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in India were more than ever neglected by the government at home, and disorders of every kind were increased and multiplied. It was believed by some persons, that Philip II. agreeably to the maxims of his malignant policy, was well pleased that the power of his new subjects should suffer a diminution, as he would thereby find it easier to maintain his usurped authority. But it is more reasonable to suppose that his attention, being wholly engrossed by objects which he judged to be of greater importance, he had not leisure to attend to the affairs in India; and found it, therefore, in some measure necessary to leave the several governors at liberty to act without controul. However this be, it is certain that they acted more like independent monarchs than the subjects of one common prince, to whom they were accountable for their conduct, and seemed to have forgotten the relation which they had bore, and the duties which they owed both to their country and to one another; while each individual was solely attentive to his private interest, and seldom scrupled to promote it at the expence either of faith or of humanity. The natives had, on different occasions, taken arms, and attempted to vindicate their rights against their lawless oppressors. Their efforts hitherto had not been vigorous, nor attended
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in the issue with success; but they were become more than ever impatient under the injuries which they suffered, and longed for an opportunity to assert their liberty.

SUCH was the state of the Portuguese, and such the disposition of the natives with regard to them, when the Dutch made their first voyage to the Indies. They were thereby encouraged to persist in their attempt to establish trade in those parts; and a spirit of enterprise and adventure was excited, which soon diffused itself over all the maritime provinces. The Spanish ministers imprudently contributed to quicken this adventurous spirit, and to confirm the Dutch in the resolution they had formed, by republishing, soon after the accession of the present king, an edict, prohibiting the Spaniards and Portuguese from all commercial intercourse with them, in the strictest manner and under the severest penalties. They might have perceived the folly of this measure from the effects which their former restrictions on the Dutch trade had already produced; but they attended only to the immediate inconvenience which was occasioned thereby to the enemy, without considering either the advantages which the Dutch might ultimately derive from their prohibition, or the prejudice

which the Spaniards and Portugese were likely to sustain.

By the advice of the count de Fuentes, a nobleman of great abilities, but naturally haughty and severe, and extremely ignorant of the commercial interest of his country, the prohibitory edict was carried into the most rigorous execution. A strict enquiry was made at all the sea-ports of Spain and Portugal, whether any of the Dutch had come thither under the colours of any neutral power; and as a considerable number were discovered to have been guilty of this temerity, their ships and goods were confiscated, and they themselves either cast into prison, or sent to the galleys, and condemned to work as slaves.

THE states-general, in order to express their contempt of this conduct of the Spanish court, published an edict, in which, besides prohibiting all intercourse between their subjects and those of the king of Spain, they declared, that they would treat as enemies the subjects of all neutral powers who should carry commodities, of whatever kind, to the ports of Spain, Portugal, or Flanders.

To this manifesto, copies of which were sent to the courts of the several maritime powers,

no answer was returned, nor any objection made by the states or princes who received it; and the French monarch gave, on this occasion, a striking proof of his favour for the Dutch, by publishing a declaration, that if any of his subjects should, for the space of six months, adventure to trade with Spain, they must do it at their private risk, without the hopes of his protection.

WHILE the Dutch in this manner shewed their contempt of the Spanish trade and the prohibitory edict, being more than ever intent on prosecuting the trade which they had begun in India, several different associations were formed by the merchants in Holland and Zealand, almost immediately after the return of their fleet under the command of Houtman; and before the end of the following year, more than eighty ships, completely equipped, and furnished with various articles of commerce, were sent out; the greater part of them to the East Indies, and some to the West, and to the coasts of Africa, while others were ordered to attempt the passage by the Straights of Magellan into the Pacific Ocean.

Dutch trade
in both In-
dies, and on
the coast of
Africa.

THEY were divided into small fleets, consisting chiefly of four, six, or eight armed
S 3 vessels,

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vessels, from about one hundred and fifty to three or four hundred tons, some of which had regular troops on board, that were furnished by Prince Maurice and the states. Their instructions were nearly the same as those which had been given to the commanders employed in the first expedition; to avoid the settlements of the Portuguese, and, as much as possible, to abstain from hostilities. But it was impossible for them strictly to comply with these instructions. Their enemies were spread almost every where over the coasts which they visited; and being equally animated by jealousy and by resentment, were resolved to give them all the opposition, and to do them all the mischief in their power. They had laboured to inspire the natives with the same malignity; and on the minds of some of them their misrepresentations had produced the desired effect. It was not only the dangers, therefore, of voyages, so long and difficult, through climates the most adverse to the human constitution, which the Dutch encountered in the prosecution of their design; but, after their arrival on those coasts, where the trade, which they desired to establish, must be carried on, they found it necessary to fight and to negotiate by turns. They had the prejudices of the natives to overcome; and they were obliged to stand perpetually on their guard

guard against the machinations of the Portuguese, who practised every method which they could devise to accomplish their destruction, whether of secret fraud, or open force and violence.

THE Portuguese had no such formidable opposition to encounter when they first arrived in India. The ships of their enemies were few in number, and much inferior to their's, both in respect of strength and size; and the towns which they attacked were weakly fortified, and unskilfully defended by a dastardly, effeminate, and feeble race of men. Whereas the Dutch encountered fleets of ships of the same construction as their own, and were obliged to contend with an enemy, who, besides being accustomed to the climate, and familiarly acquainted with the Indian seas, were not less distinguished than themselves for their naval and military skill.

But their conduct was wisely adapted to their circumstances, being equally prudent whether it respected the natives or the Portuguese. They soon convinced the former of the falshood of those injurious aspersions which the latter had cast upon their character; and by the moderation, justice, and humanity, which

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they displayed in all their dealings, proved that, in purity of manners, they were much superior to their accusers. They were soon allowed to trade in many places, from whence the Portuguese had laboured to exclude them; and, as with indefatigable industry they improved to the utmost every advantage which they enjoyed, they came, ere long, to procure admission to several of the most important branches of commerce.

