomical study of what has ceased to exist
Artillery
At length the twig was becoming the tree
Auction sales of judicial ermine
Being the true religion, proved by so many testimonies
Beneficent and charitable purposes (War)
Bomb-shells were not often used although known for a century
Burning of Servetus at Geneva
Certainly it was worth an eighty years' war
Chief seafaring nations of the world were already protestant
Children who had never set foot on the shore
Chronicle of events must not be anticipated
Conceding it subsequently, after much contestation
Conformity of Governments to the principles of justice
Considerable reason, even if there were but little justice
Constant vigilance is the price of liberty
Continuing to believe himself invincible and infallible
Court fatigue, to scorn pleasure
Deal with his enemy as if sure to become his friend
Decline a bribe or interfere with the private sale of places
Disciple of Simon Stevinus
Divine right of kings
Done nothing so long as aught remained to do
Eat their own children than to forego one high mass
Ever met disaster with so cheerful a smile
Every one sees what you seem, few perceive what you are
Evil has the advantage of rapidly assuming many shapes
Famous fowl in every pot
Fed on bear's liver, were nearly poisoned to death
Fellow worms had been writhing for half a century in the dust
Fled from the land of oppression to the land of liberty
For his humanity towards the conquered garrisons (censured)
For us, looking back upon the Past, which was then the Future
French seem madmen, and are wise
Future world as laid down by rival priesthoods
German Highland and the German Netherland
God of wrath who had decreed the extermination of all unbeliever
Had industry been honoured instead of being despised
Hanging of Mary Dyer at Boston
Hardly an inch of French soil that had not two possessors
He spent more time at table than the Bearnese in sleep
Henry the Huguenot as the champion of the Council of Trent
Highest were not necessarily the least slimy
His invectives were, however, much stronger than his arguments
Historical scepticism may shut its eyes to evidence
History is but made up of a few scattered fragments
History is a continuous whole of which we see only fragments
Holy institution called the Inquisition
Hugo Grotius
Humanizing effect of science upon the barbarism of war
Idle, listless, dice-playing, begging, filching vagabonds
Ignorance is the real enslaver of mankind
Imagining that they held the world's destiny in their hands
Imposed upon the multitudes, with whom words were things
Impossible it was to invent terms of adulation too gross
In times of civil war, to be neutral is to be nothing
Inevitable fate of talking castles and listening ladies
Infinite capacity for pecuniary absorption
Inhabited by the savage tribes called Samoyedes
Innocent generation, to atone for the sins of their forefathers
Intelligence, science, and industry were accounted degrading
Invaluable gift which no human being can acquire, authority
King was often to be something much less or much worse
King had issued a general repudiation of his debts
Labour was esteemed dishonourable
Leading motive with all was supposed to be religion
Life of nations and which we call the Past
Little army of Maurice was becoming the model for Europe
Loud, nasal, dictatorial tone, not at all agreeable
Luxury had blunted the fine instincts of patriotism
Magnificent hopefulness
Man had no rights at all He was property
Maritime heretics
Matters little by what name a government is called
Meet around a green table except as fencers in the field
Mondragon was now ninety-two years old
Moral nature, undergoes less change than might be hoped
More catholic than the pope
Myself seeing of it methinketh that I dream
Names history has often found it convenient to mark its epochs
National character, not the work of a few individuals
Nothing cheap, said a citizen bitterly, but sermons
Obscure were thought capable of dying natural deaths
Octogenarian was past work and past mischief
Often necessary to be blind and deaf
One-third of Philip's effective navy was thus destroyed
Past was once the Present, and once the Future
Patriotism seemed an unimaginable idea

