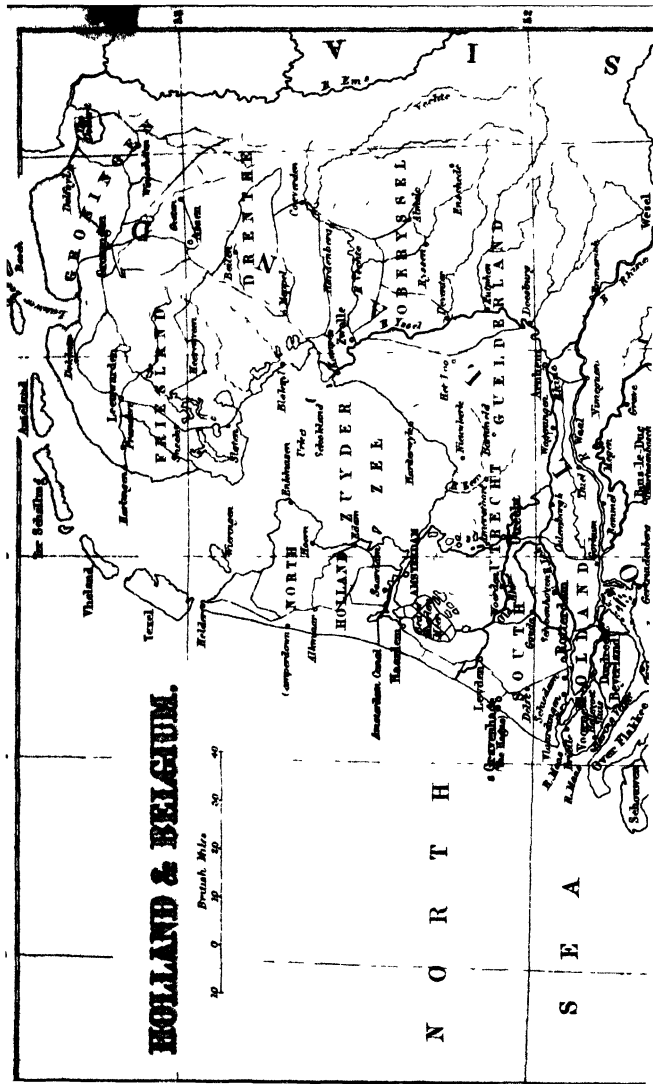
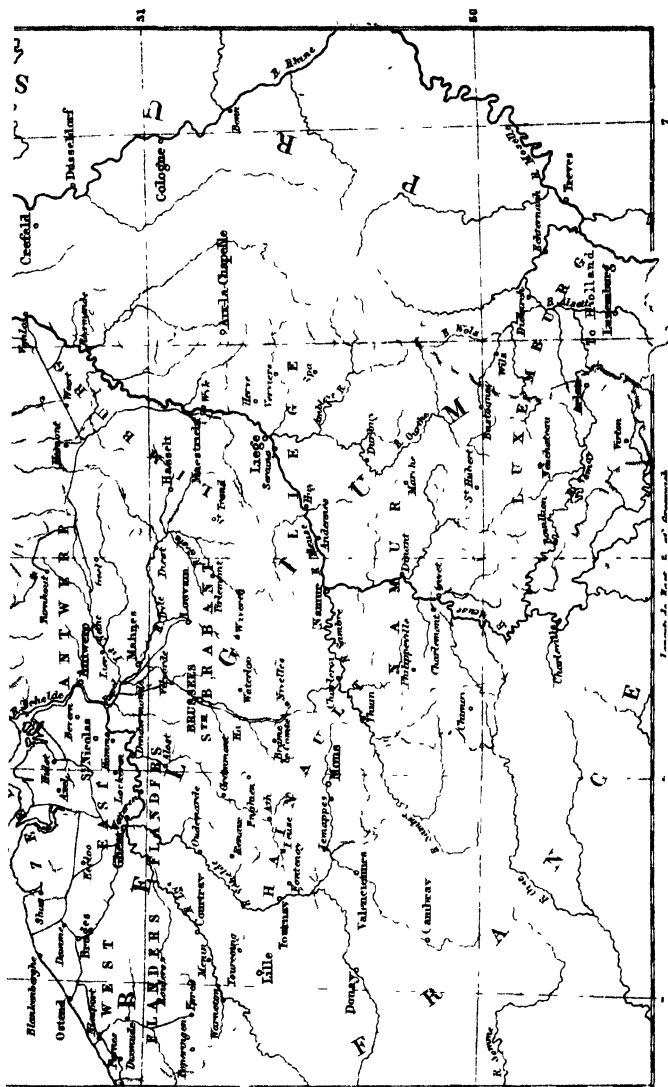


HOLLAND & BELGIUM.

10 0 10 20 30 40
British Miles





Collins' School Series.

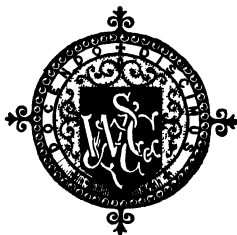
HISTORY
OF
HOLLAND AND BELGIUM.

BY

W. C PEARCE,

AUTHOR OF "ANALYSIS OF ENGLISH HISTORY" "HISTORY OF INDIA,"
"HISTORY OF SPAIN AND PORTUGAL," ETC

With Coloured Map and Illustrations.



LONDON AND GLASGOW:
WILLIAM COLLINS, SONS, & COMPANY.
1879.

PREFACE.

IN bringing this volume before the public, the Author is of opinion that slight apology need be offered for so doing beyond that which is comprised in the preface to its predecessor—namely, the *History of Spain and Portugal*.

Although the history of one's own country, it was there remarked, must necessarily engage the largest share of the student's attention, a study of the annals of those nations, so many of whose incidents are closely connected, and indeed interwoven, with those of our own, will often be found to assist in securing a surer grasp of the history of England itself.

The annals of the Netherlands—and of Holland in particular—should be specially attractive to Englishmen. Closely allied to us in race and language, the same yearning after national liberty has ever characterised this people; and thus it is that the great struggle—which forms the kernel, so to speak, of their story—in many of its features presents a counterpart to that great contest of the seventeenth century, the successful issue of which secured to Britain the inestimable blessing of political freedom.

Were this parallel not sufficient to awaken an interest in the study of this people's annals, it might be further urged that the nation whose doings we have here chronicled have at different times proved our warmest friends, our keenest rivals, and our most stubborn maritime foes, whilst, during the most eventful period of their history, their noble patriotism, patience, endurance, and self-devotion, under the most trying circumstances, secured for them the heartfelt sympathy of our freedom-loving ancestors

With these few remarks, then, the author begs to introduce his new volume to the student of history.

THE WOODLANDS,
July 1879

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER I		PAGE
Early Inhabitants,	.	9
CHAPTER II		
The Romans,	. . .	13
CHAPTER III		
The Franks,	. . .	18
CHAPTER IV.		
Development of the Nation,	. . .	22
CHAPTER V		
The House of Burgundy,	. . .	30
CHAPTER VI		
Charles the Rash,	. . .	35
CHAPTER VII		
Mary, Maximilian, Philip, Margaret,	. . .	41
CHAPTER VIII		
Charles V	. . .	49
CHAPTER IX		
Charles V. (<i>continued</i>),	. . .	57

	PAGE
CHAPTER X	
Philip II.	65
CHAPTER XI	
Eve of the Rebellion,	75
CHAPTER XII	
Early Stages of the Rebellion,	83
CHAPTER XIII	
The Rebellion (<i>continued</i>),	93
CHAPTER XIV.	
The Rebellion (<i>continued</i>),	100
CHAPTER XV	
The Rebellion (<i>continued</i>),	110
CHAPTER XVI	
The Rebellion (<i>continued</i>),	117
CHAPTER XVII	
The Rebellion (<i>continued</i>),	123
CHAPTER XVIII	
Period of the Truce,	136
CHAPTER XIX.	
Renewal of the War,	144
CHAPTER XX.	
Prince Frederick Henry—William II,	149
CHAPTER XXI	
War with England and France,	157

CONTENTS.

7

CHAPTER XXII.