As the extension of their trade, and not conquest, was the great object which they pursued, they avoided all unnecessary rencounters with the Portuguese; but they were generally well prepared to defend themselves when attacked, gave many proofs of the most determined bravery, and sometimes triumphed over the superior force and numbers of the enemy. Still, however, they kept the great end of their voyages perpetually in view. The same time which they found it necessary to spend in repairing the damages sustained in battle, was likewise employed in trading with the natives; and as soon as their cargoes were complete, and their damages repaired, they returned to Holland: thus enriching their employers, and enabling them not only to defray the expence of their equipment, but to exert themselves with

with redoubled vigour in the prosecution of their designs.

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ALTHOUGH some of the numberless voyages which they had undertaken, had, through misconduct or cross accidents, proved unfortunate, they had been in general sufficiently successful to render it their interest to persevere. The societies, however, of merchants, by whom the Indian trade had been carried on, were not satisfied with the profits which it afforded. They complained that too great a number of adventurers had engaged in it; and that in consequence thereof, as they must pay much higher prices for Indian goods than had been formerly given by the Portuguese, so they found it necessary to sell them much cheaper; and would either be ruined by their efforts to establish this new branch of commerce, or obliged to abandon it altogether.

THIS evil, which could hardly have been apprehended in the beginning of a trade attended with so great expence and danger, would probably have soon been remedied by a diminution of the number of competitors, the natural consequence of small profits in any branch of commerce; and, if the evil complained of had been the only reason for the interposition of the states, it may be questioned whether they ought to have interposed.

But,

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Dutch East
India Com-
pany.

But, besides this, there was another reason of greater weight. The Portuguese in India, being under the direction of their governors or viceroys, could more easily act in concert than the great number of independent Dutch societies; and the small fleets or single ships belonging to these societies were exposed to the danger of being separately attacked and destroyed, one after another, by an enemy with whom, if they could too act in concert, they might be able to contend. Determined by these considerations, the states-general, in the year 1602, united the several societies of traders into one body, under the name of the East India Company; on which, besides the exclusive privilege of trading beyond the Cape of Good Hope on the one hand, and the Streights of Magellan on the other; they conferred the power of administering justice, of building forts, of appointing governors and garrisons, of raising troops, and of making peace and war with the Indian princes. A fund, amounting to more than six millions of florins, was immediately subscribed for by the merchants in the principal maritime towns, and managers were appointed, under whose direction all the trade to India was henceforth to be carried on. This company being the first regular commercial society of which we read in history, has served in some measure as a model to all the trading companies that have been

been created in modern times. It consisted chiefly of those who had been engaged as private adventurers in the Indian trade; and by these men, who had profited from their former errors, and were well acquainted with that trade in all its branches, the affairs of the company were, from the beginning, conducted with consummate skill; nor was their good fortune inferior to the prudence which they displayed. Having, by their justice and moderation, extinguished those groundless prejudices against their national character, which the Portuguese had laboured to instil into the minds of the Indian princes, they were almost every where received with favour, and in several places obtained permission to establish factories, and to build forts for the protection of their trade. They were requested by some of these princes to lend their assistance in expelling the Portuguese, and in their rencounters with that nation they generally came off victorious. They made innumerable captures of their richest ships. Their trade was every year more widely extended, and the profits arising from it were greater than they had been accustomed to derive from any former branch of commerce. The principal causes of their weakness have been already explained; and to these must be added this consideration, that, on the other hand, the trade and power of the Portuguese

Portuguese were quickly hastening to decay. While their rivals were every season receiving reinforcements both of ships and troops, they were left unsupported by their friends in Europe, to struggle with the difficulties which surrounded them. The strength of Portugal had long been exhausted by the too numerous emigration of its inhabitants; and the Spanish ministers, besides that their attention was entirely occupied by other objects, found more than sufficient employment at home for all the force and treasure which they possessed.

It was this reason, and not, as has been supposed, the desire of having Portugal reduced to a state of weakness, and thereby rendered more tame and obsequious, that prevented the court of Spain from affording that assistance to the Portuguese in India, which their exigencies so much required at the present period. They were almost equally inattentive, or equally unable to afford support to the Spanish traders and colonists as to the Portuguese. Many captures were made of their ships loaded with the treasures of America and the Indies. Their fleets were sometimes blocked up in their harbours, till the season fit for entering on their voyages had elapsed; and their settlements on the coasts were often plundered, sometimes by the Dutch, and sometimes by the English, with impunity.

NOR was it only in the Indies, and on the coast of America, that the subjects of the Spanish monarchy were exposed to the depredations of their enemies. While the war with England subsisted, the coasts of Spain itself had been insulted both by the Dutch and English; and many ships in the harbours either taken or destroyed. After the establishment of peace with France and England, the Spanish ministers had conceived the hopes of finding it easy, not only to resist the most vigorous efforts of the Dutch, but ere long to reduce them to obedience. But, although they had now only a single enemy to contend with, whom they had long been accustomed to despise, that enemy, through the great increase of their trade and navigation, were become more powerful, while they themselves, from the decay of their trade and other causes, were much weaker than before. For some time past, therefore, the Spaniards had found it equally difficult to defend themselves against the Dutch alone, as they had done formerly against the Dutch, and English, and French united.

PHILIP's ministers were not ignorant of the sources from whence the Dutch had received so great an accession of wealth and power; and of one of these, we have seen, they had in
vain

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The Spaniards attempt to destroy the Dutch commerce.

vain endeavoured to deprive them, by the prohibition of their trade with Spain and Portugal. Another, not less copious, they knew, was their cod and herring fishery on the coast of England and the Netherlands; and to deprive them of this, and at the same time to intercept their navigation in the narrow seas, between the southern and northern states of Europe, had for some years been a principal object of their attention. It was with this view that all those gallies had been equipped, which, as formerly related, had been intrusted to the command of Frederick de Spinola; and with the same view there had been fitted out at Nieupoort and Dunkirk a great number of armed vessels, from which the Dutch suffered considerable molestation in their coasting trade and fishery. But all Spinola's gallies had either been destroyed, or had fallen into the hands of the Dutch, when they got possession of Sluys; and the States having provided some ships of war on purpose, had, on some occasions, taken signal vengeance on the privateers of Nieupoort and Dunkirk, the crews of which they always treated as pirates, and either hanged or drowned. Their fleets now rode triumphant from the Baltic to the Streights of Gibraltar, and their European, as well as their African and Indian

Indian trade, was at this time in a much more flourishing condition than ever *.