Peace would be destruction
Philip II. gave the world work enough
Picturesqueness of crime
Placid unconsciousness on his part of defeat
Plea of infallibility and of authority soon becomes ridiculous
Portion of these revenues savoured much of black-mail
Proceeds of his permission to eat meat on Fridays
Rarely able to command, having never learned to obey
Religion was rapidly ceasing to be the line of demarcation
Repudiation of national debts was never heard of before
Rich enough to be worth robbing
Righteous to kill their own children
Road to Paris lay through the gates of Rome
Royal plans should be enforced adequately or abandoned entirely
Sacked and drowned ten infant princes
Sages of every generation, read the future like a printed scroll
Seems but a change of masks, of costume, of phraseology
Self-assertion—the healthful but not engaging attribute
Selling the privilege of eating eggs upon fast-days
Sentiment of Christian self-complacency
Sewers which have ever run beneath decorous Christendom
Shift the mantle of religion from one shoulder to the other
Slain four hundred and ten men with his own hand
So often degenerated into tyranny (Calvinism)
Some rude lessons from that vigorous little commonwealth
Spain was governed by an established terrorism
Spaniards seem wise, and are madmen
Strangled his nineteen brothers on his accession
Such a crime as this had never been conceived (bankruptcy)
That unholy trinity—Force; Dogma, and Ignorance
The history of the Netherlands is history of liberty
The great ocean was but a Spanish lake
The divine speciality of a few transitory mortals
The Alcoran was less cruel than the Inquisition
The nation which deliberately carves itself in pieces
The most thriving branch of national industry (Smuggler)
The record of our race is essentially unwritten
There are few inventions in morals
They liked not such divine right nor such gentle-mindedness
They had come to disbelieve in the mystery of kingcraft
Thirty thousand masses should be said for his soul
Thirty-three per cent. interest was paid (per month)
Those who argue against a foregone conclusion
Three or four hundred petty sovereigns (of Germany)
To attack England it was necessary to take the road of Ireland
Toil and sacrifices of those who have preceded us
Tranquil insolence
Under the name of religion (so many crimes)
Unproductive consumption was alarmingly increasing
Upon their knees, served the queen with wine
Use of the spade
Utter want of adaptation of his means to his ends
Utter disproportions between the king's means and aims
Valour on the one side and discretion on the other
Walk up and down the earth and destroy his fellow-creatures
We have the reputation of being a good housewife
Weapons
Whether murders or stratagems, as if they were acts of virtue
While one's friends urge moderation
Whole revenue was pledged to pay the interest, on his debts
Wish to sell us the bear-skin before they have killed the bear
Worn nor caused to be worn the collar of the serf
Wrath of that injured personage as he read such libellous truths

---

subject to the trademark license, especially commercial redistribution.

START: FULL LICENSE
THE FULL PROJECT GUTENBERG LICENSE
PLEASE READ THIS BEFORE YOU DISTRIBUTE OR USE THIS WORK

To protect the Project Gutenberg™ mission of promoting the free distribution of electronic works, by using or distributing this work (or any other work associated in any way with the phrase “Project Gutenberg”), you agree to comply with all the terms of the Full Project Gutenberg™ License available with this file or online at www.gutenberg.org/license.

Section 1. General Terms of Use and Redistributing Project Gutenberg™ electronic works

1.A. By reading or using any part of this Project Gutenberg™ electronic work, you indicate that you have read, understand, agree to and accept all the terms of this license and intellectual property (trademark/copyright) agreement. If you do not agree to abide by all the terms of this agreement, you must cease using and return or destroy all copies of Project Gutenberg™ electronic works in your possession. If you paid a fee for obtaining a copy of or access to a Project Gutenberg™ electronic work and you do not agree to be bound by the terms of this agreement, you may obtain a refund from the person or entity to whom you paid the fee as set forth in paragraph 1.E.8.

1.B. “Project Gutenberg” is a registered trademark. It may only be used on or associated in any way with an electronic work by people who agree to be bound by the terms of this agreement. There are a few things that you can do with most Project Gutenberg™ electronic works even without complying with the full terms of this agreement. See paragraph 1.C below. There are a lot of things you can do with Project Gutenberg™ electronic works if you follow the terms of this agreement and help preserve free future access to Project Gutenberg™ electronic works. See paragraph 1.E below.

