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BOOK II.

CARDINAL GRANVELLA.

ANTHONY PERENOT, Bishop of Arras, subsequently Archbishop of Malines, and Metropolitan of all the Netherlands, who, under the name of Cardinal Granvella, has been immortalized by the hatred of his contemporaries, was born in the year 1516, at Besancon in Burgundy. His father, Nicolaus Perenot, the son of a blacksmith, had risen by his own merits to be the private secretary of Margaret, Duchess of Savoy, at that time regent of the Netherlands. In this post he was noticed for his habits of business by Charles V., who took him into his own service and employed him in several important negotiations. For twenty years he was a member of the Emperor's cabinet, and filled the offices of privy counsellor and keeper of the king's seal, and shared in all the state secrets of that monarch. He acquired a large fortune. His honors, his influence, and his political knowledge were inherited by his son, Anthony Perenot, who in his early years gave proofs of the great capacity which subsequently opened to him so distinguished a career. Anthony had cultivated at several colleges the talents with which nature had so lavishly endowed him, and in some respects had an advantage over his father. He soon showed that his own abilities were sufficient to maintain the advantageous position which the merits of another had procured him. He was twenty-four years old when the Emperor sent him as his plenipotentiary to the ecclesiastical council of Trent, where he delivered the first specimen of that eloquence which in the sequel gave him so complete an ascendancy over two kings. Charles employed him in several difficult embassies, the duties of which he fulfilled to the satisfaction of his sovereign, and when finally that Emperor resigned the sceptre to his son he made that costly present complete by giving him a minister who could help him to wield it.

Granvella opened his new career at once with the greatest masterpiece of political genius, in passing so easily from the favor of such a father into equal consideration with such a son. And he soon proved himself deserving of it. At the secret negotiations of which the Duchess of Lorraine had, in 1558, been

the medium between the French and Spanish ministers at Peronne, he planned, conjointly with the Cardinal of Lorraine, that conspiracy against the Protestants which was afterwards matured, but also betrayed, at Chateau-Cambray, where Perenot likewise assisted in effecting the so-called peace.

A deeply penetrating, comprehensive intellect, an unusual facility in conducting great and intricate affairs, and the most extensive learning, were wonderfully united in this man with persevering industry and never- wearying patience, while his enterprising genius was associated with thoughtful mechanical regularity. Day and night the state found him vigilant and collected; the most important and the most insignificant things were alike weighed by him with scrupulous attention. Not unfrequently he employed five secretaries at one time, dictating to them in different languages, of which he is said to have spoken seven. What his penetrating mind had slowly matured acquired in his lips both force and grace, and truth, set forth by his persuasive eloquence, irresistibly carried away all hearers. He was tempted by none of the passions which make slaves of most men. His integrity was incorruptible. With shrewd penetration he saw through the disposition of his master, and could read in his features his whole train of thought, and, as it were, the approaching form in the shadow which outran it. With an artifice rich in resources he came to the aid of Philip's more inactive mind, formed into perfect thought his master's crude ideas while they yet hung on his lips, and liberally allowed him the glory of the invention. Granvella understood the difficult and useful art of depreciating his own talents; of making his own genius the seeming slave of another; thus he ruled while he concealed his sway. In this manner only could Philip II. be governed. Content with a silent but real power, Granvella did not grasp insatiably at new and outward marks of it, which with lesser minds are ever the most coveted objects; but every new distinction seemed to sit upon him as easily as the oldest. No wonder if such extraordinary endowments had alone gained him the favor of his master; but a large and valuable treasure of political secrets and experiences, which the active life of Charles V. had accumulated, and had deposited in the mind of this man, made him indispensable to his successor. Self-sufficient as the latter was, and accustomeded to confide in his own understanding, his timid and crouching policy was fain to lean on a superior mind, and to aid its own irresolution not only by precedent but also by the influence and example of another. No political matter which concerned the royal interest, even when Philip himself was in the Netherlands, was decided without the intervention of Granvella; and when the king embarked for Spain he made the new regent the same valuable present of the minister which he himself had received from the Emperor, his father.

Common as it is for despotic princes to bestow unlimited confidence on the creatures whom they have raised from the dust, and of whose greatness they themselves are, in a measure, the creators, the present is no ordinary instance; pre-eminent must have been the qualities which could so far conquer the selfish reserve of such a character as Philip's as to gain his confidence, nay, even to win him into familiarity. The slightest ebullition of the most allowable self-respect, which might have tempted him to assert, however slightly, his claim to any idea which the king had once ennobled as his own, would have cost him his whole influence. He might gratify without restraint the lowest passions of voluptuousness, of rapacity, and of revenge, but the only one in which he really took delight, the sweet consciousness of his own superiority and power, he was constrained carefully to conceal from the suspicious glance of the despot. He voluntarily disclaimed all the eminent qualities, which were already his own, in order, as it were, to receive them a second time from the generosity of the king. His happiness seemed to flow from no other source, no other person could have a claim upon his gratitude. The purple, which was sent to him from Rome, was not assumed until the royal permission reached him from Spain; by laying it down on the steps of the throne he appeared, in a measure, to receive it first from the hands of majesty. Less politic, Alva erected a trophy in Antwerp, and inscribed his own name under the victory, which he had won as the servant of the crown—but Alva carried with him to the grave the displeasure of his master. He had invaded with audacious hand the royal prerogative by drawing immediately at the fountain of immortality.

Three times Granvella changed his master, and three times he succeeded in rising to the highest favor. With the same facility with which he had guided the settled pride of an autocrat, and the sly egotism of a despot, he knew how to manage the delicate vanity of a woman. His business between himself and the regent, even when they were in the same house, was, for the most part, transacted by the medium of notes, a custom which draws its date from the times of Augustus and Tiberius. When the regent was in any perplexity these notes were interchanged from hour to hour. He probably adopted this expedient in the hope of eluding the watchful jealousy of the nobility, and concealing from them, in part at least, his influence over the regent. Perhaps, too, he also believed that by this means his advice would become more permanent; and, in case of need, this written testimoney would be at hand to shield him from blame. But the vigilance of the nobles made this caution vain, and it was soon known in all the provinces that nothing was determined upon without the minister's advice.

Granvella possessed all the qualities requisite for a perfect statesman in a monarchy governed by despotic principles, but was absolutely unqualified for republics which are governed by kings. Educated

between the throne and the confessional, he knew of no other relation between man and man than that of rule and subjection; and the innate consciousness of his own superiority gave him a contempt for others. His policy wanted pliability, the only virtue which was here indispensable to its success. He was naturally overbearing and insolent, and the royal authority only gave arms to the natural impetuosity of his disposition and the imperiousness of his order. He veiled his own ambition beneath the interests of the crown, and made the breach between the nation and the king incurable, because it would render him indispensable to the latter. He revenged on the nobility the lowliness of his own origin; and, after the fashion of all those who have risen by their own merits, he valued the advantages of birth below those by which he had raised himself to distinction. The Protestants saw in him their most implacable foe; to his charge were laid all the burdens which oppressed the country, and they pressed the more heavily because they came from him. Nay, he was even accused of having brought back to severity the milder sentiments to which the urgent remonstrances of the provinces had at last disposed the monarch. The Netherlands execrated him as the most terrible enemy of their liberties, and the originator of all the misery which subsequently came upon them.

1559. Philip had evidently left the provinces too soon. The new measures of the government were still strange to the people, and could receive sanction and authority from his presence alone; the new machines which he had brought into play required to be kept in motion by a dreaded and powerful hand, and to have their first movements watched and regulated. He now exposed his minister to all the angry passions of the people, who no longer felt restrained by the fetters of the royal presence; and he delegated to the weak arm of a subject the execution of projects in which majesty itself, with all its powerful supports, might have failed.

The land, indeed, flourished; and a general prosperity appeared to testify to the blessings of the peace which had so lately been bestowed upon it. An external repose deceived the eye, for within raged all the elements of discord. If the foundations of religion totter in a country they totter not alone; the audacity which begins with things sacred ends with things profane. The successful attack upon the hierarchy had awakened a spirit of boldness, and a desire to assail authority in general, and to test laws as well as dogmas—duties as well as opinions. The fanatical boldness with which men had learned to discuss and decide upon the affairs of eternity might change its subject matter; the contempt for life and property which religious enthusiasm had taught could metamorphose timid citizens into foolhardy rebels. A female government of nearly forty years had given the nation room to assert their liberty; continual wars, of which the Netherlands had been the theatre, had introduced a license with them, and the right of the stronger had usurped the place of law and order. The provinces were filled with foreign adventurers and fugitives; generally men bound by no ties of country, family, or property, who had brought with them from their unhappy homes the seeds of insubordination and rebellion. The repeated spectacles of torture and of death had rudely burst the tenderer threads of moral feeling, and had given an unnatural harshness to the national character.

Still the rebellion would have crouched timorously and silently on the ground if it had not found a support in the nobility. Charles V. had spoiled the Flemish nobles of the Netherlands by making them the participators of his glory, by fostering their national pride, by the marked preference he showed for them over the Castilian nobles, and by opening an arena to their ambition in every part of his empire. In the late war with France they had really deserved this preference from Philip; the advantages which the king reaped from the peace of Chateau- Cambray were for the most part the fruits of their valor, and they now sensibly missed the gratitude on which they had so confidently reckoned. Moreover, the separation of the German empire from the Spanish monarchy, and the less warlike spirit of the new government, had greatly narrowed their sphere of action, and, except in their own country, little remained for them to gain. And Philip now appointed his Spaniards where Charles V. had employed the Flemings. All the passions which the preceding government had raised and kept employed still survived in peace; and in default of a legitimate object these unruly feelings found, unfortunately, ample scope in the grievances of their country. Accordingly, the claims and wrongs which had been long supplanted by new passions were now drawn from oblivion. By his late appointments the king had satisfied no party; for those even who obtained offices were not much more content than those who were entirely passed over, because they had calculated on something better than they got. William of Orange had received four governments (not to reckon some smaller dependencies which, taken together, were equivalent to a fifth), but William had nourished hopes of Flanders and Brabant. He and Count Egmont forgot what had really fallen to their share, and only remembered that they had lost the regency. The majority of the nobles were either plunged into debt by their own extravagance, or had willingly enough been drawn into it by the government. Now that they were excluded from the prospect of lucrative appointments, they at once saw themselves exposed to poverty, which pained them the more sensibly when they contrasted the splendor of the affluent citizens with their own necessities. In the extremities to which they were reduced many would have readily assisted in the commission even of crimes; how then could they resist the seductive offers of the Calvinists, who liberally repaid them for

their intercession and protection? Lastly, many whose estates were past redemption placed their last hope in a general devastation, and stood prepared at the first favorable moment to cast the torch of discord into the republic.

This threatening aspect of the public mind was rendered still more alarming by the unfortunate vicinity of France. What Philip dreaded for the provinces was there already accomplished. The fate of that kingdom prefigured to him the destiny of his Netherlands, and the spirit of rebellion found there a seductive example. A similar state of things had under Francis I. and Henry II. scattered the seeds of innovation in that kingdom; a similar fury of persecution and a like spirit of faction had encouraged its growth. Now Huguenots and Catholics were struggling in a dubious contest; furious parties disorganized the whole monarchy, and were violently hurrying this once-powerful state to the brink of destruction. Here, as there, private interest, ambition, and party feeling might veil themselves under the names of religion and patriotism, and the passions of a few citizens drive the entire nation to take up arms. The frontiers of both countries merged in Walloon Flanders; the rebellion might, like an agitated sea, cast its waves as far as this: would a country be closed against it whose language, manners, and character wavered between those of France and Belgium? As yet the government had taken no census of its Protestant subjects in these countries, but the new sect, it was aware, was a vast, compact republic, which extended its roots through all the monarchies of Christendom, and the slighest disturbance in any of its most distant members vibrated to its centre. It was, as it were, a chain of threatening volcanoes, which, united by subterraneous passages, ignite at the same moment with alarming sympathy. The Netherlands were, necessarily, open to all nations, because they derived their support from all. Was it possible for Philip to close a commercial state as easily as he could Spain? If he wished to purify these provinces from heresy it was necessary for him to commence by extirpating it in France.

It was in this state that Granvella found the Netherlands at the beginning of his administration (1560).