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THE courts of Spain and Bruffels had long beheld this superiority of the naval power of the Dutch with much anxiety. They dreaded from it the utter extinction of their commerce; and perceived, that in order to prevent this effect, it would, ere long, be necessary to put a period to the war. Nor did peace appear to be less necessary, when they considered what had hitherto been the issue of their military operations at land, than when they reflected on the numberless losses which they had sustained at sea. Their most strenuous endeavours to reduce the revolted provinces to obedience had served only to render the people more expert, and more obstinate in their defence to strengthen the bond of their internal union; and to confirm the neighbouring powers in their resolution of affording them assistance and support. The maritime provinces almost surrounded by the sea, and every where intersected by the rivers and canals, had

Causes
which in-
duced the
Spanish mi-
nisters to
wish for
peace.

* *Recueil des Voyages, &c.* Van Meteren *Passim*;—*Grotius. De Wit's Maxims*—*Thysii Hist. navalis, passim.* *Huet on the Dutch Commerce.* *Janizon Etat present des Prov. Un.* *Recueil des Voyages qui ont servi a l'Etablissement & aux Progrès de la Compagnie des Indes Orientales formée dans les Provinces Unies des Pays Bas.* Rouen, 1725.

hitherto

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hitherto been found impregnable; and the southern frontier had lately been strengthened by the acquisition of some of the strongest places in Flanders and Brabant, Sluys, and Breda.

THE marquis of Spinola had wisely directed his attack against the confederates in that quarter where they were the worst prepared for resistance. The army which he commanded had been the most numerous which could possibly be collected.

THROUGH the united exertions which had been made by the archdukes, the court of Spain, and by the marquis himself, who had mortgaged his ample fortune in order to procure money, his troops, having regularly received their pay, had been kept under the strictest discipline. All his operations had been conducted with consummate skill: and nothing had been omitted on his part which might have ensured success: yet he had been utterly unable to surmount the difficulties which he encountered. Instead of penetrating into the interior provinces, he had been obliged to rest satisfied with conquests from whence no solid advantage could be derived. From the fatigues which they had undergone, and the moisture of the climate, the army had
lately

lately suffered considerable diminution. Those funds from whence the marquis had defrayed the expences of the last campaign, had for several months been almost entirely exhausted; and considerable arrears being now resting to the soldiers, the same mutinous spirit by which they had formerly been actuated, had again begun to appear. A part of them, as above mentioned, had already abandoned their officers; and having chosen others from among themselves, had begun to indulge themselves in every species of licentiousness. To these disorders no adequate remedy could possibly be applied during the continuance of the war. All the money which could be raised in the Netherlands, or furnished by the court of Spain, would be hardly sufficient to defray the expence of the new levies which must be made before the next campaign. And in the mean time the licentious spirit of the mutineers must diffuse itself throughout the army; and both the army itself, and the provinces, be thereby exposed an easy prey to a watchful enemy; who, being possessed of more certain resources for carrying on the war, had been always ready to avail themselves of every advantage that was afforded them*.

* Grotius, lib. xv. Bentiv. part xiii. lib. viii.

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BESIDES these considerations there were some others, which, with Philip and his ministers, were supposed to have had still greater weight. A report at that time prevailed, that the Dutch, having entered into a correspondence with the Moors on the coast of Barbary, had agreed to furnish them with ships to transport an army into Spain. And another report was likewise propagated, that the French monarch having formed the design of annexing the Netherlands to France, was now prepared and resolved to carry it into execution. It does not appear that there was any just foundation for either of these reports. But they seem to have made a strong impression on the minds of the Spanish ministers; who, dreading that either an interruption of that domestic tranquillity which Spain had so long enjoyed, or the entire loss of the Netherlands, must be the consequence of the continuance of the war, were now more desirous than ever to have it brought to a conclusion †.

The archduke Albert solicitous for peace, and why.

THE archduke was still more solicitous for peace than the Spanish ministers. From the commencement of his sovereignty he had lived in perpetual disquietude. He had fully experienced the vanity of his hopes of success from

† *Memoriei recondite*, vol. i. p. 418

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the support of Spain, which he knew to be too much exhausted, and removed at too great a distance from the scene of action, to afford him the assistance that was necessary. He had no heirs of his own body to whom he could transmit his dominions. And both he and the infanta, besides being sensibly affected by the calamities in which their subjects were involved, were desirous to pass the remainder of their days in peace.

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THEY were confirmed in their resolution by the marquis of Spinola, who did not hesitate in advising peace, notwithstanding the renown which he had acquired from his conduct of the war. But his ambition being tempered with prudence and moderation, he wisely judged it better to rest satisfied with the glory which he had already gained, than to run the risk of exposing himself to reproach, by attempting what he knew to be impossible. He was better acquainted than any other person with the difficulties to be encountered in the prosecution of the war, and therefore exerted all his influence to persuade the archduke, and the Spanish ministers, of the folly of persisting in their attempt. The time might come, he represented, when the confederates, divided among themselves, and no longer supported by

Peace recommended by Spinola.

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so powerful an ally as the king of France, might be induced or compelled to return to their allegiance; but while, through their dread of Spain, their internal union was preserved inviolate, and a prince so near them, possessed of such inexhaustible resources, ever ready to lend them his assistance; as it was absurd to expect to bring the war to the desired issue, so the consequences of persisting in it must prove equally ruinous to the dominions of the archdukes, and to the Spanish monarchy *.

Albert offers
peace to the
confederacy.

ALBERT, who entertained the most profound respect for Spinola's judgment, being now more firmly than ever persuaded that peace was necessary, resolved, whatever construction might be put upon his conduct, to make the confederates an offer of it without delay. Having previously sounded their inclinations, by two persons of the names of Wittenhorst and Gevert, he some time after sent these men back to Holland, with instructions signed by himself and the infanta †.