1.C. The Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation (“the Foundation” or PGLAF), owns a compilation copyright in the collection of Project Gutenberg™ electronic works. Nearly all the individual works in the collection are in the public domain in the United States. If an individual work is unprotected by copyright law in the United States and you are located in the United States, we do not claim a right to prevent you from copying, distributing, performing, displaying or creating derivative works based on the work as long as all references to Project Gutenberg are removed. Of course, we hope that you will support the Project Gutenberg™ mission of promoting free access to electronic works by freely sharing Project Gutenberg™ works in compliance with the terms of this agreement for keeping the Project Gutenberg™ name associated with the work. You can easily comply with the terms of this agreement by keeping this work in the same format with its attached full Project Gutenberg™ License when you share it without charge with others.

1.D. The copyright laws of the place where you are located also govern what you can do with this work. Copyright laws in most countries are in a constant state of change. If you are outside the United States, check the laws of your country in addition to the terms of this agreement before downloading, copying, displaying, performing, distributing or creating derivative works based on this work or any other Project Gutenberg™ work. The Foundation makes no representations concerning the copyright status of any work in any country other than the United States.

1.E. Unless you have removed all references to Project Gutenberg:

1.E.1. The following sentence, with active links to, or other immediate access to, the full Project Gutenberg™ License must appear prominently whenever any copy of a Project Gutenberg™ work (any work on which the phrase “Project Gutenberg” appears, or with which the phrase “Project Gutenberg” is associated) is accessed, displayed, performed, viewed, copied or distributed:

> This eBook is for the use of anyone anywhere in the United States and most other parts of the world at no cost and with almost no restrictions whatsoever. You may copy it, give it away or re-use it under the terms of the Project Gutenberg License included with this eBook or online at www.gutenberg.org. If you are not located in the United States, you will have to check the laws of the country where you are located before using this eBook.

1.E.2. If an individual Project Gutenberg™ electronic work is derived from texts not protected by U.S. copyright law (does not contain a notice indicating that it is posted with permission of the copyright holder), the work can be copied and distributed to anyone in the United States without paying any fees or charges. If you are redistributing or providing access to a work with the phrase “Project Gutenberg” associated with or appearing on the work, you must comply either with the requirements of paragraphs 1.E.1 through 1.E.7 or obtain permission for the use of the work and the Project Gutenberg™ trademark as set forth in paragraphs 1.E.8 or 1.E.9.

1.E.3. If an individual Project Gutenberg™ electronic work is posted with the permission of the copyright holder, your use and distribution must comply with both paragraphs 1.E.1 through 1.E.7 and any additional terms imposed by the copyright holder. Additional terms will be linked to the Project Gutenberg™ License for all works posted with the permission of the copyright holder found at the beginning of this work.

1.E.4. Do not unlink or detach or remove the full Project Gutenberg™ License terms from this work, or any files containing a part of this work or any other work associated with Project Gutenberg™.

1.E.5. Do not copy, display, perform, distribute or redistribute this electronic work, or any part of this electronic work, without prominently displaying the sentence set forth in paragraph 1.E.1 with active links or immediate access to the full terms of the Project Gutenberg™ License.

1.E.6. You may convert to and distribute this work in any binary, compressed, marked up, nonproprietary or proprietary form, including any word processing or hypertext form. However, if you provide access to or distribute copies of a Project Gutenberg™ work in a format other than “Plain Vanilla ASCII” or other format used in the official version posted on the official Project Gutenberg™ website (www.gutenberg.org), you must, at no additional cost, fee or expense to the user, provide a copy, a means of exporting a copy, or a means of obtaining a copy upon request, of the work in its original “Plain Vanilla ASCII” or other form. Any alternate format must include the full Project Gutenberg™ License as specified in paragraph 1.E.1.