To restore to these countries the uniformity of papistry, to break the co-ordinate power of the nobility and the states, and to exalt the royal authority on the ruins of republican freedom, was the great object of Spanish policy and the express commission of the new minister. But obstacles stood in the way of its accomplishment; to conquer these demanded the invention of new resources, the application of new machinery. The Inquisition, indeed, and the religious edicts appeared sufficient to check the contagion of heresy; but the latter required superintendence, and the former able instruments for its now extended jurisdiction. The church constitution continued the same as it had been in earlier times, when the provinces were less populous, when the church still enjoyed universal repose, and could be more easily overlooked and controlled. A succession of several centuries, which changed the whole interior form of the provinces, had left the form of the hierarchy unaltered, which, moreover, was protected from the arbitrary will of its ruler by the particular privileges of the provinces. All the seventeen provinces were parcelled out under four bishops, who had their seats at Arras, Tournay, Cambray, and Utrecht, and were subject to the primates of Rheims and Cologne. Philip the Good, Duke of Burgundy, had, indeed, meditated an increase in the number of bishops to meet the wants of the increasing population; but, unfortunately, in the excitement of a life of pleasure had abandoned the project. Ambition and lust of conquest withdrew the mind of Charles the Bold from the internal concerns of his kingdom, and Maximilian had already too many subjects of dispute with the states to venture to add to their number by proposing this change. A stormy reign prevented Charles V. from the execution of this extensive plan, which Philip II. now undertook as a bequest from all these princes. The moment had now arrived when the urgent necessities of the church would excuse the innovation, and the leisure of peace favored its accomplishment. With the prodigious crowd of people from all the countries of Europe who were crowded together in the towns of the Netherlands, a multitude of religious opinions had also grown up; and it was impossible that religion could any longer be effectually superintended by so few eyes as were formerly sufficient. While the number of bishops was so small their districts must, of necessity, have been proportionally extensive, and four men could not be adequate to maintain the purity of the faith through so wide a district.

The jurisdiction which the Archbishops of Cologne and Rheims exercised over the Netherlands had long been a stumbling-block to the government, which could not look on this territory as really its own property so long as such an important branch of power was still wielded by foreign hands. To snatch this prerogative from the alien archbishops; by new and active agents to give fresh life and vigor to the superintendence of the faith, and at the same time to strengthen the number of the partisans of government at the diet, no more effectual means could be devised than to increase the number of bishops. Resolved upon doing this Philip II. ascended the throne; but he soon found that a change in the hierarchy would inevitably meet with warm opposition from the provinces, without whose consent, nevertheless, it would be vain to attempt it. Philip foresaw that the nobility would never approve of a measure which would so strongly augment the royal party, and take from the aristocracy the

preponderance of power in the diet. The revenues, too, for the maintenance of these new bishops must be diverted from the abbots and monks, and these formed a considerable part of the states of the realm. He had, besides, to fear the opposition of the Protestants, who would not fail to act secretly in the diet against him. On these accounts the whole affair was discussed at Rome with the greatest possible secrecy. Instructed by, and as the agent of, Granvella, Francis Sonnoi, a priest of Louvain, came before Paul IV. to inform him how extensive the provinces were, how thriving and populous, how luxurious in their prosperity. But, he continued, in the immoderate enjoyment of liberty the true faith is neglected, and heretics prosper. To obviate this evil the Romish See must have recourse to extraordinary measures. It was not difficult to prevail on the Romish pontiff to make a change which would enlarge the sphere of his own jurisdiction.

Paul IV. appointed a tribunal of seven cardinals to deliberate upon this important matter; but death called him away, and he left to his successor, Pius IV., the duty of carrying their advice into execution. The welcome tidings of the pope's determination reached the king in Zealand when he was just on the point of setting sail for Spain, and the minister was secretly charged with the dangerous reform. The new constitution of the hierarchy was published in 1560; in addition to the then existing four bishoprics thirteen new ones were established, according to the number of seventeen provinces, and four of them were raised into archbishoprics. Six of these episcopal sees, viz., in Antwerp, Herzogenbusch, Ghent, Bruges, Ypres, and Ruremonde, were placed under the Archbishopric of Malines; five others, Haarlem, Middelburg, Leuwarden, Deventer, and Groningen, under the Archbishopric of Utrecht; and the remaining four, Arras, Tournay, St. Omer, and Namur, which lie nearest to France, and have language, character, and manners in common with that country, under the Archbishopric of Cambray. Malines, situated in the middle of Brabant and in the centre of all the seventeen provinces, was made the primacy of all the rest, and was, with several rich abbeys, the reward of Granvella. The revenues of the new bishoprics were provided by an appropriation of the treasures of the cloisters and abbeys which had accumulated from pious benefactions during centuries. Some of the abbots were raised to the episcopal throne, and with the possession of their cloisters and prelacies retained also the vote at the diet which was attached to them. At the same time to every bishopric nine prebends were attached, and bestowed on the most learned juris-consultists and theologians, who were to support the Inquisition and the bishop in his spiritual office. Of these, the two who were most deserving by knowledge, experience, and unblemished life were to be constituted actual inquisitors, and to have the first voice in the Synods. To the Archbishop of Malines, as metropolitan of all the seventeen provinces, the full authority was given to appoint, or at discretion depose, archbishops and bishops; and the Romish See was only to give its ratification to his acts.

At any other period the nation would have received with gratitude and approved of such a measure of church reform since it was fully called for by circumstances, was conducive to the interests of religion, and absolutely indispensable for the moral reformation of the monkhood. Now the temper of the times saw in it nothing but a hateful change. Universal was the indignation with which it was received. A cry was raised that the constitution was trampled under foot, the rights of the nation violated, and that the Inquisition was already at the door, and would soon open here, as in Spain, its bloody tribunal. The people beheld with dismay these new servants of arbitrary power and of persecution. The nobility saw in it nothing but a strengthening of the royal authority by the addition of fourteen votes in the states' assembly, and a withdrawal of the firmest prop of their freedom, the balance of the royal and the civil power. The old bishops complained of the diminution of their incomes and the circumscription of their sees; the abbots and monks had not only lost power and income, but had received in exchange rigid censors of their morals. Noble and simple, laity and clergy, united against the common foe, and while all singly struggled for some petty private interest, the cry appeared to come from the formidable voice of patriotism.

Among all the provinces Brabant was loudest in its opposition. The inviolability of its church constitution was one of the important privileges which it had reserved in the remarkable charter of the "Joyful Entry,"—statutes which the sovereign could not violate without releasing the nation from its allegiance to him. In vain did the university of Louvain assert that in disturbed times of the church a privilege lost its power which had been granted in the period of its tranquillity. The introduction of the new bishoprics into the constitution was thought to shake the whole fabric of liberty. The prelacies, which were now transferred to the bishops, must henceforth serve another rule than the advantage of the province of whose states they had been members. The once free patriotic citizens were to be instruments of the Romish See and obedient tools of the archbishop, who again, as first prelate of Brabant, had the immediate control over them. The freedom of voting was gone, because the bishops, as servile spies of the crown, made every one fearful. "Who," it was asked, "will after this venture to raise his voice in parliament before such observers, or in their presence dare to protect the rights of the nation against the rapacious hands of the government? They will trace out the resources of the provinces, and betray to the crown the secrets of our freedom and our property. They will obstruct the way to all offices of honor; we shall soon see the courtiers of the king succeed the present men; the

children of foreigners will, for the future, fill the parliament, and the private interest of their patron will guide their venal votes." "What an act of oppression," rejoined the monks, "to pervert to other objects the pious designs of our holy institutions, to contemn the inviolable wishes of the dead, and to take that which a devout charity had deposited in our chests for the relief of the unfortunate and make it subservient to the luxury of the bishops, thus inflating their arrogant pomp with the plunder of the poor?" Not only the abbots and monks, who really did suffer by this act of appropriation, but every family which could flatter itself with the slightest hope of enjoying, at some time or other, even in the most remote posterity, the benefit of this monastic foundation, felt this disappointment of their distant expectations as much as if they had suffered an actual injury, and the wrongs of a few abbot-prelates became the concern of a whole nation.

Historians have not omitted to record the covert proceedings of William of Orange during this general commotion, who labored to conduct to one end these various and conflicting passions. At his instigation the people of Brabant petitioned the regent for an advocate and protector, since they alone, of all his Flemish subjects, had the misfortune to unite, in one and the same person, their counsel and their ruler. Had the demand been granted, their choice could fall on no other than the Prince of Orange. But Granvella, with his usual presence of mind, broke through the snare. "The man who receives this office," he declared in the state council, "will, I hope, see that he divides Brabant with the king!" The long delay of the papal bull, which was kept back by a misunderstanding between the Romish and Spanish courts, gave the disaffected an opportunity to combine for a common object. In perfect secrecy the states of Brabant despatched an extraordinary messenger to Pins IV. to urge their wishes in Rome itself. The ambassador was provided with important letters of recommendation from the Prince of Orange, and carried with him considerable sums to pave his way to the father of the church. At the same time a public letter was forwarded from the city of Antwerp to the King of Spain containing the most urgent representations, and supplicating him to spare that flourishing commercial town from the threatened innovation. They knew, it was stated, that the intentions of the monarch were the best, and that the institution of the new bishops was likely to be highly conducive to the maintenance of true religion; but the foreigners could not be convinced of this, and on them depended the prosperity of their town. Among them the most groundless rumors would be as perilous as the most true. The first embassy was discovered in time, and its object disappointed by the prudence of the regent; by the second the town of Antwerp gained so far its point that it was to remain without a bishop, at least until the personal arrival of the king, which was talked of.

The example and success of Antwerp gave the signal of opposition to all the other towns for which a new bishop was intended. It is a remarkable proof of the hatred to the Inquisition and the unanimity of the Flemish towns at this date that they preferred to renounce all the advantages which the residence of a bishop would necessarily bring to their local trade rather than by their consent promote that abhorred tribunal, and thus act in opposition to the interests of the whole nation. Deventer, Ruremond, and Leuwarden placed themselves in determined opposition, and (1561) successfully carried their point; in the other towns the bishops were, in spite of all remonstrances, forcibly inducted. Utrecht, Haarlem, St. Omer, and Middelburg were among the first which opened their gates to them; the remaining towns followed their example; but in Malines and Herzogenbusch the bishops were received with very little respect. When Granvella made his solemn entry into the former town not a single nobleman showed himself, and his triumph was wanting in everything that could make it real, because those remained away over whom it was meant to be celebrated.

In the meantime, too, the period had elapsed within which the Spanish troops were to have left the country, and as yet there was no appearance of their being withdrawn. People perceived with terror the real cause of the delay, and suspicion lent it a fatal connection with the Inquisition. The detention of these troops, as it rendered the nation more vigilant and distrustful, made it more difficult for the minister to proceed with the other innovations, and yet he would fain not deprive himself of this powerful and apparently indispensable aid in a country where all hated him, and in the execution of a commission to which all were opposed. At last, however, the regent saw herself compelled by the universal murmurs of discontent, to urge most earnestly upon the king the necessity of the withdrawal of the troops. "The provinces," she writes to Madrid, "have unanimously declared that they would never again be induced to grant the extraordinary taxes required by the government as long as word was not kept with them in this matter. The danger of a revolt was far more imminent than that of an attack by the French Protestants, and if a rebellion was to take place in the Netherlands these forces would be too weak to repress it, and there was not sufficient money in the treasury to enlist new." By delaying his answer the king still sought at least to gain time, and the reiterated representations of the regent would still have remained ineffectual, if, fortunately for the provinces, a loss which he had lately suffered from the Turks had not compelled him to employ these troops in the Mediterranean. He, therefore, at last consented to their departure: they were embarked in 1561 in Zealand, and the exulting shouts of all the provinces accompanied their departure.

Meanwhile Granvella ruled in the council of state almost uncontrolled. All offices, secular and spiritual, were given away through him; his opinion prevailed against the unanimous voice of the whole assembly. The regent herself was governed by him. He had contrived to manage so that her appointment was made out for two years only, and by this expedient he kept her always in his power. It seldom happened that any important affair was submitted to the other members, and if it really did occur it was only such as had been long before decided, to which it was only necessary for formality's sake to gain their sanction. Whenever a royal letter was read Viglius received instructions to omit all such passages as were underlined by the minister. It often happened that this correspondence with Spain laid open the weakness of the government, or the anxiety felt by the regent, with which it was not expedient to inform the members, whose loyalty was distrusted. If again it occurred that the opposition gained a majority over the minister, and insisted with determination on an article which he could not well put off any longer, he sent it to the ministry at Madrid for their decision, by which he at least gained time, and in any case was certain to find support.—With the exception of the Count of Barlaimont, the President Viglius, and a few others, all the other counsellors were but superfluous figures in the senate, and the minister's behavior to them marked the small value which he placed upon their friendship and adherence. No wonder that men whose pride had been so greatly indulged by the flattering attentions of sovereign princes, and to whom, as to the idols of their country, their fellow-citizens paid the most reverential submission, should be highly indignant at this arrogance of a plebeian. Many of them had been personally insulted by Granvella.