THESE instructions they first communicated privately to several individuals, and afterwards

* Bentivoglio, Grotius, Baudius, &c.

† Dated January 3, 1607.

requested to be permitted to lay them before the assembly of the states. The members were of different opinions with regard to the expediency of granting them this permission: and prince Maurice endeavoured to dissuade the states from granting it, by expressing his apprehensions that some insidious design was covered under the present proposal; and that as no treaty with Spain, or with the archdukes, while they were so entirely governed in all their conduct by the court of Spain, could be productive of any good effect, so the granting of a public audience to the commissioners would only serve to inspire the people with fallacious hopes of peace, and so damp their zeal in the prosecution of the war.

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Prince
Maurice op-
poses an
overture for
peace.

BUT Maurice yielded *, on this occasion, to the persuasions of the celebrated John Olden Barnevelt, pensioner of Holland; one of the greatest statesmen of the age, and equally eminent for his public spirit as his political abilities and integrity. By this venerable patriot it was urged, that while the king of Great Britain stood an idle spectator of the war, and the French monarch seemed to have some great object in view, which he deemed

Peace stren-
uously re-
commended
by Bar-
nevelt.

* It does not appear to have been candour or conviction.
Vide Jeannin, tom. iii. 106, 107.

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of more importance than the support of the Dutch republic, both these princes were well pleased to observe the Spaniards exhaust their strength by an obstinate perseverance in the war with the Netherlands; and would probably be more liberal in their offers of assistance to the states than they had hitherto been, if there were a negotiation begun for the establishment of peace. A great majority of the assembly, with Maurice himself, came readily into this opinion, and the commissioners were readily admitted to an audience. They represented that the archdukes, being desirous to put an end to the calamities of war, were ready to enter into treaty with them, either for establishing a perpetual peace, or a long truce, and would consent to such reasonable terms as they could not suppose would be rejected by the United Provinces. That the states could not be ignorant of the equity of the pretensions of the archdukes; that in all their conduct they had shewn how averse they were to every severe and arbitrary measure in the government of their subjects; that they would claim nothing to which they had not the most unquestionable title; and that the states might assuredly depend on receiving from them every sort of satisfaction and security they could require for the full enjoyment of their rights and privileges.

To this proposal the states, after an interval of a few days, replied, that no regard could be paid to what the commissioners had delivered in the assembly; since the archdukes, it appeared, still persisted in supposing themselves possessed of a right to the sovereignty of the United Provinces. That in the solemn deed, entitled the Union of Utrecht, the states, having, on the justest grounds, renounced the authority of the king of Spain, had asserted their liberty and independence; that this deed had been recognised by many of the European states and princes: that they had long maintained their liberty by force of arms; and were still determined to maintain it to the last extremity; and to reject every proposal for treating with the archduke or the king of Spain, either for a truce or a perpetual peace, unless they were acknowledged as a free state, over which these princes could pretend to no authority.

WITH this answer the commissioners returned to Brussels, from whence they wrote a letter to the states, acquainting them that, by the proposal which had been made, the archduke did not mean to claim any authority over them, or to introduce any change into their form of government; but, leaving all their

The United States insist on a recognition of their freedom.

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laws and institutions on their present footing, to put a period to the miseries attendant upon war, by a peace or truce; and, soon afterwards, another commissioner was sent into Holland, in whom it should seem Albert could put greater confidence than in his first commissioners. This person was Ney, or Neyen, a native of Antwerp, who had been educated in the Protestant religion, but having afterwards embraced the Popish faith, had resided for several years in Spain, and was at this time general of the order of Franciscans; a man of considerable learning, and of great integrity and abilities, and highly distinguished for his eloquence and address. Having been upwards of twenty years of age before he left the Netherlands, he retained a warm affection for his native country; he was at the same time animated with zeal to signalize himself in the service of the archdukes and the court of Spain, and undertook the task imposed upon him with great alacrity.

He had no sooner, after his arrival in Holland, had an interview with some of the principal persons in the republic, than he discovered that it would be vain to hope for success in the execution of his embassy, unless the states were, in the treaty proposed, to be acknowledged free

free and independent, and for this reason he immediately returned to Brussels, in order to convince the archdukes of the necessity of making this concession.

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THESE princes, conformably to the tenor of the above mentioned letter, written by Witenhorst and Gevart, at their desire, were willing to agree that no mention should be made in the treaty of their right of sovereignty ; but expressly to disclaim this right, and formally to acknowledge the sovereignty of the states, they considered as equally dangerous and dishonourable. It would be in words to acknowledge what in their hearts they must disavow ; it would be to give their sanction to rebellion, and thereby to afford encouragement to their subjects to imitate the example of the revolted provinces.

BEING conscious, however, from the state of their finances, that they were utterly unable to carry on the war, they resolved, in conformity to the advice of their counsellors, to yield at least so far as to empower their commissioners to declare, that they were willing to treat with the confederates as with a free people, over whom they pretended to no authority : a form of expression which might be adopted, they thought, consistently with their honour, as it

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only denoted a matter of fact, but did not import either a renunciation of their own right to the sovereignty, or an acknowledgment of a right inherent in the states to independence.

A letter
from the
archdukes
to the U-
nited States

IN the hopes however that it might satisfy the confederates, Ney was immediately sent back to the Hague, with a letter addressed to the states, and signed both by Albert and Isabella, of which the following were the principal contents: that being extremely solicitous to put a stop to the effusion of human blood, they were ready to treat with the United States as with a free people, from whom they claimed no submission or obedience; that they were willing to treat either for the purpose of establishing a perpetual peace, or a long truce, of twelve, fifteen, or twenty years, during the continuance of which, the contending parties should retain what they at present possessed; unless it should be mutually agreed, for the common interest of both, to make an exchange of certain towns and territories: that, in order to prevent all suspicion of fraud or sinister intention, ambassadors, natives of the Netherlands, should be nominated by the archdukes, and an equal number named by the United States: that the states should have their choice of the time and place of meeting; and that,

while

while the negotiation was carrying on, there should be an entire suspension of hostilities for eight months, both by sea and land.