	PAGE
Struggle with Louis the Fourteenth,	167

CHAPTER XXIII

European Politics,	174
----------------------------	-----

CHAPTER XXIV

Struggle with Napoleon,	183
---------------------------------	-----

CHAPTER XXV.

Struggle with Napoleon (<i>continued</i>),	189
--	-----

CHAPTER XXVI

The Belgian Revolt,	196
-----------------------------	-----

CHAPTER XXVII

The Belgian Revolt (<i>continued</i>),	203
--	-----

HISTORY OF HOLLAND AND BELGIUM.

CHAPTER I.

EARLY INHABITANTS

The Belgæ, Batavi, and Frisii—Julius Cæsar's Invasion—Character of the Belgæ—Of the Batavi—Their Training—Cæsar's Dealings with the Tribes—Various other Tribes—Celt and Teuton compared

PREVIOUS to the dawn of the Christian era, when the Roman armies, having gathered the fairest portions of southern Europe and western Asia into the embrace of the great empire of the day, were carrying their eagles westward in search of new lands and new conquests, that portion of Europe now known as the Netherlands—or, more strictly speaking, Holland and Belgium—was inhabited mainly by three principal nations of Celtic and Teutonic blood. These were—the *Belgæ*, who dwelt upon the left bank of the Rhine, and occupied a tract of country that extended southward to the Seine, and westward far into Britain, the *Batavi*, whose territory lay within the delta formed by the Rhine and Meuse, and the *Frisii*, whose dominions stretched thence northwards to the shores of the German Ocean.

To Roman ambition it is due that these tribes were rescued from the oblivion which, considering the situation and character of their country, might have been for a long time their fate. To their own indomitable courage and resolution, however, they owe it that their names have become immortalised, and their territory saved from the waters of the Atlantic. Throughout the whole of his career of conquest, the great Cæsar never encountered more stubborn foemen than the hardy dwellers of this

region—"outcast of ocean and earth." Long indeed before Cæsar himself appeared upon the stage of Rome's history, these tribes had learned the art of war with the kindred Cimbric nations who, a century before the birth of Christ, bore down with their massive armies upon the northern dominions of Rome; so that when his triumphant legions, a half century later, entered this most uninviting portion of western Europe, a task was before them which discipline and superior military knowledge certainly enabled them to perform, but only by the exercise of a most mighty effort. The Belgæ, says their conqueror, were the bravest of all the Celtic tribes; and he fortifies his testimony by quoting the fact that they were the only people who had succeeded in withstanding the onset of the Teutons and Cimbri.

Nevertheless, to the Batavii belongs the palm of heroism. According to Tacitus, they surpassed all the tribes of these parts in bravery and hardihood. "Others go to battle," says the old historian; "these go to war." This same "war" was even the great study and delight of their existence; and for the exercise of this, the great business of their lives, they were duly educated by a course of rigid self-denial, while a significant symbolism prepared them for its stern duties. The Romans ever spoke of them with the most profound respect; and, while Belgian and Frisian were forced to bend before their conquering arms, Batavian heroism was drawn upon to swell the ranks of the Roman cohorts. Batavian horsemen formed the flower of their cavalry, and were even employed as a body-guard to the Roman emperors. We hear of their heroic deeds in middle Europe, where "their wild courage terrified the Dacians, as they saw them, in complete armour, swimming across the Danube." They went far to give Cæsar the victory over his rival Pompey upon the decisive field of Pharsalia; and they later on accompanied Agricola in his expedition against Britain, and helped him to conquer our island. The Romans made no attempt to reduce these insular tribes, because they were shrewd enough to perceive that they

would reap far greater advantage by permitting them to retain their liberty ; and, while they subdued the Belgæ, and placed the far-off Frisii under tribute, they left this tribe unmolested. Thus, under Augustus, we find them spoken of as allies rather than subjects of Rome, and they were even honoured by the proud title of friends and brothers of the Roman people. Subsequently, however, they appear to have been brought under the dominion of Rome; but whether by conquest or by arrangement is uncertain.

Among the most prominent of the Belgic tribes, we hear of the Menapii, near neighbours of the Batavii, and the Eburones, who together occupied the district now forming the Dutch province of North Brabant; the Morini, inhabiting the present Belgian sea-board; the Atrebates, who peopled the fair territory of Flanders; and the Nervii, whose dominions comprised the heart of modern Belgium. Beyond the confines of the Batavian territory dwelt the Frisii or Freses, who occupied the regions beyond the Rhine and Ems. Of the whole of the tribes that peopled the Netherlands, these were the last to receive the attentions of the all-conquering Romans, and when at length they were brought beneath the imperial sway, the fetters forged for them by their conquerors were of the least galling kind. To this condition of things, the distance of their country from the capital, and its difficult character, contributed more largely perhaps than their military prowess. This same physical difficulty, too, which caused them to be among the latest of Rome's acquisitions in western Europe, enabled them early to regain their liberty, and afterwards to become themselves an aggressive and conquering people.

Thus the inhabitants of the Netherlands were comprised of Celt and Teuton, as typified by the various tribes of the Belgæ, and of the Batavi and Frisii respectively, tribes possessing much in common, but so much also that was so widely dissimilar, that, in all ages, every circumstance and every attempt to weld them into a homogeneous nation has signally failed. Both were of the same gigantic stature ; both were of fair complexion, with eyes

of azure and light hair—flaxen, however, in the one case, and fiery red in the other. So much for their physical resemblances : ethically, they were separated by a yawning gulf. Gaul and Teuton were alike brave ; but the irascibility and dash which distinguishes the progeny of the Gaul at the present day was observable in all his undertakings ; while the dogged, phlegmatic temperament of the modern Dutchman and German characterised the Teuton their ancestor of this early age. Their theology differed as it differs now ; their notions of government were widely dissimilar ; their social characteristics, perhaps, were even more at variance. The Gaul was something more than a polygamist ; the Teuton wooed but one life-partner, whom he regarded as the sharer of his labours, joys, and sorrows, and a part of his very self. Indeed, he was the repository, for the time being, of those chivalric ideas of courtesy and consideration to the weaker sex which, in after times, formed the one redeeming feature of the feudal age.

On the other hand, while the Gaul was a keeper of sheep, a tiller of the ground, and a merchant to boot, the Teuton had no notion whatever of industrial pursuits. If man was to live by the sweat of his brow, he chose that that sweat should result from the operations carried on in the stirring arena of the battle-field, despising the pursuits of peaceful industry as ignoble and debasing. Dress was despised by the Teuton ; his simple thorn-pinned tunic—the prototype of the peasant smock—contrasted markedly with the full garment and elaborate decoration of the Gaul. Such “characteristics,” says Motley,* “time has rather hardened than effaced. In the contrast and the separation lies the key to much of their history. Had Providence permitted a fusion of the two races, it is possible, from their position, and from the geographical and historical link which they would have afforded to the dominant tribes of Europe, that a world-empire might have been the result, different in many respects from any which has ever arisen.”

* *Rise of the Dutch Republic.*

CHAPTER II.

THE ROMANS.

Confederation of the Tribes against the Romans—Rout of the Tribes—Prolonged Resistance of the Nervii—Their Defeat—Alliances with the Romans—Value of these Alliances to the Romans—Roman Undertakings—Decline of Roman Power—Claudius Civilis—His Services in behalf of the Romans—Charged with Conspiracy—Rebels—Receives Assistance from the Germans and other Tribes—Their Desertion of him—Proposed Meeting with Cerealis

THE *De Bello Gallico* of Cæsar contains an account of the earliest known exploits of this people. In recording the progress of their subjugation, the historian—although he gives as his reason for molesting them a general confederation of the various clans against the arms of the Romans—omits to state the cause of these inimical proceedings. We must, therefore, be allowed to conjecture that the movement had its origin in the warlike propensities of the race rather than in apprehension lest their territory should share the fate of their neighbours, and become absorbed in the mighty dominion of the over-reaching Romans. The earliest stages of the struggle reveal the universality of the league. The Rhemi are first forcibly detached from the confederation, the Gallic besiegers of Bibrax beaten off, and, after a splendid fight, the main body of the Belgic clans put to rout. The SueSSIONES submit, the BELLORACI follow their example, and the Roman commander advances with his all-conquering legions.