The Prince of Orange was well aware that it was he who had prevented his marriage with the Princess of Lorraine, and that he had also endeavored to break off the negotiations for another alliance with the Princess of Savoy. He had deprived Count Horn of the government of Gueldres and Zutphen, and had kept for himself an abbey which Count Egmont had in vain exerted himself to obtain for a relation. Confident of his superior power, he did not even think it worth while to conceal from the nobility his contempt for them, and which, as a rule, marked his whole administration; William of Orange was the only one with whom be deemed it advisable to dissemble. Although he really believed himself to be raised far above all the laws of fear and decorum, still in this point, however, his confident arrogance misled him, and he erred no less against policy than he shined against propriety. In the existing posture of affairs the government could hardly have adopted a worse measure than that of throwing disrespect on the nobility. It had it in its power to flatter the prejudices and feelings of the aristocracy, and thus artfully and imperceptibly win them over to its plans, and through them subvert the edifice of national liberty. Now it admonished them, most inopportunely, of their duties, their dignity, and their power; calling upon them even to be patriots, and to devote to the cause of true greatness an ambition which hitherto it had inconsiderately repelled. To carry into effect the ordinances it required the active co-operation of the lieutenant-governors; no wonder, however, that the latter showed but little zeal to afford this assistance. On the contrary, it is highly probable that they silently labored to augment the difficulties of the minister, and to subvert his measures, and through his ill-success to diminish the king's confidence in him, and expose his administration to contempt. The rapid progress which in spite of those horrible edicts the Reformation made during Granvella's administration in the Netherlands, is evidently to be ascribed to the lukewarmness of the nobility in opposing it. If the minister had been sure of the nobles he might have despised the fury of the mob, which would have impotently dashed itself against the dreaded barriers of the throne. The sufferings of the citizens lingered long in tears and sighs, until the arts and the example of the nobility called forth a louder expression of them.

Meanwhile the inquisitions into religion were carried on with renewed vigor by the crowd of new laborers (1561, 1562), and the edicts against heretics were enforced with fearful obedience. But the critical moment when this detestable remedy might have been applied was allowed to pass by; the nation had become too strong and vigorous for such rough treatment. The new religion could now be extirpated only by the death of all its professors. The present executions were but so many alluring exhibitions of its excellence, so many scenes of its triumphs and radiant virtue. The heroic greatness with which the victims died made converts to the opinions for which they perished. One martyr gained ten new proselytes. Not in towns only, or villages, but on the very highways, in the boats and public carriages disputes were held touching the dignity of the pope, the saints, purgatory, and indulgences, and sermons were preached and men converted. From the country and from the towns the common people rushed in crowds to rescue the prisoners of the Holy Tribunal from the hands of its satellites, and the municipal officers who ventured to support it with the civil forces were pelted with stones. Multitudes accompanied the Protestant preachers whom the Inquisition pursued, bore them on their shoulders to and from church, and at the risk of their lives concealed them from their persecutors. The first province which was seized with the fanatical spirit of rebellion was, as had been expected, Walloon Flanders. A French Calvinist, by name Lannoi, set himself up in Tournay as a worker of miracles, where he hired a few women to simulate diseases, and to pretend to be cured by him. He preached in the woods near the town, drew the people in great numbers after him, and scattered in their minds the seeds of rebellion. Similar teachers appeared in Lille and Valenciennes, but in the latter place the

municipal functionaries succeeded in seizing the persons of these incendiaries; while, however, they delayed to execute them their followers increased so rapidly that they became sufficiently strong to break open the prisons and forcibly deprive justice of its victims. Troops at last were brought into the town and order restored. But this trifling occurrence had for a moment withdrawn the veil which had hitherto concealed the strength of the Protestant party, and allowed the minister to compute their prodigious numbers. In Tournay alone five thousand at one time had been seen attending the sermons, and not many less in Valenciennes. What might not be expected from the northern provinces, where liberty was greater, and the seat of government more remote, and where the vicinity of Germany and Denmark multiplied the sources of contagion? One slight provocation had sufficed to draw from its concealment so formidable a multitude. How much greater was, perhaps, the number of those who in their hearts acknowledged the new sect, and only waited for a favorable opportunity to publish their adhesion to it. This discovery greatly alarmed the regent. The scanty obedience paid to the edicts, the wants of the exhausted treasury, which compelled her to impose new taxes, and the suspicious movements of the Huguenots on the French frontiers still further increased her anxiety. At the same time she received a command from Madrid to send off two thousand Flemish cavalry to the army of the Queen Mother in France, who, in the distresses of the civil war, had recourse to Philip II. for assistance. Every affair of faith, in whatever land it might be, was made by Philip his own business. He felt it as keenly as any catastrophe which could befall his own house, and in such cases always stood ready to sacrifice his means to foreign necessities. If it were interested motives that here swayed him they were at least kingly and grand, and the bold support of his principles wins our admiration as much as their cruelty withholds our esteem.

The regent laid before the council of state the royal will on the subject of these troops, but with a very warm opposition on the part of the nobility. Count Egmont and the Prince of Orange declared that the time was illchosen for stripping the Netherlands of troops, when the aspect of affairs rendered rather the enlistment of new levies advisable. The movements of the troops in France momentarily threatened a surprise, and the commotions within the provinces demanded, more than ever, the utmost vigilance on the part of the government. Hitherto, they said, the German Protestants had looked idly on during the struggles of their brethren in the faith; but will they continue to do so, especially when we are lending our aid to strengthen their enemy? By thus acting shall we not rouse their vengeance against us, and call their arms into the northern Netherlands? Nearly the whole council of state joined in this opinion; their representations were energetic and not to be gainsaid. The regent herself, as well as the minister, could not but feel their truth, and their own interests appeared to forbid obedience to the royal mandate. Would it not be impolitic to withdraw from the Inquisition its sole prop by removing the larger portion of the army, and in a rebellious country to leave themselves without defence, dependent on the arbitrary will of an arrogant aristocracy? While the regent, divided between the royal commands, the urgent importunity of her council, and her own fears, could not venture to come to a decision, William of Orange rose and proposed the assembling of the States General. But nothing could have inflicted a more fatal blow on the supremacy of the crown than by yielding to this advice to put the nation in mind of its power and its rights. No measure could be more hazardous at the present moment. The danger which was thus gathering over the minister did not escape him; a sign from him warned the regent to break off the consultation and adjourn the council. "The government," he writes to Madrid, "can do nothing more injurious to itself than to consent to the assembling of the states. Such a step is at all times perilous, because it tempts the nation to test and restrict the rights of the crown; but it is many times more objectionable at the present moment, when the spirit of rebellion is already widely spread amongst us; when the abbots, exasperated at the loss of their income, will neglect nothing to impair the dignity of the bishops; when the whole nobility and all the deputies from the towns are led by the arts of the Prince of Orange, and the disaffected can securely reckon on the assistance of the nation." This representation, which at least was not wanting in sound sense, did not fail in having the desired effect on the king's mind. The assembling of the states was rejected once and forever, the penal statutes against the heretics were renewed in all their rigor, and the regent was directed to hasten the despatch of the required auxiliaries.

But to this the council of state would not consent. All that she obtained was, instead of the troops, a supply of money for the Queen Mother, which at this crisis was still more welcome to her. In place, however, of assembling the states, and in order to beguile the nation with, at least, the semblance of republican freedom, the regent summoned the governors of the provinces and the knights of the Golden Fleece to a special congress at Brussels, to consult on the present dangers and necessities of the state. When the President, Viglius, had laid before them the matters on which they were summoned to deliberate, three days were given to them for consideration. During this time the Prince of Orange assembled them in his palace, where he represented to them the necessity of coming to some unanimous resolution before the next sitting, and of agreeing on the measures which ought to be followed in the present dangerous state of affairs.

The majority assented to the propriety of this course; only Barlaimont, with a few of the dependents

of the cardinal, had the courage to plead for the interests of the crown and of the minister. "It did not behoove them," he said, "to interfere in the concerns of the government, and this previous agreement of votes was an illegal and culpable assumption, in the guilt of which he would not participate;"—a declaration which broke up the meeting without any conclusion being come to. The regent, apprised of it by the Count Barlaimont, artfully contrived to keep the knights so well employed during their stay in the town that they could find no time for coming to any further secret understanding; in this session, however, it was arranged, with their concurrence, that Florence of Montmorency, Lord of Montigny, should make a journey to Spain, in order to acquaint the king with the present posture of affairs. But the regent sent before him another messenger to Madrid, who previously informed the king of all that had been debated between the Prince of Orange and the knights at the secret conference.

The Flemish ambassador was flattered in Madrid with empty protestations of the king's favor and paternal sentiments towards the Netherlands, while the regent was commanded to thwart, to the utmost of her power, the secret combinations of the nobility, and, if possible, to sow discord among their most eminent members. Jealousy, private interest, and religious differences had long divided many of the nobles; their share in the common neglect and contempt with which they were treated, and a general hatred of the minister had again united them. So long as Count Egmont and the Prince of Orange were suitors for the regency it could not fail but that at times their competing claims should have brought them into collision. Both had met each other on the road to glory and before the throne; both again met in the republic, where they strove for the same prize, the favor of their fellow-citizens. Such opposite characters soon became estranged, but the powerful sympathy of necessity as quickly reconciled them. Each was now indispensable to the other, and the emergency united these two men together with a bond which their hearts would never have furnished. But it was on this very uncongeniality of disposition that the regent based her plans; if she could fortunately succeed in separating them she would at the same time divide the whole Flemish nobility into two parties. Through the presents and small attentions by which she exclusively honored these two she also sought to excite against them the envy and distrust of the rest, and by appearing to give Count Egmont a preference over the Prince of Orange she hoped to make the latter suspicious of Egmont's good faith. It happened that at this very time she was obliged to send an extraordinary ambassador to Frankfort, to be present at the election of a Roman emperor. She chose for this office the Duke of Arschot, the avowed enemy of the prince, in order in some degree to show in his case how splendid was the reward which hatred against the latter might look for. The Orange faction, however, instead of suffering any diminution, had gained an important accession in Count Horn, who, as admiral of the Flemish marine, had convoyed the king to Biscay, and now again took his seat in the council of state. Horn's restless and republican spirit readily met the daring schemes of Orange and Egmont, and a dangerous Triumvirate was soon formed by these three friends, which shook the royal power in the Netherlands, but which terminated very differently for each of its members.

(1562.) Meanwhile Montigny had returned from his embassy, and brought back to the council of state the most gracious assurance of the monarch. But the Prince of Orange had, through his own secret channels of intelligence, received more credible information from Madrid, which entirely contradicted this report. By these means be learnt all the ill services which Granvella had done him and his friends with the king, and the odious appellations which were there applied to the Flemish nobility. There was no help for them so long as the minister retained the helm of government, and to procure his dismissal was the scheme, however rash and adventurous it appeared, which wholly occupied the mind of the prince. It was agreed between him and Counts Horn and Egmont to despatch a joint letter to the king, and, in the name of the whole nobility, formally to accuse the minister, and press energetically for his removal. The Duke of Arschot, to whom this proposition was communicated by Count Egmont, refused to concur in it, haughtily declaring that he was not disposed to receive laws from Egmont and Orange; that he had no cause of complaint against Granvella, and that he thought it very presumptuous to prescribe to the king what ministers he ought to employ. Orange received a similar answer from the Count of Aremberg. Either the seeds of distrust which the regent had scattered amongst the nobility had already taken root, or the fear of the minister's power outweighed the abhorrence of his measures; at any rate, the whole nobility shrunk back timidly and irresolutely from the proposal. This disappointment did not, however, discourage them. The letter was written and subscribed by all three (1563).

In it Granvella was represented as the prime cause of all the disorders in the Netherlands. So long as the highest power should be entrusted to him it would, they declared, be impossible for them to serve the nation and king effectually; on the other hand, all would revert to its former tranquillity, all opposition be discontinued, and the government regain the affections of the people as soon as his majesty should be pleased to remove this man from the helm of the state. In that case, they added, neither exertion nor zeal would be wanting on their part to maintain in these countries the dignity of the king and the purity of the faith, which was no less sacred to them than to the cardinal, Granvella.