1.E.7. Do not charge a fee for access to, viewing, displaying, performing, copying or distributing any Project Gutenberg™ works unless you comply with paragraph 1.E.8 or 1.E.9.

1.E.8. You may charge a reasonable fee for copies of or providing access to or distributing Project Gutenberg™ electronic works provided that:

- You pay a royalty fee of 20% of the gross profits you derive from the use of Project Gutenberg™ works calculated using the method you already use to calculate your applicable taxes. The fee is owed to the owner of the Project Gutenberg™ trademark, but he has agreed to donate royalties under this paragraph to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation. Royalty payments must be paid within 60 days following each date on which you prepare (or are legally required to prepare) your periodic tax returns. Royalty payments should be clearly marked as such and sent to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation at the address specified in Section 4, “Information about donations to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation.”

- You provide a full refund of any money paid by a user who notifies you in writing (or by e-mail) within 30 days of receipt that s/he does not agree to the terms of the full Project Gutenberg™ License. You must require such a user to return or destroy all copies of the works possessed in a physical medium and discontinue all use of and all access to other copies of Project Gutenberg™ works.

- You provide, in accordance with paragraph 1.F.3, a full refund of any money paid for a work or a replacement copy, if a defect in the electronic work is discovered and reported to you within 90 days of receipt of the work.

- You comply with all other terms of this agreement for free distribution of Project Gutenberg™ works.

1.E.9. If you wish to charge a fee or distribute a Project Gutenberg™ electronic work or group of works on different terms than are set forth in this agreement, you must obtain permission in writing from the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation, the manager of the Project Gutenberg™ trademark. Contact the Foundation as set forth in Section 3 below.

1.F.

1.F.1. Project Gutenberg volunteers and employees expend considerable effort to identify, do copyright research on, transcribe and proofread works not protected by U.S. copyright law in creating the Project Gutenberg™ collection. Despite these efforts, Project Gutenberg™ electronic works, and the medium on which they may be stored, may contain “Defects,” such as, but not limited to, incomplete, inaccurate or corrupt data, transcription errors, a copyright or other intellectual property infringement, a defective or damaged disk or other medium, a computer virus, or computer codes that damage or cannot be read by your equipment.

1.F.2. LIMITED WARRANTY, DISCLAIMER OF DAMAGES - Except for the “Right of Replacement or Refund” described in paragraph 1.F.3, the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation, the owner of the Project Gutenberg™ trademark, and any other party distributing a Project Gutenberg™ electronic work under this agreement, disclaim all liability to you for damages, costs and expenses, including legal fees. YOU AGREE THAT YOU HAVE NO REMEDIES FOR NEGLIGENCE, STRICT LIABILITY, BREACH OF WARRANTY OR BREACH OF CONTRACT EXCEPT THOSE PROVIDED IN PARAGRAPH 1.F.3. YOU AGREE THAT THE FOUNDATION, THE TRADEMARK OWNER, AND ANY DISTRIBUTOR UNDER THIS AGREEMENT WILL NOT BE LIABLE TO YOU FOR ACTUAL, DIRECT, INDIRECT, CONSEQUENTIAL, PUNITIVE OR INCIDENTAL DAMAGES EVEN IF YOU GIVE NOTICE OF THE POSSIBILITY OF SUCH DAMAGE.

1.F.3. LIMITED RIGHT OF REPLACEMENT OR REFUND - If you discover a defect in this electronic work within 90 days of receiving it, you can receive a refund of the money (if any) you paid for it by sending a written explanation to the person you received the work from. If you received the work on a physical medium, you must return the medium with your written explanation. The person or entity that provided you with the defective work may elect to provide a replacement copy in lieu of a refund. If you received the work electronically, the person or entity providing it to you may choose to give you a second opportunity to receive the work electronically in lieu of a refund. If the second copy is also defective, you may demand a refund in writing without further opportunities to fix the problem.