The formidable Nervii await him in a strong position behind the Sambré, resolved that if he pass beyond their confines it shall be over their dead bodies. A desperate struggle—the most desperate of the campaign—ensues. The contest is long, severe, and often renewed. At one time the Nervii enter the Roman camp; at another, they press forward as if to certain victory: but the Roman

legion is invincible. The great general himself, as if in desperation, throws himself into the thickest of the conflict, and fights as a common soldier. A determined hand to hand conflict follows, in which quarter is neither given nor expected. The desperate valour of the brave Nervii at length succumbs to the superior discipline and determination of the Roman legionaries. The Nervii, true to their resolve, will neither turn nor surrender; and when, at length, the fight does end, it is only from sheer exhaustion.

The army of the Nervii was literally annihilated. Sixty thousand of their dead lay heaped upon the battle-field; and, true to their resolve, it was only over the mangled corpses of their enemy that the conquerors were permitted to enter the Nervian territory, a miserable remnant of five hundred only escaping the slaughter of that terrible day. The subsequent defeat of the Aduatuci, and their wholesale delivery into bondage, and of the Menapii and the Morini, complete the overthrow of their devoted tribes. Having also received the submission of many Teutonic nations, whose territories lay upon the confines of the Belgæ, the Roman banners moved in grand though mournful defiance over the entire Belgic territory.

Flushed with his great success, Cæsar paused at the bank of the Rhine, and returned to Italy. Thus the Batavi escaped the fate of their neighbours the Belgæ; but, with creditable wisdom, they hastened to join issue with the many tribes who, from a sense of danger, and for the purpose of self-protection, had despatched envoys to Rome to seek peace and alliance with so terrible an aggressor. It is thus we find the Batavi, for some centuries to come, active allies of the Romans; and the *Insula Batavorum*, as the country was termed, a prolific recruiting-ground for their armies. Under these conditions, alone, they escaped the burdens of customary tribute, which, however, was compensated by the offering of their best blood. Roman handiwork was brought into play here as elsewhere; a canal was cut, in the reign

of Tiberius, connecting the Rhine with the ancient Flevo, and so with the German Ocean. To this they gave the name of Fossa Drusiana, in honour of Drusus the brother of the emperor, under whose superintendence the undertaking was effected. They likewise constructed two roads which existed even in the times of Trajan and Hadrian. One of these crossed the country from Lugdunum (Leyden) to the Mosa, and thence, turning eastward, followed the course of this river and the Vahalís to Noviomagus (Nimeguen). Another, starting from the same point, ran eastward to Trajectum (Utrecht), and thence became identical with the northern Rhine. These works afford ample testimony to the fact that the hold of the Romans over this portion of the Low Countries was by that time complete, and that the brotherhood which the nations so proudly claimed was merely nominal.

Their presence, however, in the Roman armies was highly valued by their imperial leaders. The part they took in Roman conquest has already been hinted at, and if any further evidence be needed respecting their importance, it exists in the fact that it was to these that Nero and Vitellius mainly owed their possession of the imperial crown, and further, when their services were no longer needed, they were removed by both emperors to far-off portions of the empire as dangerous and dreaded auxiliaries. The Frisii proved steadfast allies of the Romans, but undesirable subjects—rising in rebellion at the earliest exhibition of tyranny, massacring their conquerors, driving them from their territories, and razing their many fortresses to the ground.

To the Netherlands, as to many other lands over which their eagles flew, the Romans brought the belongings of peace as well as of war. As we have seen, they taught these amphibious nations the art of road-making and canal-cutting, but best of all, that which, by reason of the necessities of the situation, seems ever since to have clung to them, the way to battle with their great assailant the ocean—to resist his encroachments, to undo the mischief of ages by efficient drainage, and to recover

from his bed some of the finest and most fertile lands of the continent.

The Romans continued to keep possession of this corner of Europe till the barbaric hordes bore down upon the empire with that irresistible might which, after having sapped its foundations, finally shattered the fabric to fragments. From amid the gloom that enshrouds the century of imperial rule, one event stands out in undying brilliancy—namely, the struggle of the tribes under Civilius. Claudius Civilius was a Batavian by blood, of noble birth, and a man of war from his youth. Steadfastly and well, amid the squadrons of his countrymen, he had served the emperor for a quarter of a century upon many a battle-field both far off and near, but, with that ingratitude which so largely characterised the rulers of this mighty empire, Civilius, in due time, had to endure the fate of so many of those who had risked life and limb in imperial service, being suddenly arrested upon a charge of conspiracy, carried in chains to Rome, and with his brother, condemned to a traitor's death. Civilius escaped the hands of the executioner; but, with a burning hatred, he turned his back upon the city, and sought the land of his fathers. Henceforth he was to be numbered among the enemies of the empire, with life and energies devoted to the patriotic task of redeeming his country from the Roman yoke. His purpose, the offspring of a revengeful soul, was probably strengthened by the circumstances of the times. He was no barbarian, but an educated Roman citizen; and he could not therefore have failed to note how that the imperial purple was open to the successful soldier. Moreover, he must have been alive to the influence wielded by the Batavian legions, seeing that by their instrumentality two candidates for the coveted honour had brought their aims to a successful issue. If therefore, he might have argued, they were so great a factor in the military calculation, why should not their valour be employed for the emancipation of their own nation?

In his new undertaking, Civilius found an ally in the superstitions of his countrymen, over whose minds a

certain witch at this time exercised a powerful influence. To his overtures his countrymen lent a willing ear, and a general confederation of the northern tribes was accordingly formed. The weird woman of the Rhenish forest predicted success, and many of the German tribes not in actual warfare with Rome, not only wished him success, but freely poured their offerings into the Batavian treasury. The struggle, which, in so many of its features, resembles the great contest of the sixteenth century, was long and often doubtful, but the name of Rome was yet a power and a terror. Many of the tribes lost heart, deserted the cause, and secretly leagued with the dread enemy Vespasian, flushed with recent victory, was now at the head of the Roman armies, with all the resources of the empire at his command. Civilus was so repeatedly and severely worsted that the ancient confidence of the tribes who had hitherto stood by him waned, and he was left alone to face the might of Rome. Thus circumstanced, he was at length led to treat with the imperial commander Cerealis. The Roman emperor was perhaps more anxious for a termination of hostilities than Civilus himself, who, plunged in the abyss of despair, through the wholesale desertion of his allies, cared little for what the world offered, since his exertions in behalf of Netherlandish independence had miscarried. Moreover, Vespasian could not be supposed to forget him, the hardy, skilful soldier, the hero of a hundred fights, and his companion and friend upon many a hard-contested field; and as his soldierly qualities had served Rome in days gone by, so his good sword, secured by conciliatory dealings, might be drawn again in her behalf. A conference was appointed. It was to take place upon the bridge that then spanned the Nabalia, as the canal was termed which the Romans had constructed to connect the Rhine with the Flevo. This bridge was now cut in twain, so that the waters flowed between the Roman commander and the rebel patriot. At this point the narrative abruptly ends, and the world perplexingly hears no more of this redoubtable chieftain.

CHAPTER III.

THE FRANKS.

Batavian Service—The Frisii cast off the Roman Yoke—The Salian Franks—Defeated by the German Tribes—They migrate southward into Gaul—Clovis—Clotaire—Dagobert—Pepin—Charles Martel—Establishment of the Christian Religion—Christian Missionaries—Heroism of the Frisii—Its Effects.