Secretly as this letter was prepared still the duchess was informed of it in sufficient time to anticipate it by another despatch, and to counteract the effect which it might have had on the king's mind. Some months passed ere an answer came from Madrid. It was mild, but vague. "The king," such was its import, "was not used to condemn his ministers unheard on the mere accusations of their enemies. Common justice alone required that the accusers of the cardinal should descend from general imputations to special proofs, and if they were not inclined to do this in writing, one of them might come to Spain, where he should be treated with all respect." Besides this letter, which was equally directed to all three, Count Egmont further received an autograph letter from the king, wherein his majesty expressed a wish to learn from him in particular what in the common letter had been only generally touched upon. The regent, also, was specially instructed how she was to answer the three collectively, and the count singly. The king knew his man. He felt it was easy to manage Count Egmont alone; for this reason he sought to entice him to Madrid, where he would be removed from the commanding guidance of a higher intellect. In distinguishing him above his two friends by so flattering a mark of his confidence, he made a difference in the relation in which they severally stood to the throne; how could they, then, unite with equal zeal for the same object when the inducements were no longer the same? This time, indeed, the vigilance of Orange frustrated the scheme; but the sequel of the history will show that the seed which was now scattered was not altogether lost.

(1563.) The king's answer gave no satisfaction to the three confederates; they boldly determined to venture a second attempt. "It had," they wrote, "surprised them not a little, that his majesty had thought their representations so unworthy of attention. It was not as accusers of the minister, but as counsellors of his majesty, whose duty it was to inform their master of the condition of his states, that they had despatched that letter to him. They sought not the ruin of the minister, indeed it would gratify them to see him contented and happy in any other part of the world than here in the Netherlands. They were, however, fully persuaded of this, that his continued presence there was absolutely incompatible with the general tranquillity. The present dangerous condition of their native country would allow none of them to leave it, much less to take so long a journey as to Spain on Granvella's account. If, therefore, his majesty did not please to comply with their written request, they hoped to be excused for the future from attendance in the senate, where they were only exposed to the mortification of meeting the minister, and where they could be of no service either to the king or the state, but only appeared contemptible in their own sight. In conclusion, they begged his majesty would not take ill the plain simplicity of their languge, since persons of their character set more value on acting well than on speaking finely." To the same purport was a separate letter from Count Egmont, in which he returned thanks for the royal autograph. This second address was followed by an answer to the effect that "their representations should be taken into consideration, meanwhile they were requested to attend the council of state as heretofore."

It was evident that the monarch was far from intending to grant their request; they, therefore, from this tune forth absented themselves from the state council, and even left Brussels. Not having succeeded in removing the minister by lawful means they sought to accomplish this end by a new mode from which more might be expected. On every occasion they and their adherents openly showed the contempt which they felt for him, and contrived to throw ridicule on everything he undertook. By this contemptuous treatment they hoped to harass the haughty spirit of the priest, and to obtain through his mortified self-love what they had failed in by other means. In this, indeed, they did not succeed; but the expedient on which they had fallen led in the end to the ruin of the minister.

The popular voice was raised more loudly against him so soon as it was perceived that be had forfeited the good opinion of the nobles, and that men whose sentiments they had been used blindly to echo preceded them in detestation of him. The contemptuous manner in which the nobility now treated him devoted him in a measure to the general scorn and emboldened calumny which never spares even what is holiest and purest, to lay its sacrilegious hand on his honor. The new constitution of the church, which was the great grievance of the nation, had been the basis of his fortunes. This was a crime that could not be forgiven. Every fresh execution—and with such spectacles the activity of the inquisitors was only too liberal—kept alive and furnished dreadful exercise to the bitter animosity against him, and at last custom and usage inscribed his name on every act of oppression. A stranger in a land into which he had been introduced against its will; alone among millions of enemies; uncertain of all his tools; supported only by the weak arm of distant royalty; maintaining his intercourse with the nation, which he had to gain, only by means of faithless instruments, all of whom made it their highest object to falsify his actions and misrepresent his motives; lastly, with a woman for his coadjutor who could not share with him the burden of the general execration—thus he stood exposed to the wantonness, the ingratitude, the faction, the envy, and all the evil passions of a licentious, insubordinate people. It is worthy of remark that the hatred which he had incurred far outran the demerits which could be laid to his charge; that it was difficult, nay impossible, for his accusers to substantiate by proof the general condemnation which fell upon him from all sides. Before and after him fanaticism dragged its victims to

the altar; before and after him civil blood flowed, the rights of men were made a mock of, and men themselves rendered wretched. Under Charles V. tyranny ought to have pained more acutely through its novelty; under the Duke of Alva it was carried to far more unnatural lengths, insomuch that Granvella's administration, in comparison with that of his successor, was even merciful; and yet we do not find that his contemporaries ever evinced the same degree of personal exasperation and spite against the latter in which they indulged against his predecessor. To cloak the meanness of his birth in the splendor of high dignities, and by an exalted station to place him if possible above the malice of his enemies, the regent had made interest at Rome to procure for him the cardinal's hat; but this very honor, which connected him more closely with the papal court, made him so much the more an alien in the provinces. The purple was a new crime in Brussels, and an obnoxious, detested garb, which in a measure publicly held forth to view the principles on which his future conduct would be governed. Neither his honorable rank, which alone often consecrates the most infamous caitiff, nor his talents, which commanded esteem, nor even his terrible omnipotence, which daily revealed itself in so many bloody manifestations, could screen him from derision. Terror and scorn, the fearful and the ludicruous, were in his instance unnaturally blended.

> [The nobility, at the suggestion of Count Egmont, caused their servants to wear a common livery, on which was embroidered a fool's cap. All Brussels interpreted it for the cardinal's hat, and every appearance of such a servant renewed their laughter; this badge of a fool's cap, which was offensive to the court, was subsequently changed into a bundle of arrows—an accidental jest which took a very serious end, and probably was the origin of the arms of the republic. Vit. Vigl. T. II. 35 Thuan. 489. The respect for the cardinal sunk at last so low that a caricature was publicly placed in his own hand, in which he was represented seated on a heap of eggs, out of which bishops were crawling. Over him hovered a devil with the inscription—"This is my son, hear ye him!"]

Odious rumors branded his honor; murderous attempts on the lives of Egmont and Orange were ascribed to him; the most incredible things found credence; the most monstrous, if they referred to him or were said to emanate from him, surprised no longer. The nation had already become uncivilized to that degree where the most contradictory sentiments prevail side by side, and the finer boundary lines of decorum and moral feeling are erased. This belief in extraordinary crimes is almost invariably their immediate precursor.

But with this gloomy prospect the strange destiny of this man opens at the same time a grander view, which impresses the unprejudiced observer with pleasure and admiration. Here he beholds a nation dazzled by no splendor, and restrained by no fear, firmly, inexorably, and unpremeditatedly unanimous in punishing the crime which had been committed against its dignity by the violent introduction of a stranger into the heart of its political constitution. We see him ever aloof and ever isolated, like a foreign hostile body hovering over a surface which repels its contact. The strong hand itself of the monarch, who was. his friend and protector, could not support him against the antipathies of the nation which had once resolved to withhold from him all its sympathy. The voice of national hatred was all powerful, and was ready to forego even private interest, its certain gains; his alms even were shunned, like the fruit of an accursed tree. Like pestilential vapor, the infamy of universal reprobation hung over him. In his case gratitude believed itself absolved from its duties; his adherents shunned him; his friends were dumb in his behalf. So terribly did the people avenge the insulted majesty of their nobles and their nation on the greatest monarch of the earth.

History has repeated this memorable example only once, in Cardinal Mazarin; but the instance differed according to the spirit of the two periods and nations. The highest power could not protect either from derision; but if France found vent for its indignation in laughing at its pantaloon, the Netherlands hurried from scorn to rebellion. The former, after a long bondage under the vigorous administration of Richelieu, saw itself placed suddenly in unwonted liberty; the latter had passed from ancient hereditary freedom into strange and unusual servitude; it was as natural that the Fronde should end again in subjection as that the Belgian troubles should issue in republican independence. The revolt of the Parisians was the offspring of poverty; unbridled, but not bold, arrogant, but without energy, base and plebeian, like the source from which it sprang. The murmur of the Netherlands was the proud and powerful voice of wealth. Licentiousness and hunger inspired the former; revenge, life, property, and religion were the animating motives of the latter. Rapacity was Mazarin's spring of action; Granvella's lust of power. The former was humane and mild; the latter harsh, imperious, cruel. The French minister sought in the favor of his queen an asylum from the hatred of the magnates and the fury of the people; the Netherlandish minister provoked the hatred of a whole nation in order to please one man. Against Mazarin were only a few factions and the mob they could arm; an entire and united nation against Granvella. Under the former parliament attempted to obtain, by stealth, a power which did not belong to them; under the latter it struggled for a lawful authority which he insidiously had endeavored to wrest from them. The former had to contend with the princes of the blood and the

peers of the realm, as the latter had with the native nobility and the states, but instead of endeavoring, like the former, to overthrow the common enemy, in the hope of stepping themselves into his place, the latter wished to destroy the place itself, and to divide a power which no single man ought to possess entire.

While these feelings were spreading among the people the influence of the minister at the court of the regent began to totter. The repeated complaints against the extent of his power must at last have made her sensible how little faith was placed in her own; perhaps, too, she began to fear that the universal abhorrence which attached to him would soon include herself also, or that his longer stay would inevitably provoke the menaced revolt. Long intercourse with him, his instruction and example, had qualified her to govern without him. His dignity began to be more oppressive to her as he became less necessary, and his faults, to which her friendship had hitherto lent a veil, became visible as it was withdrawn. She was now as much disposed to search out and enumerate these faults as she formerly had been to conceal them. In this unfavorable state of her feelings towards the cardinal the urgent and accumulated representations of the nobles began at last to find access to her mind, and the more easily, as they contrived to mix up her own fears with their own. "It was matter of great astonishment," said Count Egmont to her, "that to gratify a man who was not even a Fleming, and of whom, therefore, it must be well known that his happiness could not be dependent on the prosperity of this country, the king could be content to see all his Netherlandish subjects suffer, and this to please a foreigner, who if his birth made him a subject of the Emperor, the purple had made a creature of the court of Rome." "To the king alone," added the count, "was Granvella indebted for his being still among the living; for the future, however, he would leave that care of him to the regent, and he hereby gave her warning." As the majority of the nobles, disgusted with the contemptuous treatment which they met with in the council of state, gradually withdrew from it, the arbitrary proceedings of the minister lost the last semblance of republican deliberation which had hitherto softened the odious aspect, and the empty desolation of the council chamber made his domineering rule appear in all its obnoxiousness. The regent now felt that she had a master over her, and from that moment the banishment of the minister was decided upon.

With this object she despatched her private secretary, Thomas Armenteros, to Spain, to acquaint the king with the circumstances in which the cardinal was placed, to apprise him of the intimations she had received of the intentions of the nobles, and in this manner to cause the resolution for his recall to appear to emanate from the king himself. What she did not like to trust to a letter Armenteros was ordered ingeniously to interweave in the oral communication which the king would probably require from him. Armenteros fulfilled his commission with all the ability of a consummate courtier; but an audience of four hours could not overthrow the work of many years, nor destroy in Philip's mind his opinion of his minister, which was there unalterably established. Long did the monarch hold counsel with his policy and his interest, until Granvella himself came to the aid of his wavering resolution and voluntarily solicited a dismissal, which, he feared, could not much longer be deferred. What the detestation of all the Netherlands could not effect the contemptuous treatment of the nobility accomplished; he was at last weary of a power which was no longer feared, and exposed him less to envy than to infamy.

Perhaps as some have believed he trembled for his life, which was certainly in more than imaginary danger; perhaps he wished to receive his dismissal from the king under the shape of a boon rather than of a sentence, and after the example of the Romans meet with dignity a fate which he could no longer avoid. Philip too, it would appear, preferred generously to accord to the nation a request rather than to yield at a later period to a demand, and hoped at least to merit their thanks by voluntarily conceding now what necessity would ere long extort. His fears prevailed over his obstinacy, and prudence overcame pride.

Granvella doubted not for a moment what the decision of the king would be. A few days after the return of Armenteros he saw humility and flattery disappear from the few faces which had till then servilely smiled upon him; the last small crowd of base flatterers and eyeservants vanished from around his person; his threshold was forsaken; he perceived that the fructifying warmth of royal favor had left him.