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FROM the sequel, it will appear that all the members of the states were not equally disposed to agree to these proposals; but by a great majority they were thought a sufficient ground for a negotiation or treaty.

No objection was made to the words in which the declaration of the independence of the republic was expressed. The states, conscious of the superiority of their naval force, refused to consent to the cessation of hostilities at sea; but they agreed that no hostile enterprise should be undertaken against any of the towns or provinces of the Netherlands, and no new forts erected. It was declared that the truce of eight months should commence on the fourth of May: and the archdukes engaged to procure a ratification of the present convention, including the declaratory clause, within three months, from the king of Spain *.

THIS agreement having been first made with Ney, and a few days after confirmed in proper form by Albert and Isabella, was immediately

* Grotius, lib. xvi. Baudius, lib. i. Bentivoglio, lib. viii. and Meteren, liv. xxviii.

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The prospect of
peace matter of
joy to the people
of the United
Provinces.

communicated by the states-general to the particular states, and a day of thanksgiving to Heaven for the prospect of peace appointed to be observed throughout the provinces.

THE people in general sincerely rejoiced on this occasion, and were greatly elated when they reflected on the proof which the proposal and concession of the archdukes afforded of the difficulties to which they were reduced.

THE war had now subsisted for almost forty years; and though, during a part of that time only some of them had been much exposed to the calamities which are commonly attendant upon war, in the immediate scenes of action, yet most of them had experienced these calamities in some degree. They had, on numberless occasions, been disquieted with the most dreadful apprehensions; and they had long groaned under the weight of those enormous taxes, which the supporting of so many fleets and armies made it necessary to impose.

THERE was a considerable proportion however of the people whose interest and prosperity depended on the continuance of the war, and particularly those who held employments, which must either be suppressed, or rendered much

much less lucrative in the time of peace. By such persons peace was no less dreaded than it was desired by the generality of their countrymen; and the archdukes proposals were represented as deceitful and insidious. Unhappily many of the clergy joined in representing them in this light; and, by their inflammatory harangues from the pulpit, contributed to increase the difficulties which the states afterwards encountered in carrying on the treaty.

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A party in the United States represent the archdukes proposals as insidious.

THIS negotiation was a matter of great surprise to the neighbouring states and princes. They could not suppose that the archdukes would have ventured to make such humiliating concessions, if they had not before hand obtained the consent of the court of Spain; and that court, they thought, would never have consented to it, but in order to procure by artifice what they had been unable to accomplish by force of arms. They were not wholly unacquainted with the disorder that had taken place in the Spanish finances; but they could hardly believe that a prince, possessed of such copious resources as those of Philip, could be reduced so low as to find it necessary to treat with his rebellious subjects on equal terms. They were therefore suspicious that the Spanish ministers had secretly formed some design, by which
their

The negotiation for peace matter of surprise to neighbouring states and princes.

Likewise an object of jealousy.

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their interest or the interest of Europe might be affected ; and they were confirmed in their suspicion, by reflecting on the secrecy with which the negotiation had been carried on. At Brussels it had been communicated only to a very small number of the archdukes ministers. At the Hague, the states-general alone had been privy to it ; and at both these places it had been carefully concealed from all the foreign residents, till it was made known by the states-general to the particular states, when they appointed the day of public thanksgiving. These precautions gave a mysterious appearance to the conduct of both parties ; yet they had probably been used with no other view, but either to avoid the perplexity arising from too great a multitude of counsellors, or to prevent opposition to the treaty in its infancy, and before the resolution was fully formed, whether it should be rejected or embraced.

THERE were no princes so well entitled to be consulted on this occasion by the states as the kings of Great Britain and France, to whom the provinces had been so much indebted for their assistance in carrying on the war. The former of these princes, from the narrowness of his revenue, joined to his bad œconomy in the administration of it, had never been
able

ble to furnish them with pecuniary supplies ; but notwithstanding the difficulties in which he was involved, he had consented that the one half of the money with which the French king supplied them, should be deducted from the debt which that prince owed to the crown of England, and had at all times afforded encouragement to their levies of troops in Britain ; while he had secretly discountenanced those which, in consequence of the permission granted in the treaty of peace above mentioned, were attempted by the archduke or the king of Spain.

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THE obligations however of the states were much greater to the French than to the British monarch ; for Henry was not only more able, but more disposed to contribute to their support. Before the peace of Vervins, he had always considered their cause and interest as his own ; and after that peace, had given them every proof of friendship that was consistent with fidelity to those engagements which he had come under to the king of Spain. His protestant subjects had been freely admitted to enter into their service, and had, every campaign, formed a considerable proportion of their troops. When, in order to procure tranquillity to France, he found it necessary to engage that he would not any longer afford assistance

Conduct of
the French
king to-
wards the
United
States after
the peace of
Vervins.

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ance to the states, he had solemnly declared to the Spanish ambassadors, that he did not thereby mean to preclude himself from repaying those sums to the states, which they had lent him in the time of his distress. And, for some years, the repaying of these sums* was the only assistance in money which he afforded them. But after discovering that, in violation of the peace of Vervins, the court of Spain had formed intrigues with the marshal Biron, and his other dissatisfied subjects, the object of which was the subversion of his government, thinking himself then at liberty to retaliate upon them for so great an injury, he had been more open and liberal than formerly in lending his assistance to the United Provinces. He spared no pains to persuade the king of England to enter into an alliance with him for their support; and had, yearly, advanced them sums of money for the payment of their forces.

It would be absurd to suppose, that in the kindness which Henry had manifested to the states, his conduct had entirely proceeded from motives of friendship and generosity.

* The amount of these sums was seven millions three hundred and seventy-eight thousand and eight hundred livres. Sully, liv. xxi.

It can seldom happen that a prince, in his conduct towards foreign states, could be justified for acting under the influence of such motives. A regard to the interest of his subjects, was, as it ought to have been, the ruling principle of Henry's conduct; and his liberality towards the United Provinces proceeded from his conviction, that on their prosperity, in some measure, depended the peace and tranquillity of his own dominions.