THE exertions of Civilis in the field were therefore powerless to disturb the old order of things, and we may with certainty suppose that his efforts in the arena of diplomacy equally miscarried, for the Netherlandish provinces are numbered among the dominion of Rome until the epoch of those migrations which destroyed the Roman empire itself, and wrought such mighty ethnological changes in Europe. Batavian blood continued to flow in the imperial cause, and struck down, at the great fight of Strasburg, the enemies of Julian as it had done the foes of Nero and Vitellius. From this time, however, the Batavian name is lost to history. Exhausted by the continuous drain upon their valued manhood, the Batavians at length became a scanty tribe, gradually merging in the races that by-and-by peopled this ancient island. The Gallic tribes survived, but, no longer a Netherland nation, they formed a portion of that territory to which the name of Gallia, or Gaul, was given. The Frisii, we repeat, early cast off the yoke of their conquerors, and rose as a free and aggressive people, pushing their frontier beyond the Rhine, and governing themselves with customs of their own, whose principles they had learned from their Roman masters. "Of all the provinces of the Netherlands," says Schiller, "Friesland, especially, had suffered the least from the corruptions of strange tribes and

foreign customs, and for centuries retained traces of its national spirit and manners, which have not, even at the present day, entirely disappeared " *

But the annals of these times of triumphant and encroaching barbarism are mysterious and obscure. The stream of immigration setting forth from Asia passed through Europe westward till it encountered the barrier of the ocean, and thus the maritime Netherlands felt its force in a remarkable manner. Movements as mighty as these might be expected to modify, and even radically alter, the distribution of the tribes. Nevertheless, the old Netherlandish races still preponderate. The Teutonic element outnumbers the Celts, who gradually fall back and settle in the south; and the old Batavian spirit leavens the mass of Frisian character. The Frisians, with their Saxon kindred, still occupy the northern portion, though with enlarged frontiers extending northward to the Elbe and southward to the Scheldt.

The middle of the third century witnessed the arrival of the Salian Franks, which race, with the assistance of the Menapian Carausius, now settled in the old Batavian island. By-and-by, these new-comers were defeated and thrust out by the Saxon tribes who at this time fringed the shores of the German Ocean. The Franks, dislodged from Batavian territory, sought solace in seizing upon the lands of their more southern neighbours. This dislodgment of the Franks by the Saxons started the former upon a career of conquest which, as it brought about a permanent and important change, is one of the most remarkable in the annals of Europe. Driven southward by the vigorous onsets of the Saxons, horde after horde of this people continued for a century and a half to alight upon the fair soil of Gaul. The absorbing process closely resembled that which the tribes of the conquering race maintained later on in Britain. The whole land was gradually overspread, and its inhabitants driven into the hill-country of the west. This invasion gave to the land

* *Revolt of the Netherlands.*

a new population and new institutions, and to its history a new departure.

Towards the end of the fifth century, Clovis had succeeded in removing the last vestiges of Roman dominion from Gaul, and now whatever of disgrace attended the expulsion of three centuries earlier was retrieved. The victorious arms of the Salians, careering northwards, again did battle with their ancient Saxon foemen, whose various families had by this time united under the name of the Frisii. Crossing the Rhine, Clotaire first fell upon the Saxons of Hanover and Westphalia, and by having recourse to wholesale slaughter, extinguished the very name of Saxon in these parts. Clotaire's son, Dagobert, pushed his conquests as far west as Utrecht, where he founded a Christian church. By degrees the Frankish or Merovignian sway was established. The Frisii generally made a gallant struggle. They were, it is true, defeated in battle by Pepin d'Heristal, but the overthrow of so famous a captain as Charles Martel in the forests of the Ardennes, and the recovery of Utrecht, testify to the gallantry of these Frisian warriors.

These struggles of the Frisii were, however, shortly to terminate. The rule of the inert Merovignians, as this dynasty was termed, had ceased, and the work so vigorously begun by Pepin was as vigorously upheld by Charles Martel. The victories of this renowned warrior paved the way for the establishment of Christianity in the Netherlands. The tenets of the new faith had indeed followed the banners of the Salian Franks in their career of conquest. The Merovignians would appear to have concerned themselves more respecting the triumph of their religion than the security of their sway, and, as has been observed, a Christian church was established at Utrecht by Dagobert. Missionaries came over from Britain to assist in the work; the monk Wilfrid, the Saxon Willibrod, who founded a church in North Holland, and finally, Boniface, who became a martyr to the pious cause. Radbod, the redoubtable, was, by an unguarded reply of a bishop, lost to the Christian cause, but his son and

successor, Poppo, though refusing the rite of baptism, was not inimical to the introduction of its truths into his dominions. Finally, when the pagan Witikind was overcome and converted, the thorough dominion of the Franks and that of Christianity were alike established.

Under Charlemagne, Friesland, with the other provinces of the Netherlands, formed a portion of the great German empire, which embraced besides within its limits the west of Germany, France, and Lombardy; and thus once more the Netherlands were united under an imperial sway. As the Friesii were the last to submit to the conquerors' yoke, so they were the people who gave the conquerors the greatest amount of trouble. Often in rebellion, they were, it is true, as often defeated, but they taught their conquerors to respect their prowess, and succeeded in wringing from them a recognition of their ancient rights and privileges such as conquerors of the Frankish type were not in the habit of conceding. They remained, in many respects, as their name implies, a free people, and hence the feudal system—that offspring of the Franks—while it struck root in neighbouring provinces, was never even planted upon Frisian soil.

CHAPTER IV.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE NATION

Physical Changes in the Netherlands—Condition of the Netherlands—The Feudal System—Charlemagne's Successors—Disintegration of his Empire—Its Atoms—Ravages of the Northmen—Baldwin Brasdefer—The Northmen gradually driven off—Change in the Character of Government—In the Condition of the People—The Crusades—Progress of Liberty—Development of Industry—The Guilds—The Settling Process

THE flood of emigration which had served to submerge the empire of the Caesars, besides introducing new races, had considerably changed the physical aspect of the country. The Netherlands were no longer a huge quagmire, as the encroachments of the ocean for ages had left it—shut out, too, from civilization by a mighty forest. The industry of its people had given bounds to the channels of its streams, and by the construction of huge walls or dykes, had bid defiance to the encroachments of the ocean. The belt of woodland which had once cut the land off from the rest of Europe, had been broken through, and many a flourishing town now stood upon the site of former desolation.

The character of its people had changed with that of the country. The spirit of military hardihood, which heretofore had attracted the notice of Roman emperors, existed no longer, or lingered only among the Frisian inhabitants of the North Sea coast. All but they were subject to the burdens of feudalism in its most unbearable form. As yet there was no hereditary nobility. The nobles, both lay and ecclesiastical, were rather court-officers than landed proprietors as were the Warrenes, the Bohuns, and the Bigods of feudal England. They owned

the land, indeed, but their tenancy was regarded less in the light of a possession than as a remuneration for court service. Many of the nobles, remote from the central power, had done their best to make their feudal privileges a reality; and it was only by dint of unflagging exertion that the great western emperor was able to maintain his authority unquestioned. For the present, however, the breath of liberty animated not this land of future free and representative institutions.

What, however, the system denied to the Netherlands was virtually acquired by the natural configuration of the country, and the habits which it generated. A land liable to the encroachments of a vast ocean, and to sudden inundations from many streams, could only be insured against the dangers and inconveniences which these visitations suggest, by a constant vigilance and a thorough unity of action and purpose. By such agencies a universal concert was organised, which was often found to compensate for that balancing power which the feudal barons were elsewhere wont to apply to the sovereign authority. This same principle of co-operation it was that initiated those remarkable institutions which, under the name of "gilden" or guilds, were formed throughout the whole length and breadth of the land, and play, in after times, so important a part in the country's history.

The mighty edifice which Charlemagne's genius had served to raise and so hardly to maintain, collapsed as soon as the hand of the architect was removed from earth. His successors, whose shallow genius is suggested by such drivelling cognomens as "the bald," "the fat," "the simple," "the stammerer," were impotent to preserve the empire to the western Franks; and, in the reign of Charles the Simple, Lotharingia, as the Netherlands, with Friesland, were called, passed into the hands of Henry, king of the East Frisians (925). While, however, these degenerate representatives of a vigorous stock failed to hold together the atoms of a temporal empire, they largely assisted to strengthen the edifice of spiritual domination,

and thus the provinces swayed by ecclesiastical rulers became the most powerful of all the semi-independent, and now hereditary, states which arose upon the shattered fragments of Charlemagne's great empire. The Bishoprics of Utrecht, largely endowed by the lavish donations of the Carolingians, rich in the possession of pious usurpations, and commanding the unswerving fealty of numerous and superstitious subjects, became an arbitrary and encroaching power. Liege and Tournay followed in the wake of Utrecht. Among what we may term the secular states were the duchy of Lotharinga or Lorraine, divided into upper and lower, the county of Flanders, lying between the Scheldt and Somme, which was boldly snatched, together with his daughter Judith (864), from Charles the Bald, by Baldwin Brasdefer, and Holland, the gift of Charles the Simple to Count Dirk (922), the nucleus of the present kingdom bearing the same name.