Detraction, which had assailed him during his whole administration, did not spare him even in the moment of resignation. People did not scruple to assert that a short time before he laid down his office he had expressed a wish to be reconciled to the Prince of Orange and Count Egmont, and even offered, if their forgiveness could be hoped for on no other terms, to ask pardon of them on his knees. It was base and contemptible to sully the memory of a great and extraordinary man with such a charge, but it is still more so to hand it down uncontradicted to posterity. Granvella submitted to the royal command with a dignified composure. Already had he written, a few months previously, to the Duke of Alva in Spain, to prepare him a place of refuge in Madrid, in case of his having to quit the Netherlands. The latter long bethought himself whether it was advisable to bring thither so dangerous a rival for the

favor of his king, or to deny so important a friend such a valuable means of indulging his old hatred of the Flemish nobles. Revenge prevailed over fear, and he strenuously supported Granvella's request with the monarch. But his intercession was fruitless. Armenteros had persuaded the king that the minister's residence in Madrid would only revive, with increased violence, all the complaints of the Belgian nation, to which his ministry had been sacrificed; for then, he said, he would be suspected of poisoning the very source of that power, whose outlets only he had hitherto been charged with corrupting. He therefore sent him to Burgundy, his native place, for which a decent pretext fortunately presented itself. The cardinal gave to his departure from Brussels the appearance of an unimportant journey, from which he would return in a few days. At the same time, however, all the state counsellors, who, under his administration, had voluntarily excluded themselves from its sittings, received a command from the court to resume their seats in the senate at Brussels. Although the latter circumstance made his return not very credible, nevertheless the remotest possibility of it sobered the triumph which celebrated his departure. The regent herself appears to have been undecided what to think about the report; for, in a fresh letter to the king, she repeated all the representations and arguments which ought to restrain him from restoring this minister. Granvella himself, in his correspondence with Barlaimont and Viglius, endeavored to keep alive this rumor, and at least to alarm with fears, however unsubstantial, the enemies whom he could no longer punish by his presence. Indeed, the dread of the influence of this extraordinary man was so exceedingly great that, to appease it, he was at last driven even from his home and his country.

After the death of Pius IV., Granvella went to Rome, to be present at the election of a new pope, and at the same time to discharge some commissions of his master, whose confidence in him remained unshaken. Soon after, Philip made him viceroy of Naples, where he succumbed to the seductions of the climate, and the spirit which no vicissitudes could bend voluptuousness overcame. He was sixty-two years old when the king allowed him to revisit Spain, where he continued with unlimited powers to administer the affairs of Italy. A gloomy old age, and the self- satisfied pride of a sexagenarian administration made him a harsh and rigid judge of the opinions of others, a slave of custom, and a tedious panegyrist of past times. But the policy of the closing century had ceased to be the policy of the opening one. A new and younger ministry were soon weary of so imperious a superintendent, and Philip himself began to shun the aged counsellor, who found nothing worthy of praise but the deeds of his father. Nevertheless, when the conquest of Portugal called Philip to Lisbon, he confided to the cardinal the care of his Spanish territories. Finally, on an Italian tour, in the town of Mantua, in the seventy-third year of his life, Granvella terminated his long existence in the full enjoyment of his glory, and after possessing for forty years the uninterrupted confidence of his king.

(1564.) Immediately upon the departure of the minister, all the happy results which were promised from his withdrawal were fulfilled. The disaffected nobles resumed their seats in the council, and again devoted themselves to the affairs of the state with redoubled zeal, in order to give no room for regret for him whom they had driven away, and to prove, by the fortunate administration of the state, that his services were not indispensable. The crowd round the duchess was great. All vied with one another in readiness, in submission, and zeal in her service; the hours of night were not allowed to stop the transaction of pressing business of state; the greatest unanimity existed between the three councils, the best understanding between the court and the states. From the obliging temper of the Flemish nobility everything was to be had, as soon as their pride and self-will was flattered by confidence and obliging treatment. The regent took advantage of the first joy of the nation to beguile them into a vote of certain taxes, which, under the preceding administration, she could not have hoped to extort. In this, the great credit of the nobility etfectually supported her, and she soon learned from this nation the secret, which had been so often verified in the German diet—that much must be demanded in order to get a little.

With pleasure did the regent see herself emancipated from her long thraldom; the emulous industry of the nobility lightened for her the burden of business, and their insinuating humility allowed her to feel the full sweetness of power.

(1564). Granvella had been overthrown, but his party still remained. His policy lived in his creatures, whom he left behind him in the privy council and in the chamber of finance. Hatred still smouldered amongst the factious long after the leader was banished, and the names of the Orange and Royalist parties, of the Patriots and Cardinalists still continued to divide the senate and to keep up the flames of discord. Viglius Van Zuichem Van Aytta, president of the privy council, state counsellor and keeper of the seal, was now looked upon as the most important person in the senate, and the most powerful prop of the crown and the tiara. This highly meritorious old man, whom we have to thank for some valuable contributions towards the history of the rebellion of the Low Countries, and whose confidential correspondence with his friends has generally been the guide of our narrative, was one of the greatest lawyers of his time, as well as a theologian and priest, and had already, under the Emperor, filled the

most important offices. Familiar intercourse with the learned men who adorned the age, and at the head of whom stood Erasmus of Rotterdam, combined with frequent travels in the imperial service, had extended the sphere of his information and experience, and in many points raised him in his principles and opinions above his contemporaries. The fame of his erudition filled the whole century in which he lived, and has handed his name down to posterity. When, in the year 1548, the connection of the Netherlands with the German empire was to be settled at the Diet of Augsburg, Charles V. sent hither this statesman to manage the interests of the provinces; and his ability principally succeeded in turning the negotiations to the advantage of the Netherlands. After the death of the Emperor, Viglius was one of the many eminent ministers bequeathed to Philip by his father, and one of the few in whom be honored his memory. The fortune of the minister, Granvella, with whom he was united by the ties of an early acquaintance, raised him likewise to greatness; but he did not share the fall of his patron, because he had not participated in his lust of power; nor, consequently, the hatred which attached to him. A residence of twenty years in the provinces, where the most important affairs were entrusted to him, approved loyalty to his king, and zealous attachment to the Roman Catholic tenets, made him one of the most distinguished instruments of royalty in the Netherlands.

Viglius was a man of learning, but no thinker; an experienced statesman, but without an enlightened mind; of an intellect not sufficiently powerful to break, like his friend Erasmus, the fetters of error, yet not sufficiently bad to employ it, like his predecessor, Granvella, in the service of his own passions. Too weak and timid to follow boldly the guidance of his reason, he preferred trusting to the more convenient path of conscience; a thing was just so soon as it became his duty; he belonged to those honest men who are indispensable to bad ones; fraud reckoned on his honesty. Half a century later he would have received his immortality from the freedom which he now helped to subvert. In the privy council at Brussels he was the servant of tyranny; in the parliament in London, or in the senate at Amsterdam, he would have died, perhaps, like Thomas More or Olden Barneveldt.

In the Count Barlaimont, the president of the council of finance, the opposition had a no less formidable antagonist than in Viglius. Historians have transmitted but little information regarding the services and the opinions of this man. In the first part of his career the dazzling greatness of Cardinal Granvella seems to have cast a shade over him; after the latter had disappeared from the stage the superiority of the opposite party kept him down, but still the little that we do find respecting him throws a favorable light over his character. More than once the Prince of Orange exerted himself to detach him from the interests of the cardinal, and to join him to his own party—sufficient proof that he placed a value on the prize. All his efforts failed, which shows that he had to do with no vacillating character. More than once we see him alone, of all the members of the council, stepping forward to oppose the dominant faction, and protecting against universal opposition the interests of the crown, which were in momentary peril of being sacrificed. When the Prince of Orange had assembled the knights of the Golden Fleece in his own palace, with a view to induce them to come to a preparatory resolution for the abolition of the Inquisition, Barlaimont was the first to denounce the illegality of this proceeding and to inform the regent of it. Some time after the prince asked him if the regent knew of that assembly, and Barlaitnont hesitated not a moment to avow to him the truth. All the steps which have been ascribed to him bespeak a man whom neither influence nor fear could tempt, who, with a firm courage and indomitable constancy, remained faithful to the party which he had once chosen, but who, it must at the same time be confessed, entertained too proud and too despotic notions to have selected any other.

Amongst the adherents of the royal party at Brussels, we have, further, the names of the Duke of Arschot, the Counts of Mansfeld, Megen, and Aremberg—all three native Netherlanders; and therefore, as it appeared, bound equally with the whole Netherlandish nobility to oppose the hierarchy and the royal power in their native country. So much the more surprised must we feel at their contrary behavior, and which is indeed the more remarkable, since we find them on terms of friendship with the most eminent members of the faction, and anything but insensible to the common grievances of their country.

But they had not self-confidence or heroism enough to venture on an unequal contest with so superior an antagonist. With a cowardly prudence they made their just discontent submit to the stern law of necessity, and imposed a hard sacrifice on their pride because their pampered vanity was capable of nothing better. Too thrifty and too discreet to wish to extort from the justice or the fear of their sovereign the certain good which they already possessed from his voluntary generosity, or to resign a real happiness in order to preserve the shadow of another, they rather employed the propitious moment to drive a traffic with their constancy, which, from the general defection of the nobility, had now risen in value. Caring little for true glory, they allowed their ambition to decide which party they should take; for the ambition of base minds prefers to bow beneath the hard yoke of compulsion rather than submit to the gentle sway of a superior intellect. Small would have been the value of the favor conferred had they bestowed themselves on the Prince of Orange; but their connection with royalty

made them so much the more formidable as opponents. There their names would have been lost among his numerous adherents and in the splendor of their rival. On the almost deserted side of the court their insignificant merit acquired lustre.

The families of Nassau and Croi (to the latter belonged the Duke of Arschot) had for several reigns been competitors for influence and honor, and their rivalry had kept up an old feud between their families, which religious differences finally made irreconcilable. The house of Croi from time immemorial had been renowned for its devout and strict observance of papistic rites and ceremonies; the Counts of Nassau had gone over to the new sect—sufficient reasons why Philip of Croi, Duke of Arschot, should prefer a party which placed him the most decidedly in opposition to the Prince of Orange. The court did not fail to take advantage of this private feud, and to oppose so important an enemy to the increasing influence of the house of Nassau in the republic. The Counts Mansfeld and Megen had till lately been the confidential friends of Count Egmont. In common with him they had raised their voice against the minister, had joined him in resisting the Inquisition and the edicts, and had hitherto held with him as far as honor and duty would permit. But at these limits the three friends now separated. Egmont's unsuspecting virtue incessantly hurried him forwards on the road to ruin; Mansfeld and Megen, admonished of the danger, began in good time to think of a safe retreat. There still exist letters which were interchanged between the Counts Egmont and Mansfeld, and which, although written at a later period, give us a true picture of their former friendship. "If," replied Count Mansfeld to his friend, who in an amicable manner had reproved him for his defection to the king, "if formerly I was of opinion that the general good made the abolition of the Inquisition, the mitigation of the edicts, and the removal of the Cardinal Granvella necessary, the king has now acquiesced in this wish and removed the cause of complaint. We have already done too much against the majesty of the sovereign and the authority of the church; it is high time for us to turn, if we would wish to meet the king, when he comes, with open brow and without anxiety. As regards my own person, I do not dread his vengeance; with confident courage I would at his first summons present myself in Spain, and boldly abide my sentence from his justice and goodness. I do not say this as if I doubted whether Count Egrnont can assert the same, but he will act prudently in looking more to his own safety, and in removing suspicion from his actions. If I hear," he says, in conclusion, "that he has allowed my admonitions to have their due weight, our friendship continues; if not, I feel myself in that case strong enough to sacrifice all human ties to my duty and to honor."