HAVING formerly suffered so much from the arms, and afterwards from the intrigues of the Spaniards, he was still disquieted with apprehensions of the danger to which he was exposed from their turbulent ambition. He had long beheld with pleasure their fruitless contest in the Netherlands, which had contributed so much to exhaust their strength. But, having, in concert with some of his wisest ministers, formed a plan for the humiliation both of the German and Spanish branches of the Austrian family, which required leisure before he could bring it to maturity*, he was not displeased to hear that the states had agreed to the archdukes proposals for entering into a treaty; but not having been previously con-

* Sully's Memoirs, p. 324, &c.

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sulted upon the subject, and the archdukes having made greater concessions than he expected, he dreaded that the court of Spain must have formed some deep insidious design, either against the states themselves, or the princes in alliance with them; and therefore he resolved to bestow all that attention upon the present negociation in the Netherlands, which a transaction of the highest consequence deserved.

His affairs in that country had hitherto been managed with great prudence by his president, monsieur de Burerwall; but, being determined, if possible, to acquire a direction of the present negociation, and vigilantly to watch over the conduct of the contracting powers, he sent to the Hague, in quality of ambaffador extraordinary, the president Jeannin, a minister of great experience, who is equally celebrated in the annals of Henry's reign, and in those of his successor, for his fidelity, his eloquence, and his political abilities.

The president Jeannin, sent ambaffador to the Hague from France.

THIS able negociator had no sooner arrived than he required admiffion into the assembly of the states; where, after reminding them of the zeal with which his master had for so many years

years exerted himself in their behalf, he inveighed, with much severity, against those who had falsely accused the king of aiming at the sovereignty of the Provinces; and then gently reproached the states with giving a colour to this aspersion, by entering into a treaty with the enemy, without his knowledge or consent. But as no prince, he added, could more easily forgive his enemies, so there was none more ready to overlook the omissions of his friends: and to prove the sincerity of his friendship for the states, the king had now sent him in the character of ambassador, with powers to assure them of the continuance of his assistance, in case a continuance of the war should be found expedient; or, if they chose to put a period to it, to assist them in establishing an honourable and lasting peace. He concluded with requesting that a committee of the states might be appointed, to whom he might more particularly communicate his instructions, and with whom he might occasionally deliberate concerning the measures which it might be proper to pursue.

THE states readily complied with this request, and expressed how sincerely they rejoiced to find so great a king disposed to take so warm an interest in their affairs.

THIS interposition of Henry gave equal uneasiness to the court of Spain, as it afforded joy to the states. They knew that all his influence would be employed, either to prevent an accommodation, or to render it derogatory to the honour and interest of Spain. And they were well acquainted with the superior talents of Jeannin, who, while he would keep the states perpetually on their guard, would encourage them to persist in their most exorbitant demands.

THE courts of Spain and Bruffels had reason likewise to look for opposition from the British as well as from the French monarch. For James had no ground, they thought, to entertain any jealousy of the Dutch; as their dependence on him for their English and Scotch troops, which formed so great a proportion of their army, his possession of the cautionary towns, which were so many keys of the Netherlands, the situation of his dominions, and the coincidence between his subjects and those of the states in religious opinions, seemed to render him secure of their alliance. It could not therefore but be agreeable, they imagined, to this prince, to contribute his endeavours, in the treaty of peace, to promote the interest of the states at the expence of Spain. They supposed it, however, to be more likely that he might

might exert his influence to render this truly abortive from an apprehension which they had given him ground to entertain, that if Spain were at peace with the United Provinces, she might employ her leisure in fomenting the discontents of his popish subjects in Ireland.

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BUT they afterwards found that they had erred in this conjecture. Indolence and an aversion to war were predominant principles in the character of James; and these, on this occasion, determined him, in opposition to his political interest, to concur with the French monarch, in promoting the establishment of peace; besides that, he could not decently have attempted to dissuade the Dutch from listening to the proposals which had been made to them without being more liberal than the narrow state of his finances would permit, in contributing to their assistance. James had been no less alarmed than Henry, by the intelligence which he received of the negotiation between the states and the archdukes; and had expressed to Caron, the Dutch resident at London, his surprize at the secrecy with which it had been carried on. But the states, solicitous to preserve his friendship, having sent two of their number to explain to him the motives of their conduct, he readily admitted of

The king of England concurs with the French monarch in promoting peace.

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their apology, and soon after sent Sir Ralph Winwood and Sir Richard Spencer, in the character of ambassadors, to assist them in bringing the treaty to the desired conclusion.

ABOUT the same time ambassadors arrived in Holland from the king of Denmark, the elector Palatine, the elector of Brandenburg, the landgrave of Hesse, and several other protestant princes of Germany; who, having no interest of their own to adjust or secure, could have no other motive in sending them, but to afford to the states, on this important occasion, a proof of the concern which they took in their prosperity*.

IN the mean time an event happened, which, by elevating the hopes of one of the contending parties, while it depressed those of the other, contributed to hasten the treaty to a conclusion. The states having, early in the spring of this year, equipped a fleet of twenty-six ships of war, besides transports with stores and provisions, they put it under the command of Heemskirk, one of the bravest officers, and most skilful navigators in the Netherlands, with instructions to sail for the western coasts of Spain and Portugal, and by watching

Operations
of the
Dutch at
sea, under
admiral
Heemskirk.

* Baudius, lib. i. Bentivoglio, Grotius, and Winwood, vol. ii.

the motions of the enemy, to provide for the safe arrival of the East India fleet. The preservation of this fleet, which there was ground to believe the Spaniards were prepared to intercept, the states informed him, was to be considered as a principal object of his expedition; but they required besides, that he should give all possible annoyance to the enemy, and remember that the archdukes having made proposals for a treaty of peace, the issue of this treaty, and consequently the future prosperity of the United Provinces, would greatly depend on the success with which his arms in the present enterprize should be attended.