At this period of imperial disintegration, then, arose the independent sovereignties which were, in course of time, to form the territory known as the Netherlands, subsequently divided into the present countries of Holland and Belgium—countries destined to play a conspicuous part indeed in the history of the middle ages of Europe—Namur, Hainault, Limburg, Luxemburg, Gueldres, Antwerp, Mechlin; while Friesland, over which territory the Counts of Flanders and the Bishops of Utrecht long exercised divided sway, was resolved in time into the various provinces that formed the United States of Holland.

During the process of settlement, the country, in common with the rest of the territory upon the western seaboard of Europe at that period, was a prey to the ravages of the Northmen. The shores of Gueldres, for obvious reasons, were the first to suffer from their piratical visits. By degrees the whole coast was visited by their swarming multitudes, and the interior of the country at length was made to feel the sad consequences of the new barbarian invasions. Flanders, remote from the centre of their operations, and defended by the arm

of the redoubtable Baldwin Brasdefer, managed for a time to check their inroads, but in due time this province shared the fate of the rest, the entire country being overrun by their unsparing bands. Powerless to resist their continuous inroads, an agreement was finally (882) entered into with their chieftain Godfrey, whereby they consented to withdraw into Friesland, and thither they hastened to lord it in this new region even as they had done in the more southern province. Shortly after, Charles the Fat procured the assassination of this chieftain. The whole band was then immediately fallen upon by the Frisians, who finally succeeded in clearing the land of their rapacious masters. From this time forward, the attacks of the Northmen became more desultory, and by the end of the tenth century they had ceased to trouble.

The five centuries that followed the establishment of Dirk's dominion form, in many respects, the most important portion of its annals, not so much from the presence of those stirring incidents which go so far to make up a history, as from the process of national development which it unfolds. The collapse which followed upon the death of Charlemagne furnished this country with a new starting-point for its history. The free general assembly and the elective monarchy, peculiar to the old German tribes, had disappeared, and in their place feudalism in its least tolerable form was rampant. The disjointed character of the empire necessitated the presence of a strong hand to hold together its various atoms, and to control their numerous delegates; and when the place of a Charlemagne was assumed by a degenerate progeny, the incoherent mass parted asunder. The imperial representatives became themselves little emperors, lording it in their limited domains with more than the despotism characteristic of their former lieges. The functionaries of the Church joined in the movement of sedition, and the crosier thus became no less a symbol of temporal than of spiritual authority. Hereditary succession, notwithstanding the special exertions of the emperors to prevent this, the most formidable barrier to imperial

authority, took the place of delegated power. Attendant circumstances were well calculated to bring this about. The nature of the duties to which these usurpers had been appointed had given them a training in the art of despotic rule, and had likewise furnished them with the full coffers so necessary to the maintenance of their new position.

The subdivision of power which this movement occasioned was productive of greater tyranny. The props of feudalism were strengthened, and the spirit of individual liberty entirely subverted. From degradation to degradation the people, under the sway of their late governors, now their absolute masters, descended, and we behold them as "dumb driven cattle," bartering their liberty for the protection a castle-wall afforded them. "Paupers sold themselves that they might escape starvation; the timid sold themselves that they might escape violence." * And thus feudalism, as established in the Low Countries, had at length become almost identical with that which obtained in the worst days of Norman England.

The process had been helped forward materially by the disturbed condition of the land consequent upon the inroads of the Normans, which, here as elsewhere, had struck down civilization, and caused it to lie prostrate and inanimate for a couple of centuries. Whole districts were depopulated, and towns once flourishing were either reduced to a heap of ruins or swept entirely away. But such a condition of things was not likely long to prevail. The mighty instinct of liberty had not altogether died out of the breast of the Teutonic churl. With the inland peoples it was dormant merely, with the Frisians it had never yet lost strength, for the liberty of the "free Frisians" had never been forfeited, except through volition. By this process, however, slavery had been established even here to an appreciable extent.

While thus the Teutonic folk lay in the degradation of the most abject serfdom, the progress of circumstances beyond the confines of their nation was preparing a means

* Motley, *Rise of the Dutch Republic*.

whence they might ascend from the slough of bondage to the solid ground of liberty. The contest between Cross and Crescent caused a continuous drain upon the manhood of Europe. The feudal barons of the Netherlands early caught the spirit of the age; and, ambitious to shine in the glorious duel of the east, their greatest care was naturally to lead thither an imposing array. To secure this, promises of personal liberty were held out as a reward for this extra military service, and thus multitudes of neck-bound serfs became free men. The lords by this means secured a cheap service; for the carnage of the battle-field too often provided a manumission which rendered that by the lords supererogatory.

Nevertheless, the cause of liberty progressed, and free labour gradually took the place of forced servitude in the land. Moreover, the great men themselves had learned many more things in this contact with the civilization that gathered upon the great theatre of religious strife than they had ever before dreamt of, and came back with views greatly modified by the sheer circumstances of a refining influence, and by a timely recognition of their true advantages—that is to say, such as returned at all, for in this tremendous conflict noble suffered equally with churl. Thus it was that, whether through the enfeebling consequence of extensive foreign contests, or the wisdom begotten of the circumstances surrounding them, the cause of freedom materially gained ground, and with it came renewed civilization and opulence.

It was in such times, and by such means, that the towns began to rise into importance. The wretched hovels of the serfs, who once had clustered for mere shelter beneath the battlements of their lieges' castles, gave place to well-built colonies, inhabited by a better, a more industrious and ingenious class, so that now the stroke of the smith's hammer commingled with the rattle of the weaver's loom, and all the other well-known sounds of industrial life. Then arose those times of thriving industry which, throughout the course of the middle ages, made these Low Countries the mart and factory of Europe,

enriched the people with unmatched wealth, and thereby furnished them with an argument more powerful than the sword. The entire land seemed to have been seized with a mania for industrial and commercial enterprise. The maritime population, with the daring of the race, crossed a treacherous ocean, and brought to the marts of Dort or Bruges the precious metal for the craftsman, or the fleecy supplies from Britain and Spain for the Flemish weaver. By degrees the importance of the artisan became duly recognised. The humble populations of these new colonies were petted and encouraged; for their superiors, recognising the sterling value of their brain and sinew, cherished the growth of the new power. The nobles were numbered among the promoters of trade. The various centres of industry became first communities, and these afterwards began to divide themselves into guilds, whose charters and privileges, bought with the all-powerful gold begotten of their toil, formed a sacred and valued thing for all times.

Another circumstance brought power and influence to these newly-resuscitated communities. The attacks and depredations of the Normans, though carried on for the space of a century and a half, while it made such havoc of the budding civilization of the Netherlands, failed sensibly to disturb the political distribution of the land. The emperors of Germany still remained suzerains of the entire country—Flanders, which was attached, in great part, to the dominions of the King of France, alone excepted. For administrative purposes, the territory which, from Charlemagne's son, Lothaire, took the name of Lotharingia, or Lower Lorraine, was governed vicariously by subject nobles. This lieutenancy became a matter of contention between the rulers of the provinces; and thus we hear of Lambert of Louvain and Reginald of Hainault as early aspirants to the dignity. By their successes, these chieftains secured an imperfect independence of the imperial authority.

Such wars against the chief of the empire, and the less imposing broils between the nobles themselves—which,

during what may be termed the settling process, and for centuries later indeed, were so frequent and furious—caused the wealth of the towns to become an important factor in the calculations of the combatants. Their gold furnished means of supply, their collective bravery their mainstay. Charter, privilege, and concession were all the lord had to bestow in exchange for these valuables, but they were found to be more precious than the fine gold given in exchange for them. And thus, so early as the eleventh and twelfth centuries, we find here a mixed form of government—a limited monarchy—a republic, indeed, or rather an aggregate of republics in all but the name

The settling process above referred to may be said to have taken place in the eleventh century, and this, when completed, left the provinces of the empire divided among the various dukes, marquises, counts, and lords, whose names are so familiar to the readers of European history. To trace the progress and chronicle the incidents of these principalities during the many centuries of their independent and antagonistic sway would be unnecessary, if not impossible. It would offer the usual picture of a series of petty quarrels and obstinate fights, might trampling down right, the despotism of the ruler curbed by the stubborn will and hard-headed politics of the burgher, the decline of the lordship and the principality, and the rise of the township; until imperial rule once more asserts itself, and both are enveloped in one common thralldom.