The enlarged power of the nobility exposed the republic to almost a greater evil than that which it had just escaped by the removal of the minister. Impoverished by long habits of luxury, which at the same time had relaxed their morals, and to which they were now too much addicted to be able to renounce them, they yielded to the perilous opportunity of indulging their ruling inclination, and of again repairing the expiring lustre of their fortunes. Extravagance brought on the thirst for gain, and this introduced bribery. Secular and ecclesiastical offices were publicly put up to sale; posts of honor, privileges, and patents were sold to the highest bidder; even justice was made a trade. Whom the privy council had condemned was acquitted by the council of state, and what the former refused to grant was to be purchased from the latter. The council of state, indeed, subsequently retorted the charge on the two other councils, but it forgot that it was its own example that corrupted them. The shrewdness of rapacity opened new sources of gain. Life, liberty, and religion were insured for a certain sum, like landed estates; for gold, murderers and malefactors were free, and the nation was plundered by a lottery. The servants and creatures of the state, counsellors and governors of provinces, were, without regard to rank or merit, pushed into the most important posts; whoever had a petition to present at court had to make his way through the governors of provinces and their inferior servants. No artifice of seduction was spared to implicate in these excesses the private secretary of the duchess, Thomas Armenteros, a man up to this time of irreproachable character. By pretended professions of attachment and friendship a successful attempt was made to gain his confidence, and by luxurious entertainments to undermine his principles; the seductive example infected his morals, and new wants overcame his hitherto incorruptible integrity. He was now blind to abuses in which he was an accomplice, and drew a veil over the crimes of others in order at the same time to cloak his own. With his knowledge the royal exchequer was robbed, and the objects of the government were defeated through a corrupt administration of its revenues. Meanwhile the regent wandered on in a fond dream of power and activity, which the flattery of the nobles artfully knew how to foster. The ambition of the factious played with the foibles of a woman, and with empty signs and an humble show of submission purchased real power from her. She soon belonged entirely to the faction, and had imperceptibly changed her principles. Diametrically opposing all her former proceedings, even in direct violation of her duty, she now brought before the council of state, which was swayed by the faction, not only questions which belonged to the other councils, but also the suggestions which Viglius had made to her in private, in the same way as formerly, under Granvella's administration, she had improperly neglected to consult it at all. Nearly all business and all influence were now diverted to the governors of provinces. All petitions were directed to them, by them all lucrative appointments were bestowed. Their usurpations were indeed carried so far that law proceedings were withdrawn from the municipal authorities of the towns

and brought before their own tribunals. The respectability of the provincial courts decreased as theirs extended, and with the respectability of the municipal functionaries the administration of justice and civil order declined. The smaller courts soon followed the example of the government of the country. The spirit which ruled the council of state at Brussels soon diffused itself through the provinces. Bribery, indulgences, robbery, venality of justice, were universal in the courts of judicature of the country; morals degenerated, and the new sects availed themselves of this all-pervading licentiousness to propagate their opinions. The religious indifference or toleration of the nobles, who, either themselves inclined to the side of the innovators, or, at least, detested the Inquisition as an instrument of despotism, had mitigated the rigor of the religious edicts, and through the letters of indemnity, which were bestowed on many Protestants, the holy office was deprived of its best victims. In no way could the nobility more agreeably announce to the nation its present share in the government of the country than by sacrificing to it the hated tribunal of the Inquisition—and to this inclination impelled them still more than the dictates of policy. The nation passed in a moment from the most oppressive constraint of intolerance into a state of freedom, to which, however, it had already become too unaccustomed to support it with moderation. The inquisitors, deprived of the support of the municipal authorities, found themselves an object of derision rather than of fear. In Bruges the town council caused even some of their own servants to be placed in confinement, and kept on bread and water, for attempting to lay hands upon a supposed heretic. About this very time the mob in Antwerp, having made a futile, attempt to rescue a person charged with heresy from the holy office, there was placarded in the public market- place an inscription, written in blood, to the effect that a number of persons had bound themselves by oath to avenge the death of that innocent person.

From the corruption which pervaded the whole council of state, the privy council, and the chamber of finance, in which Viglius and Barlaimont were presidents, had as yet, for the most part, kept themselves pure.

As the faction could not succeed in insinuating their adherents into those two councils the only course open to them was, if possible, to render both inefficient, and to transfer their business to the council of state. To carry out this design the Prince of Orange sought to secure the co-operation of the other state counsellors. "They were called, indeed, senators," he frequently declared to his adherents, "but others possessed the power. If gold was wanted to pay the troops, or when the question was how the spreading heresy was to be repressed, or the people kept in order, then they were consulted; although in fact they were the guardians neither of the treasury nor of the laws, but only the organs through which the other two councils operated on the state. And yet alone they were equal to the whole administration of the country, which had been uselessly portioned out amongst three separate chambers. If they would among themselves only agree to reunite to the council of state these two important branches of government, which had been dissevered from it, one soul might animate the whole body." A plan was preliminarily and secretly agreed on, in accordance with which twelve new Knights of the Fleece were to be added to the council of state, the administration of justice restored to the tribunal at Malines, to which it originally belonged, the granting of letters of grace, patents, and so forth, assigned to the president, Viglius, while the management of the finances should be committed to it. All the difficulties, indeed, which the distrust of the court and its jealousy of the increasing power of the nobility would oppose to this innovation were foreseen and provided against. In order to constrain the regent's assent, some of the principal officers of the army were put forward as a cloak, who were to annoy the court at Brussels with boisterous demands for their arrears of pay, and in case of refusal to threaten a rebellion. It was also contrived to have the regent assailed with numerous petitions and memorials complaining of the delays of justice, and exaggerating the danger which was to be apprehended from the daily growth of heresy. Nothing was omitted to darken the picture of the disorganized state of society, of the abuse of justice, and of the deficiency in the finances, which was made so alarming that she awoke with terror from the delusion of prosperity in which she had hitherto cradled herself. She called the three councils together to consult them on the means by which these disorders were to be remedied. The majority was in favor of sending an extraordinary ambassador to Spain, who by a circumstantial and vivid delineation should make the king acquainted with the true position of affairs, and if possible prevail on him to adopt efficient measures of reform. This proposition was opposed by Viglius, who, however, had not the slighest suspicion of the secret designs of the faction. "The evil complained of," he said, "is undoubtedly great, and one which can no longer be neglected with impunity, but it is not irremediable by ourselves. The administration of justice is certainly crippled, but the blame of this lies with the nobles themselves; by their contemptuous treatment they have thrown discredit on the municipal authorities, who, moreover, are very inadequately supported by the governors of provinces. If heresy is on the increase it is because the secular arm has deserted the spiritual judges, and because the lower orders, following the example of the nobles, have thrown off all respect for those in authority. The provinces are undoubtedly oppressed by a heavy debt, but it has not been accumulated, as alleged, by any malversation of the revenues, but by the expenses of former wars and the king's present exigences; still wise and prudent measures of finance might in a short time remove the burden. If the council of state would not be so profuse of its

indulgences, its charters of immunity, and its exemptions; if it would commence the reformation of morals with itself, show greater respect to the laws, and do what lies in its power to restore to the municipal functionaries their former consideration; in short, if the councils and the governors of provinces would only fulfil their own duties the present grounds of complaint would soon be removed. Why, then, send an ambassador to Spain, when as yet nothing has occurred to justify so extraordinary an expedient? If, however, the council thinks otherwise, he would not oppose the general voice; only he must make it a condition of his concurrence that the principal instruction of the envoy should be to entreat the king to make them a speedy visit."

There was but one voice as to the choice of an envoy. Of all the Flemish nobles Count Egmont was the only one whose appointment would give equal satisfaction to both parties. His hatred of the Inquisition, his patriotic and liberal sentiments, and the unblemished integrity of his character, gave to the republic sufficient surety for his conduct, while for the reasons already mentioned he could not fail to be welcome to the king. Moreover, Egmont's personal figure and demeanor were calculated on his first appearance to make that favorable impression which goes co far towards winning the hearts of princes; and his engaging carriage would come to the aid of his eloquence, and enforce his petition with those persuasive arts which are indispensable to the success of even the most trifling suits to royalty. Egmont himself, too, wished for the embassy, as it would afford him the opportunity of adjusting, personally, matters with his sovereign.

About this time the Council, or rather synod, of Trent closed its sittings, and published its decrees to the whole of Christendom. But these canons, far from accomplishing the object for which the synod was originally convened, and satisfying the expectation of religious parties, had rather widened the breach between them, and made the schism irremediable and eternal.

The labors of the synod instead of purifying the Romish Church from its corruptions had only reduced the latter to greater definiteness and precision, and invested them with the sanction of authority. All the subtilties of its teaching, all the arts and usurpations of the Roman See, which had hitherto rested more on arbitrary usage, were now passed into laws and raised into a system. The uses and abuses which during the barbarous times of ignorance and superstition had crept into Christianity were now declared essential parts of its worship, and anathemas were denounced upon all who should dare to contradict the dogmas or neglect the observances of the Romish communion. All were anathematized who should either presume to doubt the miraculous power of relics, and refuse to honor the bones of martyrs, or should be so bold as to doubt the availing efficacy of the intercession of saints. The power of granting indulgences, the first source of the defection from the See of Rome, was now propounded in an irrefragable article of faith; and the principle of monasticism sanctioned by an express decree of the synod, which allowed males to take the vows at sixteen and females at twelve. And while all the opinions of the Protestants were, without exception, condemned, no indulgence was shown to their errors or weaknesses, nor a single step taken to win them back by mildness to the bosom of the mother church. Amongst the Protestants the wearisome records of the subtle deliberations of the synod, and the absurdity of its decisions, increased, if possible, the hearty contempt which they had long entertained for popery, and laid open to their controversialists new and hitherto unnoticed points of attack. It was an ill-judged step to bring the mysteries of the church too close to the glaring torch of reason, and to fight with syllogisms for the tenets of a blind belief.

Moreover, the decrees of the Council of Trent were not satisfactory even to all the powers in communion with Rome. France rejected them entirely, both because she did not wish to displease the Huguenots, and also because she was offended by the supremacy which the pope arrogated to himself over the council; some of the Roman Catholic princes of Germany likewise declared against it. Little, however, as Philip II. was pleased with many of its articles, which trenched too closely upon his own rights, for no monarch was ever more jealous of his prerogative; highly as the pope's assumption of control over the council, and its arbitrary, precipitate dissolution had offended him; just as was his indignation at the slight which the pope had put upon his ambassador; he nevertheless acknowedged the decrees of the synod, even in its present form, because it favored his darling object—the extirpation of heresy. Political considerations were all postponed to this one religious object, and he commanded the publication and enforcement of its canons throughout his dominions.

The spirit of revolt, which was diffused through the Belgian provinces, scarcely required this new stimulus. There the minds of men were in a ferment, and the character of the Romish Church had sunk almost to the lowest point of contempt in the general opinion. Under such circumstances the imperious and frequently injudicious decrees of the council could not fail of being highly offensive; but Philip II. could not belie his religious character so far as to allow a different religion to a portion of his subjects, even though they might live on a different soil and under different laws from the rest. The regent was strictly enjoined to exact in the Netherlands the same obedience to the decrees of Trent which was yielded to them in Spain and Italy.

They met, however, with the warmest opposition in the council of state at Brussels. "The nation," William of Orange declared, "neither would nor could acknowledge them, since they were, for the most part, opposed to the fundamental principles of their constitution; and, for similar reasons, they had even been rejected by several Roman Catholic princes." The whole council nearly was on the side of Orange; a decided majority were for entreating the king either to recall the decrees entirely or at least to publish them under certain limitations. This proposition was resisted by Viglius, who insisted on a strict and literal obedience to the royal commands. "The church," he said, "had in all ages maintained the purity of its doctrines and the strictness of its discipline by means of such general councils. No more efficacious remedy could be opposed to the errors of opinion which had so long distracted their country than these very decrees, the rejection of which is now urged by the council of state. Even if they are occasionally at variance with the constitutional rights of the citizens this is an evil which can easily be met by a judicious and temperate application of them. For the rest it redounds to the honor of our sovereign, the King of Spain, that he alone, of all the princes of his time, refuses to yield his better judgment to necessity, and will not, for any fear of consequences, reject measures which the welfare of the church demands, and which the happiness of his subjects makes a duty."

But the decrees also contained several matters which affected the rights of the crown itself. Occasion was therefore taken of this fact to propose that these sections at least should be omitted from the proclimation. By this means the king might, it was argued, be relieved from these obnoxious and degrading articles by a happy expedient; the national liberties of the Netherlands might be advanced as the pretext for the omission, and the name of the republic lent to cover this encroachment on the authority of the synod. But the king had caused the decrees to be received and enforced in his other dominions unconditionally; and it was not to be expected that he would give the other Roman Catholic powers such an example of opposition, and himself undermine the edifice whose foundation he had been so assiduous in laying.

COUNT EGMONT IN SPAIN.

Count Egmont was despatched to Spain to make a forcible representation to the king on the subject of these decrees; to persuade him, if possible, to adopt a milder policy towards his Protestant subjects, and to propose to him the incorporation of the three councils, was the commission he received from the malcontents. By the regent he was charged to apprise the monarch of the refractory spirit of the people; to convince him of the impossibility of enforcing these edicts of religion in their full severity; and lastly to acquaint him with the bad state of the military defences and the exhausted condition of the exchequer.

The count's public instructions were drawn up by the President Viglius. They contained heavy complaints of the decay of justice, the growth of heresy, and the exhaustion of the treasury. He was also to press urgently a personal visit from the king to the Netherlands. The rest was left to the eloquence of the envoy, who received a hint from the regent not to let so fair an opportunity escape of establishing himself in the favor of his sovereign.