1.F.4. Except for the limited right of replacement or refund set forth in paragraph 1.F.3, this work is provided to you 'AS-IS', WITH NO OTHER WARRANTIES OF ANY KIND, EXPRESS OR IMPLIED, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO WARRANTIES OF MERCHANTABILITY OR FITNESS FOR ANY PURPOSE.

1.F.5. Some states do not allow disclaimers of certain implied warranties or the exclusion or limitation of certain types of damages. If any disclaimer or limitation set forth in this agreement violates the law of the state applicable to this agreement, the agreement shall be interpreted to make the maximum disclaimer or limitation permitted by the applicable state law. The invalidity or unenforceability of any provision of this agreement shall not void the remaining provisions.

1.F.6. INDEMNITY - You agree to indemnify and hold the Foundation, the trademark owner, any agent or employee of the Foundation, anyone providing copies of Project Gutenberg™ electronic works in accordance with this agreement, and any volunteers associated with the production, promotion and distribution of Project Gutenberg™ electronic works, harmless from all liability, costs and expenses, including legal fees, that arise directly or indirectly from any of the following which you do or cause to occur: (a) distribution of this or any Project Gutenberg™ work, (b) alteration, modification, or additions or deletions to any Project Gutenberg™ work, and (c) any Defect you cause.

Section 2. Information about the Mission of Project Gutenberg™

Project Gutenberg™ is synonymous with the free distribution of electronic works in formats readable by the widest variety of computers including obsolete, old, middle-aged and new computers. It exists because of the efforts of hundreds of volunteers and donations from people in all walks of life.

Volunteers and financial support to provide volunteers with the assistance they need are critical to reaching Project Gutenberg™'s goals and ensuring that the Project Gutenberg™ collection will remain freely available for generations to come. In 2001, the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation was created to provide a secure and permanent future for Project Gutenberg™ and future generations. To learn more about the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation and how your efforts and donations can help, see Sections 3 and 4 and the Foundation information page at www.gutenberg.org.

Section 3. Information about the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation

The Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation is a non-profit 501(c)(3) educational corporation organized under the laws of the state of Mississippi and granted tax exempt status by the Internal Revenue Service. The Foundation's EIN or federal tax identification number is 64-6221541. Contributions to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation are tax deductible to the full extent permitted by U.S. federal laws and your state's laws.

The Foundation's business office is located at 809 North 1500 West, Salt Lake City, UT 84116, (801) 596-1887. Email contact links and up to date contact information can be found at the Foundation's website and official page at www.gutenberg.org/contact

Section 4. Information about Donations to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation

Project Gutenberg™ depends upon and cannot survive without widespread public support and donations to carry out its mission of increasing the number of public domain and licensed works that can be freely distributed in machine-readable form accessible by the widest array of equipment including outdated equipment. Many small donations ($1 to $5,000) are particularly important to maintaining tax exempt status with the IRS.

The Foundation is committed to complying with the laws regulating charities and charitable donations in all 50 states of the United States. Compliance requirements are not uniform and it takes a considerable effort, much paperwork and many fees to meet and keep up with these requirements. We do not solicit donations in locations where we have not received written confirmation of compliance. To SEND DONATIONS or determine the status of compliance for any particular state visit www.gutenberg.org/donate.

While we cannot and do not solicit contributions from states where we have not met the solicitation requirements, we know of no prohibition against accepting unsolicited donations from donors in such states who approach us with offers to donate.

International donations are gratefully accepted, but we cannot make any statements concerning tax treatment of donations received from outside the United States. U.S. laws alone swamp our small staff.

Please check the Project Gutenberg web pages for current donation methods and addresses. Donations are accepted in a number of other ways including checks, online payments and credit card donations. To donate, please visit: www.gutenberg.org/donate

Section 5. General Information About Project Gutenberg™ electronic works

Professor Michael S. Hart was the originator of the Project Gutenberg™ concept of a library of electronic works that could be freely shared with anyone. For forty years, he produced and distributed Project Gutenberg™ eBooks with only a loose network of volunteer support.