CHAPTER V.

THE HOUSE OF BURGUNDY.

Importance of the Towns—Bruges—Development of Popular Strength—Possessions of the House of Burgundy—Philip the Bold—Character of his Government—John the Fearless—His Schemes—The House of Bavaria—John of Brabant and Jacqueline—Trials of Jacqueline—Philip the Good—Extension of his Dominions—His Vigorous Government—His Severity—His Popularity.

THE towns of the Netherlands then had become a power, and henceforward they must be regarded as a factor in its concerns of no inconsiderable importance. The general process by which they attained to such a position has been here hinted at rather than traced. Their earlier strength was pitted against the petty feudal lords, and as their power and means developed, they became bold enough to attack the counts and lords, and that too with success; for the same innate capacity which had begotten a habit for industrial and commercial association had likewise induced the practice of co-operation and confederation in the field.

Thus, in the middle of the thirteenth century, the nobility of Holland, and the sovereign-bishop of Utrecht, were driven from their inheritance, and free government was proclaimed by the peasantry and burghers. A little later, a similar state of things obtained in Mechlin and Louvain, while the Flemings eschewed the lordship of their own count, and by this act added the richest and most influential of the Netherlandish provinces to the dominions of the French king, Philip the Fair. The power and military prowess of the merchant city of Bruges asserted itself in a most unmistakable manner soon after, when, at the fight of Courtrai, the chivalry of

France was shattered upon the pikes of its stubborn infantry. Such, indeed, was the power of these newly-awakened communities, that it had become a dangerous thing for the rulers to ignore them and their ideas and aspirations. Indeed, the wealthy cities had elbowed their way to the very front, and, not content with being governed by laws which they had been permitted to sanction, they insisted upon participating in their administration. The deputies of the Flemish towns gained a seat beside the nobles in the provincial assemblies, the cities of Holland acquired a similar right, and so it was that the liberties of the provinces—Holland, Friesland, Flanders, and Brabant especially—became a reality, and those little communities, which usually owned a duke, a count, or a bishop for their sovereign, constituted the epitome of a great and remarkable commonwealth which itself was the outcome of many and many a long year of civil warfare.

And thus matters progressed until the larger provinces of the country had, either by marriage, purchase, legacy, or conquest, become merged in the dominions of the house of Burgundy. The process—at first a gradual one—was greatly accelerated towards the end of the fourteenth century. For many a year the Dirks and the Florences of Holland maintained an equal struggle with the bishops of Utrecht. Flanders and Brabant next became considerable powers, and vied with the older principalities—the former to exercise in time a sway unrivalled by any of them, the latter to absorb the hereditary dominions of the Dirks, and make of Holland, West Zealand, and Hainault a little empire. Flanders, through the failure of heirs direct, fell into the possession of Philip the Bold of Burgundy in 1384, and the following year, Brabant, which provokingly lay between the two great limbs of this newly-amalgamated principality, fell to the lot of his consort; thus this doubly-valued territory likewise becomes a portion of the same realm.

The Duke of Burgundy had now—having made peace with the rebellious city of Ghent—become, in effect,

suzerain of the Netherlands. The boldness of the new sovereign was equalled by his prudence; for the acquisition of power, in his case, happily failed in operating, as it too often does, in turning the brain of its possessor. He was, on the contrary, left with sufficient judgment to perceive the identity existing between his own and his new subjects' interests; hence the free institutions of his people were duly respected. Monarch and subject, therefore, laboured together harmoniously—the result being an extension of national privileges, and consequent increase in the commercial activity of the nation. Death left him a bankrupt, no doubt, for his widow formally renounced her rights, because they were burdened by such heavy liabilities; but the country shared not his insolvency—continuing to prosper, and to accumulate that wealth which subsequent sovereigns freely drew upon for support in the many wars of ambition and feud in which they were wont to embark.

To Philip the Bold succeeded John the Fearless, his son (1404). John's reign was an exceedingly restless one; but the incidents of it are more closely associated with the annals of France than with those of the Netherlands. The same immoderate ambition and vanity that had induced this monarch to take a command against the veteran Bajazet, urged him likewise to strive with the Duke of Orleans for the regency of France during the insanity of its king, Charles VI., and with still less of ultimate success. The upshot of the former trial of strength was capture; of the second, assassination.

In this scheme of the Burgundian sovereign his Netherlandish subjects played no material part. They supplied him, indeed, with the sinews of war in the twofold shape of men and money, otherwise, they observed a strict neutrality and thus a most curious spectacle was exhibited—the merchants of the enemy's country trading freely with the Burgundian ports, while their chiefs were engaged in warlike operations. This circumstance throws a powerful light upon the relations existing between monarch and subject in the newly-ordered Nether-

landish provinces. With Brabant the case was somewhat different. This province was under the dominion of Philip's brother, Anthony; though, even here, his authority was sufficient only to command the services of the nobility. The rank and file, as it were, took no part in his warlike enterprise; and when, in 1415, he shared the fate of so many of his brother monarchs upon the fatal field of Agincourt, the people, in derisive defiance of the claims of the German emperor, invested themselves with the regency during the minority of his heir.

The principles of constitutional liberty and legal equality were, however, soon to be subverted. The Dirks and Florences of Holland had died out. Their place had been taken by the Avennes of Hainault, and these were, in turn, superseded by the house of Bavaria. This powerful dynasty, which ruled over Holland, Zealand, and Hainault, was closely related by marriage to the still more powerful house of Burgundy, and, however inimical their interests might be generally, they failed not to make common cause, whenever a union was necessary, in battling with the popular force. Democracy, too, in Holland and Zealand had lost ground through the unseemly joustings of the Hooks and the Kabbeljaws—the red caps and the grey—which divided “noble against noble, city against city, father against son, for some hundred and fifty years, without foundation upon any abstract or intelligible principle.”*

In John, Duke of Brabant, who succeeded his father, through his marriage with Jacqueline, heiress of William the Fourth of Holland and Hainault, the houses of Bavaria and Brabant were united; and henceforth—possessed, so to speak, of the very heart of the Netherlands—this branch of the Burgundian line became a great power. The historic interest of this period hangs upon the trials and vicissitudes of this luckless princess, “the most lovely, intrepid, and talented woman of her times;” “the favourite heroine of ballads and dramas to Netherlanders—endowed with the palpable form and perpetual

* Motley, *Rise of the Dutch Republic*.

existence of the Iphigenias, Mary Stuarts, Joans of Arc, or other consecrated individualities."* To trace with anything like minuteness the vicissitudes of Jacqueline's career would require the space of a volume. Here we can only say that, driven into exile by the fierce hatred and petty persecution of her mean and unnatural husband, she found a refuge with that embodiment of chivalric honour, Henry the Fifth of England. Here even, although beneath the shelter of the puissant arm of England's great king and captain, she was not safe from the tyranny of her cowardly husband, and she could not avert the plottings to which a covetous eye towards her goodly heritage gave rise.

The assassination of John the Fearless at the bridge of Montereau had constituted Philip the Good, Duke of Burgundy. This monarch, actuated by motives of future aggrandisement, abandoned his present object—namely, revenge for the murder of his sire—and began to scheme, and to throw into the balance of the enemies of Jacqueline the weight of his might and influence. To achieve his purpose, he cast off old alliances and formed new ones, and when it suited his purpose, he repudiated these to league with others—even his most bitter enemies. In conjunction with John of Brabant, he invaded Hainault, defeated the Duke of Gloucester, who had undertaken its defence in Jacqueline's interest, and seized upon her remaining territory of Holland and Zeeland. Her staunch supporters, the Hooks, were, after a gallant struggle, worsted by Philip and the Kabbeljaws. Gloucester, in despair, abandoned the unhappy princess' cause, and, without a shadow of hope, this romantic lady, after a struggle of thirteen years with her own unnatural kith and kin, which left her friendless, exhausted, and heart-broken, gave up the unequal contest, became the wife of a simple forester of Zeeland, and sought, in the privacy of a humble life, the repose a crown had denied her. Her death, in 1436, removed all apprehensions concerning the security of his ill-gotten territories.