The terms in which the count's instructions and the representations which he was to make to the king were drawn up appeared to the Prince of Orange far too vague and general. "The president's statement," he said, "of our grievances comes very far short of the truth. How can the king apply the suitable remedies if we conceal from him the full extent of the evil? Let us not represent the numbers of the heretics inferior to what it is in reality. Let us candidly acknowledge that they swarm in every province and in every hamlet, however small. Neither let us disguise from him the truth that they despise the penal statutes and entertain but little reverence for the government. What good can come of this concealment? Let us rather openly avow to the king that the republic cannot long continue in its present condition. The privy council indeed will perhaps pronounce differently, for to them the existing disorders are welcome. For what else is the source of the abuse of justice and the universal corruption of the courts of law but its insatiable rapacity? How otherwise can the pomp and scandalous luxury of its members, whom we have seen rise from the dust, be supported if not by bribery? Do not the people daily complain that no other key but gold can open an access to them; and do not even their quarrels prove how little they are swayed by a care for the common weal? Are they likely to consult the public good who are the slaves of their private passions? Do they think forsooth that we, the governors of the provinces are, with our soldiers, to stand ready at the beck and call of an infamous lictor? Let them set bounds to their indulgences and free pardons which they so lavishly bestow on the very persons to whom we think it just and expedient to deny them. No one can remit the punishment of a crime without

sinning against the society and contributing to the increase of the general evil. To my mind, and I have no hesitation to avow it, the distribution amongst so many councils of the state secrets and the affairs of government has always appeared highly objectionable. The council of state is sufficient for all the duties of the administration; several patriots have already felt this in silence, and I now openly declare it. It is my decided conviction that the only sufficient remedy for all the evils complained of is to merge the other two chambers in the council of state. This is the point which we must endeavor to obtain from the king, or the present embassy, like all others, will be entirely useless and ineffectual." The prince now laid before the assembled senate the plan which we have already described. Viglius, against whom this new proposition was individually and mainly directed, and whose eyes were now suddenly opened, was overcome by the violence of his vexation. The agitation of his feelings was too much for his feeble body, and he was found, on the following morning, paralyzed by apoplexy, and in danger of his life.

His place was supplied by Jaachim Hopper, a member of the privy council at Brussels, a man of old-fashioned morals and unblemished integrity, the president's most trusted and worthiest friend.

> [Vita Vigl. 89. The person from whose memoirs I have already drawn so many illustrations of the times of this epoch. His subsequent journey to Spain gave rise to the correspondence between him and the president, which is one of the most valuable documents for our history.]

To meet the wishes of the Orange party he made some additions to the instructions of the ambassador, relating chiefly to the abolition of the Inquisition and the incorporation of the three councils, not so much with the consent of the regent as in the absence of her prohibition. Upon Count Egmont taking leave of the president, who had recovered from his attack, the latter requested him to procure in Spain permission to resign his appointment. His day, he declared, was past; like the example of his friend and predecessor, Granvella, he wished to retire into the quiet of private life, and to anticipate the uncertainty of fortune. His genius warned him of impending storm, by which he could have no desire to be overtaken.

Count Egmont embarked on his journey to Spain in January, 1565, and was received there with a kindness and respect which none of his rank had ever before experienced. The nobles of Castile, taught by the king's example to conquer their feelings, or rather, true to his policy, seemed to have laid aside their ancient grudge against the Flemish nobility, and vied with one another in winning his heart by their affability. All his private matters were immediately settled to his wishes by the king, nay, even his expectations exceeded; and during the whole period of his stay he had ample cause to boast of the hospitality of the monarch. The latter assured him in the strongest terms of his love for his Belgian subjects, and held out hopes of his acceding eventually to the general wish, and remitting somewhat of the severity of the religious edicts. At the same time, however, he appointed in Madrid a commission of theologians to whom he propounded the question, "Is it necessary to grant to the provinces the religious toleration they demand?" As the majority of them were of opinion that the peculiar constitution of the Netherlands, and the fear of a rebellion might well excuse a degree of forbearance in their case, the question was repeated more pointedly. "He did not seek to know," he said, "if he might do so, but if he must." When the latter question was answered in the negative, he rose from his seat, and kneeling down before a crucifix prayed in these words: "Almighty Majesty, suffer me not at any time to fall so low as to consent to reign over those who reject thee!" In perfect accordance with the spirit of this prayer were the measures which he resolved to adopt in the Netherlands. On the article of religion this monarch had taken his resolution once forever; urgent necessity might, perhaps, have constrained him temporarily to suspend the execution of the penal statutes, but never, formally, to repeal them entirely, or even to modify them. In vain did Egmont represent to him that the public execution of the heretics daily augmented the number of their followers, while the courage and even joy with which they met their death filled the spectators with the deepest admiration, and awakened in them high opinions of a doctrine which could make such heroes of its disciples. This representation was not indeed lost upon the king, but it had a very different effect from what it was intended to produce. In order to prevent these seductive scenes, without, however, compromising the severity of the edicts, he fell upon an expedient, and ordered that in future the executions should take place in private. The answer of the king on the subject of the embassy was given to the count in writing, and addressed to the regent. The king, when he granted him an audience to take leave, did not omit to call him to account for his behavior to Granvella, and alluded particularly to the livery invented in derision of the cardinal. Egmmont protested that the whole affair had originated in a convivial joke, and nothing was further from their meaning than to derogate in the least from the respect that was due to royalty. "If he knew," he said, "that any individual among them had entertained such disloyal thoughts be himself would challenge him to answer for it with his life."

At his departure the monarch made him a present of fifty thousand florins, and engaged, moreover, to furnish a portion for his daughter on her marriage. He also consigned to his care the young Farnese of

Parma, whom, to gratify the regent, his mother, he was sending to Brussels. The king's pretended mildness, and his professions of regard for the Belgian nation, deceived the open-hearted Fleming. Happy in the idea of being the bearer of so much felicity to his native country, when in fact it was more remote than ever, he quitted Madrid satisfied beyond measure to think of the joy with which the provinces would welcome the message of their good king; but the opening of the royal answer in the council of state at Brussels disappointed all these pleasing hopes. "Although in regard to the religious edicts," this was its tenor, "his resolve was firm and immovable, and he would rather lose a thousand lives than consent to alter a single letter of it, still, moved by the representations of Count Egmont, he was, on the other hand, equally determined not to leave any gentle means untried to guard the people against the delusions of heresy, and so to avert from them that punishment which must otherwise infallibly overtake them. As he had now learned from the count that the principal source of the existing errors in the faith was in the moral depravity of the clergy, the bad instruction and the neglected education of the young, he hereby empowered the regent to appoint a special commission of three bishops, and a convenient number of learned theologians, whose business it should be to consult about the necessary reforms, in order that the people might no longer be led astray through scandal, nor plunge into error through ignorance. As, moreover, he had been informed that the public executions of the heretics did but afford them an opportunity of boastfully displaying a foolhardy courage, and of deluding the common herd by an affectation of the glory of martyrdom, the commission was to devise means for putting in force the final sentence of the Inquisition with greater privacy, and thereby depriving condemned heretics of the honor of their obduracy." In order, however, to provide against the commission going beyond its prescribed limits Philip expressly required that the Bishop of Ypres, a man whom he could rely on as a determined zealot for the Romish faith, should be one of the body. Their deliberaations were to be conducted, if possible, in secrecy, while the object publicly assigned to them should be the introduction of the Tridentine decrees. For this his motive seems to have been twofold; on the one hand, not to alarm the court of Rome by the assembling of a private council; nor, on the other, to afford any encouragement to the spirit of rebellion in the provinces. At its sessions the duchess was to preside, assisted by some of the more loyally disposed of her counsellors, and regularly transmit to Philip a written account of its transactions. To meet her most pressing wants he sent her a small supply in money. He also gave her hopes of a visit from himself; first, however, it was necessary that the war with the Turks, who were then expected in hostile force before Malta, should be terminated. As to the proposed augmentation of the council of state, and its union with the privy council and chamber of finance, it was passed over in perfect silence. The Duke of Arschot, however, who is already known to us as a zealous royalist, obtained a voice and seat in the latter. Viglius, indeed, was allowed to retire from the presidency of the privy council, but he was obliged, nevertheless, to continue to discharge its duties for four more years, because his successor, Carl Tyssenaque, of the council for Netherlandish affairs in Madrid, could not sooner be spared.

SEVERER RELIGIOUS EDICTS—UNIVERSAL OPPOSITION OF THE NATION.

Scarcely was Egmont returned when severer edicts against heretics, which, as it were, pursued him from Spain, contradicted the joyful tidings which he had brought of a happy change in the sentiments of the monarch. They were at the same time accompanied with a transcript of the decrees of Trent, as they were acknowledged in Spain, and were now to be proclaimed in the Netherlands also; with it came likewise the death warrants of some Anabaptists and other kinds of heretics. "The count has been beguiled," William the Silent was now heard to say, "and deluded by Spanish cunning. Self-love and vanity have blinded his penetration; for his own advantage he has forgotten the general welfare." The treachery of the Spanish ministry was now exposed, and this dishonest proceeding roused the indignation of the noblest in the land. But no one felt it more acutely than Count Egmont, who now perceived himself to have been the tool of Spanish duplicity, and to have become unwittingly the betrayer of his own country. "These specious favors then," he exclaimed, loudly and bitterly, "were nothing but an artifice to expose me to the ridicule of my fellow-citizens, and to destroy my good name. If this is the fashion after which the king purposes to keep the promises which he made to me in Spain, let who will take Flanders; for my part, I will prove by my retirement from public business that I have no share in this breach of faith." In fact, the Spanish ministry could not have adopted a surer method of breaking the credit of so important a man—than by exhibiting him to his fellow citizens, who adored him, as one whom they had succeeded in deluding.

Meanwhile the commission had been appointed, and had unanimously come to the following decision:

"Whether for the moral reformation of the clergy, or for the religious instruction of the people, or for the education of youth, such abundant provision had already been made in the decrees of Trent that nothing now was requisite but to put these decrees in force as speedily as possible. The imperial edicts against the heretics already ought on no account to be recalled or modified; the courts of justice, however, might be secretly instructed to punish with death none but obstinate heretics or preachers, to make a difference between the different sects, and to show consideration to the age, rank, sex, or disposition of the accused. If it were really the case that public executions did but inflame fanaticism, then, perhaps, the unheroic, less observed, but still equally severe punishment of the galleys, would be well-adapted to bring down all high notions of martyrdom. As to the delinquencies which might have arisen out of mere levity, curiosity, and thoughtlessness it would perhaps be sufficient to punish them by fines, exile, or even corporal chastisement."

During these deliberations, which, moreover, it was requisite to submit to the king at Madrid, and to wait for the notification of his approval of them, the time passed away unprofitably, the proceedings against the sectaries being either suspended, or at least conducted very supinely. Since the recall of Granvella the disunion which prevailed in the higher councils, and from thence had extended to the provincial courts of justice, combined with the mild feelings generally of the nobles on the subject of religion, had raised the courage of the sects, and allowed free scope to the proselytizing mania of their apostles. The inquisitors, too, had fallen into contempt in consequence of the secular arm withdrawing its support, and in many places even openly taking their victims under its protection. The Roman Catholic part of the nation. had formed great expectations from the decrees of the synod of Trent, as well as from Egmont's embassy to Spain; but in the latter case their hopes had scarcely been justified by the joyous tidings which the count had brought back, and, in the integrity of his heart, left nothing undone to make known as widely as possible. The more disused the nation had become to severity in matters pertaining to religion the more acutely was it likely to feel the sudden adoption of even still more rigorous measures. In this position of affairs the royal rescript arrived from Spain in answer to the proposition of the bishops and the last despatches of the regent. "Whatever interpretation (such was its tenor) Count Egmont may have given to the king's verbal communications, it had never in the remotest manner entered his mind to think of altering in the slightest degree the penal statutes which the Emperor, his father, had five-and-thirty years ago published in the provinces. These edicts he therefore commanded should henceforth be carried rigidly into effect, the Inquisition should receive the most active support from the secular arm, and the decrees of the council of Trent be irrevocably and unconditionally acknowledged in all the provinces of his Netherlands. He acquiesced fully in the opinion of the bishops and canonists as to the sufficiency of the Tridentine decrees as guides in all points of reformation of the clergy or instruction of the people; but he could not concur with them as to the mitigation of punishment which they proposed in consideration either of the age, sex, or character of individuals, since he was of opinion that his edicts were in no degree wanting in moderation. To nothing but want of zeal and disloyalty on the part of judges could he ascribe the progress which heresy had already made in the country. In future, therefore, whoever among them should be thus wanting in zeal must be removed from his office and make room for a more honest judge. The Inquisition ought to pursue its appointed path firmly, fearlessly, and dispassionately, without regard to or consideration of human feelings, and was to look neither before nor behind. He would always be ready to approve of all its measures however extreme if it only avoided public scandal."