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HEEMSKIRK, flattered with the trust reposed in him at so critical a juncture, assured the states, when he received his instructions, that whether he should die or survive, they should not have reason to repent of the honour they had conferred on him; and in order to express his confidence of success, he declared that he would not accept of any reward or pay, unless the booty should amount to more than five hundred thousand florins; in which case he would accept only of his share of what should remain after that sum was deducted. He was already, says Grotius, possessed of a greater fortune than his manner of life required; and being animated more by the love of glory

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than of riches, under the simple show and moderate deportment of a citizen, he concealed all the qualities of a hero.

April 10.

HAVING left the Texel on the 25th of March, he first directed his course towards Lisbon; but being informed on his arrival in the mouth of the Tagus, by some merchants whom he had sent before him, under neutral colours, to procure intelligence, that the first division of the Portuguese and Spanish fleet intended for the Indies and America, had already sailed, and that the ships belonging to the second, were neither fully equipped nor had got their cargoes on board; but that a Spanish fleet of ships of war was then riding at anchor in the bay of Gibraltar, he immediately set sail for that place, and soon arrived within sight of the enemy.

April 24 or
25.

THE Spaniards having, for several days, observed him steering his course along the coast of Andalusia, had given notice to the Admiral Don John Alvarez Davila of his approach; and Davila had full leisure to put his fleet into a proper posture of defence. It consisted of twenty-one ships, nine of which were greatly superior in size to those of the enemy, and was drawn up under the cannon of the fort, having the admiral's galleon, which was much larger

larger than the rest, in front. Heemskirk was fully aware of the great advantage which the Spanish admiral must derive from his situation; but this consideration rather served to confirm him in his purpose, than to deter him from carrying it into execution.

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For the greater, said he to his officers, in a council of war which he held before the engagement, the danger to which we shall be exposed, and the more arduous our attempt, the greater will be the glory we shall acquire, and the more important the service we shall perform to our country, if our arms shall be crowned with victory. Many illustrious exploits have our countrymen achieved in different quarters of the globe, but we are the first who shall adventure to attack the royal fleet in the strongest port of Spain; and, by our success, shall show how little reason the Spanish monarch, with his long proud list of titles, has to boast that he is the sovereign of the seas. Let us not be disheartened by the enormous size of the enemy's ships, for this very circumstance, by rendering them unwieldy in all their motions, will facilitate our conquest. I require you to do nothing, of which I shall not set you an example. But when the engagement shall be begun, we must remember it will be no longer possible to escape, we must either conquer or perish.

perish. Nor is it only our own preservation that depends on the fortitude we shall display in our present enterprize, but the safety of the rich fleet that is in its way from India, the safety of all our countrymen, who are engaged in trade in this part of the world, and the terms likewise of peace which the states shall obtain from the enemy. Let us only exert ourselves as we have done on former occasions, and discover that contempt of danger which is the surest pledge of victory, and we shall enjoy the glory and felicity of putting a period to the war, and thereby secure to our countrymen that liberty, for which they have fought for more than forty years.

HAVING delivered these exhortations with that natural military eloquence, which he possessed in an eminent degree, and received from all the officers present, the most solemn assurances, confirmed by an oath, that, to the utmost of their power, they would imitate his example, and fulfil his commands, he communicated to them his plan of attack, and, as soon as they had returned to their respective ships, he gave the signal to advance.

WHEN Davila perceived them approaching, he ordered the master of a Dutch merchantman whom he had a prisoner on board his ship,

ship, in chains, to be brought upon the deck, and enquired of him what he imagined might be his countrymen's design: to attack your fleet, answered the prisoner; to which Davila, smiling contemptuously, replied, that he could not suppose it, since his single ship, he thought, would prove an over match for all the Dutch vessels that were in sight. That may be true, said the other, but, either I know nothing of the character of my countrymen, or the battle will be instantly begun.

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HEEMSKIRK himself led the van, and steered his course directly towards Davila, who, instead of that contempt which he had so recently expressed, being now overwhelmed with astonishment at the sight of such unprecedented intrepidity, gave orders to slip his anchors, and to retire behind his other ships, hoping that the enemy would thus be induced to exhaust their fury upon them, and that afterwards he might come in for a share of the victory.

Heemskirk
attacks a
Spanish fleet
riding at
anchor in
the bay of
Gibraltar.

BUT Heemskirk, agreeably to his resolution, which he had communicated to his officers, that he himself would attack the admiral's galleon, without hesitation entered within the line of the Spanish fleet, and still continued to ad-

vance

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vance, keeping up his fire till he had come within musket-shot of the enemy. Davila having, before his approach, given the first broadside, it was now returned by Heemskirk, whose fire being more skilfully directed, did greater execution. But soon after, while this gallant seaman stood giving orders, on the most conspicuous part of the deck, his left leg was carried off by a cannon ball, and his thigh being at the same time torn and shattered, he perceived, from the great effusion of blood, that he could not have many minutes to survive. These he employed in exhorting those about him to persevere in the attack, and to remember the oath which they had taken, and the duty which they owed to themselves and to their country; after which having recommended himself to the Divine Mercy, and appointed an officer of the name of Verhoeve to command the ship, he expired.

Death of
Heemskirk.

So great a disaster was calculated to fill the minds of the spectators with dismay and terror; but that intrepid spirit with which his example had inspired them, far from being extinguished by his death, was rather nourished up into rage and fury, by their desire of taking signal vengeance on the enemy. The battle which had been suspended for a little while,

was

was instantly renewed with the same vigour as before; and another captain, called Lambert, coming up to support Verhoeve, they united together in their assault on the Spanish admiral's ship, and battered her at once on both sides with uncommon violence.

IN the mean time the rest of the Dutch fleet had begun their attack upon the other galleons, with the same alacrity and ardour; and the Spaniards long gave proof of equal bravery in their defence. But at length, two of their ships were set on fire and burnt by the enemy, a third was sunk, a fourth, from some accidental cause, blew up, and all the rest, except the admiral's galleon, run ashore.

THE admiral himself had been killed about the same time with Heemskirk, but the officer who succeeded him in the command, had maintained the combat with inflexible fury, and the issue for several hours remained doubtful. At length, a third Dutch ship arriving to the assistance of the other two, the Spanish commander hoisted a white flag, as a signal that he was ready to surrender.