* Motley, *Rise of the Dutch Republic*.

Fortune had previously favoured Philip in the death of his namesake, the Count of Brabant ; for, by this event, he came—rightly or wrongly—into possession of his extensive dominions ; while the Treaty of Arras, which he concluded with the Dauphin, further increased the boundaries of his territories ; so that they now extended, with certain breaks, from the Zuyder Zee and the mouth of the Rhine southward through the finest portions of France. The Burgundian possessions belonged to him by right, as did also the counties of Flanders and Artois. The county of Namur and, later on, the duchy of Luxemburg, became his by purchase, while the duchy of Brabant, with the annexed provinces of Limburg, Antwerp, and Mechlin, were secured by usurpation. These acquisitions, together with the estates of the despoiled Jacqueline, carried his realms northward to the ocean.

Powerful as any of the princes of Europe, and ambitious beyond them all, Philip was not the kind of ruler to allow himself to be a mere puppet—his actions fettered by what his new subjects had been pleased to call popular rights, but which he was disposed to regard as a mere arrangement that he had had no hand in making. It is true, he had promised to respect these ancient liberties, but when did the most solemn engagements ever stand in the way of a ruler bent on personal aggrandisement ! His very earliest step was a formal repudiation of the oaths he had sworn, and the pledges he had solemnly given when as yet he was mere guardian of the national interests during the nominal sovereignty of Jacqueline.

Philip thus inaugurated a new era in Netherlandish history—an era of despotic supremacy, such as obtained in England under the sway of the Tudor dynasty ; and, during the whole period which elapses between his accession and the rise of the republic, the free institutions, the establishment of which had cost the stout burghers so much, were, excepting at rare intervals, trampled under foot, as had been the hereditary rights of the last scion

of the house of Bavaria, by him whom history, forsooth, has honoured with the epithet "good."

The means he took to secure these ends are noteworthy as a marvel of subtilty. Republican principles under the guardianship of the two great cities—Bruges and Ghent—were, to all appearance, safe from the assaults of his arms; and seeing that he could not hope in fair fight to overthrow the liberties of Flanders, he proceeded to foster the petty jealousies and hates which unfortunately divided these great strongholds of popular supremacy. In this way he extricated himself from the difficulties in which an attack on Bruges had involved him. The sturdy citizens of this Flemish stronghold had made short work with his followers, whom they had the temerity to massacre before his eyes. Animated solely with the spirit of antagonism, the citizens of Ghent came to his rescue. This policy assisted to preserve the keenness of a sword-edge, which was by-and-by to fall upon themselves with merciless fury. Thus, in the accession of the Burgundian dynasty, the progress of liberty had received a serious check, for the ancient privileges were either disregarded altogether by the new monarch, or so manipulated as best to secure the success of his own schemes.

The innate shrewdness of Philip was sufficient to warn him that, to utterly destroy the institutions of the country would have the effect of thoroughly disorganising society, and thus of checking the streams of wealth whose employment had so materially aided his operations. While, therefore, he interfered to destroy or modify such institutions as stood in the way of his plans, he was careful to introduce others. These, though they exhibited a semblance of freedom, possessed none of its spirit. This same shrewdness taught him, too, that his own power depended largely upon the prosperity of his people. Hence, while he heavily taxed his subjects, and took severe measures to secure whatever supplies he from time to time needed, he was careful to encourage the commerce and general industry of the nation. He even went beyond this, and patronised literature and art; and so it was that in the

leading provinces every kind of industry flourished, and the wealth of the nation increased rapidly. A keen observer of human character, Philip managed, while trampling down the prized liberties of his people, by sheer tact, to preserve a certain popularity everywhere; and thus a strange phenomenon was exhibited; for while he assumed the air of an autocrat, and punished his opponents with inordinate severity, he stopped short at actual tyranny, and altogether comported himself so adroitly that he never forfeited the proud title which he had received in times when the character of his actions scarcely warranted it.

The Burgundian sway encouraged the already growing habits of luxury among the Netherlanders; and ere the sun of that dynasty was set, it had attained a development which was remarkable. The court of the Duke of Burgundy vied in splendour with those of Italy; and all classes, from the highest to the lowest, were seized with the mania for magnificent display and voluptuous living. The army that followed Charles the Bold into Switzerland was so magnificently accoutred that the Swiss, when threatened with invasion, begged the forbearance of the warrior, reminding him that their entire territory was not worth so much as the trappings of his cavalry; and when, at length, he was forced to retreat from the fatal fields of Gransen and Morat, the treasure he left behind him was almost beyond calculation. This voluptuousness and extravagant taste brought partial ruin in their train. The testimony of Philip de Comines is to the effect that pride had followed upon the heels of prosperity in the Netherlandish provinces, and this unfortunately wrought the ruin of the two great industrial cities of Ghent and Bruges, transferring the commerce to Antwerp and Amsterdam.

CHAPTER VI.

CHARLES THE RASH.

Ambition of Charles—Quarrel with the King of France—Battle of Montlhéry—Treachery of Charles at Peronne—Sacking of Liege—Charles' Mercenaries—Contests with the Swiss—Gransen—Morat—Nancy—End of Charles—His Character—Condition of the Netherlands after his Death

PHILIP THE GOOD died in 1467, and was succeeded by his headstrong son, Charles of Charolois, to whom the name of the "Bold," or "Rash" has been given. Before his father's death had made way for his accession, his governmental skill had been put to trial, and the devoted Hollanders had thus been furnished with a foretaste of his sway. The promises of the stadtholdership were by no means belied by the performances of the sovereignty. A tyrant then, he was equally a tyrant now. A rebel son, he was equally a rebel sovereign, doing violence to every tie and sentiment that bound him to constitutional government. That the peace of the "Good" Philip should be disturbed by the unnatural and ungrateful conduct of his offspring, might be regarded as one of those means which a righteous Providence adopts to punish those of its creatures who, like him, have no more filial feeling than to join hands with a father's murderers for the fleeting advantages the unholy alliance might secure, or persecute to the death a royal sister; but that the Netherlanders, who suffered much more acutely from the effect of his tyranny, should have been cursed with the sway of a ruler such as he, is a matter of deep regret.

Deserving or undeserving, he inherited something more than his father's crown, namely, the accumulated

results of his thrift. With this loose capital, and the unfailing fund which the industry of his subjects could not cease to supply, he proceeded with a light heart to indulge those warlike propensities which gained him his cognomen, a soldier's name, a soldier's death, but little more. His one great idea was to make Burgundy a kingdom, whose borders should stretch from the Zuyder Zee and the mouth of the Rhine down to Alsace; and towards this end his whole energies were ever directed. How far his plans would have succeeded under other circumstances—had he, for instance, not inherited, together with his sire's dominions, the consequences attaching to his sire's usurpations, and had he been possessed of the penetration and caution of that sire, blended with the unquestionable vigour which characterised him as a soldier. Failing this, he soon engaged in a quarrel, concerning what must have appeared to a man of his far-reaching ambition, a trivial matter, with his crafty, treacherous, and in many ways formidable neighbour, Louis the Eleventh of France. He had scarcely held the sovereignty of Burgundy a year when he concluded an alliance with his brother-in-law, Edward of England, with the intention of carrying on a contest with the French king.