This letter of the king, to which the Orange party have ascribed all the subsequent troubles of the Netherlands, caused the most violent excitement amongst the state counsellors, and the expressions which in society they either accidentally or intentionally let fall from them with regard to it spread terror and alarm amongst the people. The dread of the Spanish Inquisition returned with new force, and with it came fresh apprehensions of the subversion of their liberties. Already the people fancied they could hear prisons building, chains and fetters forging, and see piles of fagots collecting. Society was occupied with this one theme of conversation, and fear kept no longer within bounds. Placards were affixed to houses of the nobles in which they were called upon, as formerly Rome called on her Brutus, to come forward and save expiring freedom. Biting pasquinades were published against the new bishops—tormentors as they were called; the clergy were ridiculed in comedies, and abuse spared the throne as little as the Romish see.

Terrified by the rumors which were afloat, the regent called together all the counsellors of state to consult them on the course she ought to adopt in this perilous crisis. Opinion varied and disputes were violent. Undecided between fear and duty they hesitated to come to a conclusion, until at last the aged senator, Viglius, rose and surprised the whole assembly by his opinion. "It would," he said, "be the height of folly in us to think of promulgating the royal edict at the present moment; the king must be informed of the reception which, in all probability, it will now meet. In the meantime the inquisitors must be enjoined to use their power with moderation, and to abstain from severity." But if these words of the aged president surprised the whole assembly, still greater was the astonishment when the Prince of Orange stood up and opposed his advice. "The royal will," he said, "is too clearly and too precisely

stated; it is the result of too long and too mature deliberation for us to venture to delay its execution without bringing on ourselves the reproach of the most culpable obstinacy." "That I take on myself," interrupted Viglius; "I oppose myself to, his displeasure. If by this delay we purchase for him the peace of the Netherlands our opposition will eventually secure for us the lasting gratitude of the king." The regent already began to incline to the advice of Viglius, when the prince vehemently interposing, "What," he demanded," what have the many representations which we have already made effected? of what avail was the embassy we so lately despatched? Nothing! And what then do we wait for more? Shall we, his state counsellors, bring upon ourselves the whole weight of his displeasure by determining, at our own peril, to render him a service for which he will never thank us?" Undecided and uncertain the whole assembly remained silent; but no one had courage enough to assent to or reply to him. But the prince had appealed to the fears of the regent, and these left her no choice. The consequences of her unfortunate obedience to the king's command will soon appear. But, on the other hand, if by a wise disobedience she had avoided these fatal consequences, is it clear that the result would not have been the same? However she had adopted the most fatal of the two counsels: happen what would the royal ordinance was to be promulgated. This time, therefore, faction prevailed, and the advice of the only true friend of the government, who, to serve his monarch, was ready to incur his displeasure, was disregarded. With this session terminated the peace of the regent: from this day the Netherlands dated all the trouble which uninterruptedly visited their country. As the counsellors separated the Prince of Orange said to one who stood nearest to him, "Now will soon be acted a great tragedy."

> [The conduct of the Prince of Orange in this meeting of the council has been appealed to by historians of the Spanish party as a proof of his dishonesty, and they have availed themselves over and over again to blacken his character. "He," say they, "who had, invariably up to this period, both by word and deed, opposed the measures of the court so long as he had any ground to fear that the king's measures could be successfully carried out, supported them now for the first time when he was convinced that a scrupulous obedience to the royal orders would inevitably prejudice him. In order to convince the king of his folly in disregarding his warnings; in order to be able to boast, 'this I foresaw,' and 'I foretold that,' he was willing to risk the welfare of his nation, for which alone he had hitherto professed to struggle. The whole tenor of his previous conduct proved that he held the enforcement of the edicts to be an evil; nevertheless, he at once becomes false to his own convictions and follows an opposite course; although, so far as the nation was concerned, the same grounds existed as had dictated his former measures; and he changed his conduct simply that the result might be different to the king." "It is clear, therefore," continue his adversaries, "that the welfare of the nation had less weight with him than his animosity to his sovereign. In order to gratify his hatred to the latter he does not hesitate to sacrifice the former." But is it then true that by calling for the promulgation of these edicts he sacrificed the nation? or, to speak more correctly, did he carry the edicts into effect by insisting on their promulgation? Can it not, on the contrary, be shown with far more probability that this was really the only way effectually to frustrate them? The nation was in a ferment, and the indignant people would (there was reason to expect, and as Viglius himself seems to have apprehended) show so decided a spirit of opposition as must compel the king to yield. "Now," says Orange, "my country feels all the impulse necessary for it to contend successfully with tyranny! If I neglect the present moment the tyrant will, by secret negotiation and intrigue, find means to obtain by stealth what by open force he could not. The some object will be steadily pursued, only with greater caution and forbearance; but extremity alone can combine the people to unity of purpose, and move them to bold measures." It is clear, therefore, that with regard to the king the prince did but change his language only; but that as far as the people was concerned his conduct was perfectly consistent. And what duties did he owe the king apart from those he owed the republic? Was he to oppose an arbitary act in the very moment when it was about to entail a just retribution on its author? Would he have done his duty to his country if he had deterred its oppressor from a precipitate step which alone could save it from its otherwise unavoidable misery?]

An edict, therefore, was issued to all the governors of provinces, commanding them rigorously to enforce the mandates of the Emperor against heretics, as well as those which had been passed under the present government, the decrees of the council of Trent, and those of the episcopal commission, which had lately sat to give all the aid of the civil force to the Inquisition, and also to enjoin a similar line of conduct on the officers of government under them. More effectually to secure their object, every governor was to select from his own council an efficient officer who should frequently make the circuit of the province and institute strict inquiries into the obedience shown by the inferior officers to these commands, and then transmit quarterly, to the capital an exact report of their visitation. A copy of the Tridentine decrees, according to the Spanish original, was also sent to the archbishops and bishops,

with an intimation that in case of their needing the assistance of the secular power, the governors of their diocese, with their troops, were placed at their disposal. Against these decrees no privilege was to avail; however, the king willed and commanded that the particular territorial rights of the provinces and towns should in no case be infringed.

These commands, which were publicly read in every town by a herald, produced an effect on the people which in the fullest manner verified the fears of the President Viglius and the hopes of the Prince of Orange.

Nearly all the governors of provinces refused compliance with them, and threatened to throw up their appointments if the attempt should be made to compel their obedience. "The ordinance," they wrote back, "was based on a statement of the numbers of the sectaries, which was altogether false."

> [The number of the heretics was very unequally computed by the two parties according as the interests and passions of either made its increase or diminution desirable, and the same party often contradicted itself when its interest changed. If the question related to new measures of oppression, to the introduction of the inquisitional tribunals, etc., the numbers of the Protestants were countless and interminable. If, on the other hand, the question was of lenity towards them, of ordinances to their advantage, they were now reduced to such an insignificant number that it would not repay the trouble of making an innovation for this small body of ill-minded people.]

"Justice was appalled at the prodigious crowd of victims which daily accumulated under its hands; to destroy by the flames fifty thousand or sixty thousand persons from their districts was no commission for them." The inferior clergy too, in particular, were loud in their outcries against the decrees of Trent, which cruelly assailed their ignorance and corruption, and which moreover threatened them with a reform they so much detested. Sacrificing, therefore, the highest interests of their church to their own private advantage, they bitterly reviled the decrees and the whole council, and with liberal hand scattered the seeds of revolt in the minds of the people. The same outcry was now revived which the monks had formerly raised against the new bishops. The Archbishop of Cambray succeeded at last, but not without great opposition, in causing the decrees to be proclaimed. It cost more labor to effect this in Malines and Utrect, where the archbishops were at strife with their clergy, who, as they were accused, preferred to involve the whole church in ruin rather than submit to a reformation of morals.

Of all the provinces Brabant raised its voice the loudest. The states of this province appealed to their great privilege, which protected their members from being brought before a foreign court of justice. They spoke loudly of the oath by which the king had bound himself to observe all their statutes, and of the conditions under which they alone had sworn allegiance to him. Louvain, Antwerp, Brussels, and Herzogenbusch solemnly protested against the decrees, and transmitted their protests in distinct memorials to the regent. The latter, always hesitating and wavering, too timid to obey the king, and far more afraid to disobey him, again summoned her council, again listened to the arguments for and against the question, and at last again gave her assent to the opinion which of all others was the most perilous for her to adopt. A new reference to the king in Spain was proposed; the next moment it was asserted that so urgent a crisis did not admit of so dilatory a remedy; it was necessary for the regent to act on her own responsibility, and either defy the threatening aspect of despair, or to yield to it by modifying or retracting the royal ordinance. She finally caused the annals of Brabant to be examined in order to discover if possible a precedent for the present case in the instructions of the first inquisitor whom Charles V. had appointed to the province. These instructions indeed did not exactly correspond with those now given; but had not the king declared that he introduced no innovation? This was precedent enough, and it was declared that the new edicts must also be interpreted in accordance with the old and existing statutes of the province. This explanation gave indeed no satisfaction to the states of Brabant, who had loudly demanded the entire abolition of the inquisition, but it was an encouragement to the other provinces to make similar protests and an equally bold opposition. Without giving the duchess time to decide upon their remonstrances they, on their own authority, ceased to obey the inquisition, and withdrew their aid from it. The inquisitors, who had so recently been expressly urged to a more rigid execution of their duties now saw themselves suddenly deserted by the secular arm, and robbed of all authority, while in answer to their application for assistance the court could give them only empty promises. The regent by thus endeavoring to satisfy all parties had displeased all.

During these negotiations between the court, the councils, and the states a universal spirit of revolt pervaded the whole nation. Men began to investigate the rights of the subject, and to scrutinize the prerogative of kings. "The Netherlanders were not so stupid," many were heard to say with very little attempt at secrecy, "as not to know right well what was due from the subject to the sovereign, and from the king to the subject; and that perhaps means would yet be found to repel force with force, although at present there might be no appearance of it." In Antwerp a placard was set up in several places

calling upon the town council to accuse the King of Spain before the supreme court at Spires of having broken his oath and violated the liberties of the country, for, Brabant being a portion of the Burgundian circle, was included in the religious peace of Passau and Augsburg. About this time too the Calvinists published their confession of faith, and in a preamble addressed to the king, declared that they, although a hundred thousand strong, kept themselves nevertheless quiet, and like the rest of his subjects, contributed to all the taxes of the country; from which it was evident, they added, that of themselves they entertained no ideas of insurrection. Bold and incendiary writings were publicly disseminated, which depicted the Spanish tyranny in the most odious colors, and reminded the nation of its privileges, and occasionally also of its powers.

> [The regent mentioned to the king a number (three thousand) of these writings. Strada 117. It is remarkable how important a part printing, and publicity in general, played in the rebellion of the Netherlands. Through this organ one restless spirit spoke to millions. Besides the lampoons, which for the most part were composed with all the low scurrility and brutality which was the distinguishing character of most of the Protestant polemical writings of the time, works were occasionally published which defended religious liberty in the fullest sense of the word.]

The warlike preparations of Philip against the Porte, as well as those which, for no intelligible reason, Eric, Duke of Brunswick, about this time made in the vicinity, contributed to strengthen the general suspicion that the Inquisition was to be forcibly imposed on the Netherlands. Many of the most eminent merchants already spoke of quitting their houses and business to seek in some other part of the world the liberty of which they were here deprived; others looked about for a leader, and let fall hints of forcible resistance and of foreign aid.

That in this distressing position of affairs the regent might be left entirely without an adviser and without support, she was now deserted by the only person who was at the present moment indispensable to her, and who had contributed to plunge her into this embarrassment. "Without kindling a civil war," wrote to her William of Orange, "it was absolutely impossible to comply now with the orders of the king. If, however, obedience was to be insisted upon, he must beg that his place might be supplied by another who would better answer the expectations of his majesty, and have more power than he had over the minds of the nation. The zeal which on every other occasion he had shown in the service of the crown, would, he hoped, secure his present proceeding from misconstruction; for, as the case now stood, he had no alternative between disobeying the king and injuring his country and himself." From this time forth William of Orange retired from the council of state to his town of Breda, where in observant but scarcely inactive repose lie watched the course of affairs. Count Horn followed his example. Egmont, ever vacillating between the republic and the throne, ever wearying himself in the vain attempt to unite the good citizen with the obedient subject—Egmont, who was less able than the rest to dispense with the favor of the monarch, and to whom, therefore, it was less an object of indifference, could not bring himself to abandon the bright prospects which were now opening for him at the court of the regent. The Prince of Orange had, by his supeirior intellect, gained an influence over the regent—which great minds cannot fail to command from inferior spirits. His retirement had opened a void in her confidence which Count Egmont was now to fill by virtue of that sympathy which so naturally subsists between timidity, weakness, and good-nature. As she was as much afraid of exasperating the people by an exclusive confidence in the adherents to the crown, as she was fearful of displeasing the king by too close an understanding with the declared leaders of the faction, a better object for her confidence could now hardly be presented than this very Count Egmont, of whom it could not be said that he belonged to either of the two conflicting parties.

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