BUT the Dutch, animated by the same implacable and vindictive spirit, with which their war against the Spaniards had generally been

Vindictive
fury of the
Dutch.

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They obtain a signal
victory.

conducted, paid no regard to this signal, and still continued firing till they had beaten down the flag. The hearts of the Spaniards then sunk within them, and their efforts began to relax. The Dutch perceiving this, instantly boarded their vessel, and attacked them with so much fury, that they were quickly overpowered. Most of them were put to the sword, and the rest compelled to jump over board into the sea, where many of them were either shot or drowned. In this engagement the Spaniards lost near two thousand men; and, besides the ships above mentioned, which were burnt or sunk, almost all the rest were rendered unfit for future service; whereas not a single Dutch ship was either lost or deroyed, and only about a hundred men were killed.

So signal a victory, which excited the most dreadful apprehensions in the minds of the people along the southern coast of Spain, might have been attended with the most important consequences, if Heemskirk had lived to improve it; and either Cadiz or Gibraltar might have been reduced. But the officers, on whom the command had devolved, were satisfied with the glory they had acquired, and, in two days after the engagement, retired to Tetuan, on the African coast; from whence, after repairing

ing their damages, and sending home two of the transports with the sick and wounded, and the body of the admiral, they failed in different squadrons to the coast of Portugal, Azores, and other places, where they expected to enrich themselves by the capture of the merchant ships.

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BUT although this victory was not attended with any new conquest, it had considerable influence on the temper and conduct of the contending parties at the present crisis. It contributed to inspire the Dutch with greater confidence of success in the prosecution of the war, and to render them more intractable; while it tended, on the other hand, to produce a more complying temper on the part of the Spaniards, and to heighten their sollicitude for the establishment of peace.

THE archdukes had given the most convincing evidence how strongly they were actuated with this sollicitude. They had not only made the first advances to the states, and readily agreed to preliminary terms, which, by all the powers of Europe, were thought humiliating; but no sooner had a cessation of hostilities been agreed to, which extended only to hostilities at land, than they set at liberty, without a ransom,

Effects of
this victory
on the con-
tending
parties.

ransom, all the Dutch sailors, who had been taken prisoners by their ships of war, and shewed themselves determined, if possible, to put an end to every species of hostility.

THESE princes had, from the beginning, taken too little pains to save appearances, and had suffered their eagerness for peace to betray them into an act of indiscretion, which, by putting the states more than ever upon their guard, tended to increase the difficulty of accomplishing their design. Their agent having, agreeably to his instructions, requested a private interview with Aersens, the Dutch secretary, after returning him thanks for his good offices with the states, desired him to accept of a diamond of considerable value for his wife, and acquainted him that the archdukes, deeply impressed with a sense of his good intentions, had given orders for the restoration of his house in Brussels; while the marquis of Spinola had sent him an obligation for fifty thousand crowns, fifteen thousand of which should be paid upon demand, and the rest as soon as either a peace or a long truce should be concluded. Aersens, having conjectured what might be Ney's intention in wishing for an interview, and having previously consulted prince Maurice concerning the part which he should act, accepted, though

though with seeming reluctance, both of the diamond and Spinola's obligation to the money; but, agreeably to his concert with Maurice, he delivered them up to the council of state, to whom he gave a particular relation of the whole affair in a few days*.

THIS transaction, therefore, served only to excite suspicions of the archdukes designs; while it afforded a striking proof how extremely averse they were to the continuance of the war, and thus contributed to confirm the states in their resolution of insisting upon the most advantageous and honourable terms

Eagerness of the archdukes for peace, encourages the Dutch to insist on high terms.

THE court of Spain was not in reality less anxious with regard to the issue of the present negotiation than that of Brussels; but, whether from pride or policy, they better concealed their anxiety, and artfully acted for some time as if the treaty had been entirely the plan of the archdukes, to which the king found himself under no necessity, arising from the situation of his own affairs, of yielding his consent.

OF the truth of this, their conduct, with regard to the ratification of the late agreement between the states and the archdukes, affords sufficient evidence. In order to obtain that ra-

* Grotius, 520.

The United States dissatisfied with Philip's ratification of the preliminaries of peace.

tification, Ney, the Franciscan, had gone to Madrid, and, after a delay of several weeks, during which he had occasion for all his address and eloquence, he had now returned with it to Brussels. It was immediately after carried to the Hague by Varreiken, Albert's principal secretary; to whom the states, impatient to know particularly the contents of his instructions, granted an audience on the next morning after his arrival. They had been beforehand informed, by a letter from Spinola, that their agreement with the archdukes had been ratified by the king, and that it was in order to communicate to them the deed of ratification that Verreiken was sent into Holland. But they were extremely dissatisfied when they examined this deed, both with the form and the contents.

It was conceived in vague and general terms, and not in the common form of a compact or convention. It did not comprehend the essential clause relative to the sovereignty and independence of the United Provinces. Even in the copy of the archdukes' agreement, which was prefixed to the deed, that clause was omitted; and in contradiction to the spirit and meaning of it, the archdukes were styled the sovereigns of the Netherlands. It was subscribed by
Philip,

Philip, "I the King," (Yo el Rey); a form of subscription which he used only where his subjects were addressed. It was sealed with his small seal instead of the great one; and it was written on paper, and not on vellum, as was usual in all transactions of importance.

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THESE omissions and informalities were instantly perceived by all the deputies; but that their conduct might not appear precipitate, they appointed another meeting for the mature consideration of them; after which they unanimously resolved to reject the deed of ratification, as being neither such as the archdukes had undertaken to procure, nor affording a sufficient ground for proceeding in the intended treaty. Verreiken, to whom this resolution was communicated, laboured to persuade the states that the defects and informalities complained of must have been entirely owing to carelessness on the part of the transcriber, it being impossible to doubt that the king would have entirely rejected the agreement, if he had not meant to grant his ratification of the whole.

BUT the states remained inflexible in their purpose; for it was equally impossible, they thought, to suppose that a deed of so great importance, in the consequences of which not