Had this fallen out, it would not have been their first passage of arms, for, during his father's reign, while he was yet stadtholder of Holland, he had given battle to the French, and, upon the field of Montléri and elsewhere, had exhibited unmistakable evidences of generalship. In view of the distressed condition of Louis' kingdom, chiefly through the long wars with England, it was with anything but complacency that the French king contemplated the hostile preparations being made upon his borders. Louis' adroitness, however, postponed the danger. Seeing that his chances in the field of arms were but slight, he at once entered the lists of diplomacy. Confiding in the honour of his rival, he boldly met Charles at Peronne in Picardy unattended. He, however, paid the penalty of an inordinate confidence. During the conference, Charles received news

of a rising in Liege. Rightly or wrongly, he attributed the movement to his rival's intrigue, and forthwith made him his prisoner. It was only by the exercise of tact, and the employment of gold that he succeeded in escaping with his life; as it was, he was forced to accompany his royal jailer to the rebellious city, there to witness the vengeance of an all-powerful tyrant upon the devoted heads of a people presumptuous enough to raise them in rebellion against him. Liege was taken and sacked—not a building, sacred or otherwise, being exempt from the fury of the enraged monarch and the barbaric mercenaries who but too faithfully executed his orders.

In 1470, his operations against Louis were commenced. Though possessing the bravery of a lion, Charles was no soldier, still less was he a statesman. His connection with Edward the Fourth of England was always of doubtful advantage, owing to the uncertain tenure of that sovereign's sway; and, finally, his own obstinacy deprived him of his assistance altogether. That same failing had already lost him the alliance of the Duke of Brittany. These disadvantages, however, were apparently counterbalanced by the accession which his power for mischief received when, turning his back upon his subjects and all the embarrassments which their aid entailed, he gathered around him an army of adventurers. So long as these mercenaries were rewarded for their services, they were neither likely to question the propriety of his movements, nor to refuse to become his agents in any undertaking that he chose to embark in. Experience, however, taught him that such helpers were but poor substitutes for the patriotism which shone so vividly in the ranks of his valiant Netherlanders, and his undertakings met with very little success. He gained possession of Gueldres, indeed, but it was mainly by purchase, and Louvain, with Nancy, fell to his victorious arms (1475); but these acquisitions were in no small degree due to the cunning of his French rival, and in the end they proved a snare to him.

This apparent good fortune seemed to turn his brain, and he began to consider himself a conqueror. He even contemplated an emulation of the feat of Hannibal—to cross the Alps, and to annex the country watered by the Po, thereby assimilating his dominions to the realm of the first Lothaire. This piece of presumption wrought his ruin. Between him and the object of his desire the massive hills of Switzerland, and the hardy offspring of the Helvetii together interposed a barrier which he never was able to break through. A peaceful folk, the Swiss endeavoured to dissuade him from his purpose, but, with all the recklessness which had acquired for him an equivocal epithet, he advanced to the attack. Near to the town of Gransen he was met by the hardy mountaineers, who, strong in their natural battlements, succeeded in hurling back the invader, sorely crippled and heart-sinking. Reinforced, the reckless soldier returned to the attack, but only to leave in the Alpine valleys, beside the shores of the Lake of Morat, the bones of ten thousand of his followers—a monument of his rashness and inordinate ambition.

The defeated king sadly bewailed the miscarriage of his schemes. Chagrin and melancholy seemed to take possession of him. From this stupor, however, he was at length aroused by tidings of the loss of Nancy. His wonted spirit at once reanimated him, and he turned and entered Lorraine with his mercenaries. And now he was brought fully to perceive the error he had committed in substituting hired for loyal national service. A portion of his army played him false, and, upon the eve of a conflict, deserted to the enemy. Beneath the walls of Nancy he gave battle to René of Lorraine (1477). It was his last venture, and a desperate one. Gransen and Morat had sadly shaken him, and this Lotharingian field was to complete his ruin, and terminate his restless life. As a brave soldier, he fell, sword in hand, in the thickest of the fray, and covered with wounds. His mutilated body, half-drowned in a pool of mud and water, was carried from the fatal field, and deposited

in a sarcophagus in the town, whence, some years later, the remains were removed by Philip the Fifth with pomp to Bruges.

Thus perished the last of the puissant house of Burgundy. He was in many respects a great monarch, and, in the heyday of his might, his alliance was courted by many potentates, whilst the hand of his daughter and heiress, Mary, was regarded politically as a prize of no mean value; for the emperor Ferdinand the Third did not disdain to enter into negotiations with him, and sought her hand for Maximilian his son, offering on his part his support in securing the great purpose of his existence—the exchange of a ducal coronet for a kingly crown. A meeting of the monarchs was arranged at Treves; but an unnecessary display of ostentation on the part of the duke sorely offended the dignity of the emperor, and the attempt came to nothing. The union now in contemplation certainly took place, but it was arranged at a time when death had rendered the haughty warrior's sanction unnecessary.

The character of this remarkable man is graphically exhibited by the great historian of the republic.*—"As a conqueror," says he, "he was signally unsuccessful, as a politician, he could outwit none but himself; it was only as a tyrant within his own ground that he could sustain the character which he chose to enact. . . . Unsuccessful in schemes of conquest and in political intrigue, as an oppressor of the Netherlands he nearly carried out his plans. Those provinces he regarded merely as a bank to draw upon. His immediate intercourse with the country was confined to the extortion of vast requests. . . . Few princes were ever a greater curse to the people whom they were allowed to hold as property. He nearly succeeded in establishing a centralised despotism upon the ruins of the provincial institutions. His sudden death alone deferred the catastrophe. . . . His triumphs were but few, his fall ignominious. His father's treasure was squandered, the

* Motley.

curse of a standing army fixed upon his people, the trade and manufactures of the country paralysed by his extortions, and he accomplished nothing."

The amalgamation of the Netherlandish provinces by the powerful house of Burgundy was followed by the centralization of the government. The separate provinces assembled under the name of the States. These had been wont to meet as often as their needs dictated it; and, with their actions unfettered, enacted laws, declared war, levied taxes, and, in a word, exercised all the functions of independent nations. This independence was now virtually lost, inasmuch as their charters were placed under the jurisdiction of a council, which sat at Mechlin, appointed by the sovereign, who also nominated its leading officers at his own pleasure. This dynasty likewise introduced the form of government by stadtholders, of which office we shall hereafter often hear. By-and-by, and under different circumstances, this became an honourable institution, and many a name celebrated in Netherlandish story is proudly associated with the title. Under the Burgundian sovereigns the office was little else than a symbol of conquest, and the subversion of national privileges. From the era of its establishment, the character of the Netherlands government was entirely changed, for, from being an aggregate of flourishing self-ruled republics, owing fealty alone to a sovereign who "reigned but did not rule," they became "mere departments of an ill-assorted, ill-conditioned, ill-governed realm, which was neither commonwealth nor empire, neither kingdom nor duchy, which had no homogeneousness of population, no affection between ruler and people, small sympathies of lineage or of language." *

* Motley, *Rise of the Dutch Republic*.

CHAPTER VII.

MARY—MAXIMILIAN—PHILIP—MARGARET.

The Duchess Mary—The "Great Privilege"—Matrimonial Alliance with Maximilian of Germany—Struggle with the French King—Death of Mary—Policy of the Flemings—Their treatment of Maximilian—His Revenge—Philip the Fair—Change in the Government—Margaret's Regency—Disturbed condition of the Land—Margaret's Ability—Prince Charles.

UPON the death of Charles the Bold, in 1477, his honours, and with them his embarrassments, devolved upon his hapless daughter, the Lady Mary. No sooner was the strong hand that had pressed down the liberties of the Netherlands removed, than a complete reaction set in. The provinces united, and the whole estates of the realm sank for a time their old differences, and banded together, while yet opportunity offered, to regain what had been lost. Holland and Zealand compelled Mary to give them a new charter of liberty, while the people of Ghent struck terror into the heart of the young duchess by summarily decapitating two of her obnoxious ministers, Imbercourt and Hugonet, before her eyes. To add to the perplexities of the new ruler, the craft of her father's ancient enemy, Louis, was brought into the arena; and, terror-stricken and undone, she perforce yielded to the clamour of her insubordinate subjects, and granted them all that they requested. The Great Privilege—which was to Holland what the Magna Charta was to England, and even more—was with comparative ease obtained from the embarrassed sovereign. By this document the fabric of despotism which Philip and Charles had set up was at once demolished, and the Netherlands became a land of resuscitated freedom. Violated this charter often was—even as was also its English counterpart; but the great principles its clauses defined were never, except at rare intervals, lost sight of.

The year of Mary's accession witnessed her nuptials with the prince whose wooing had been some years before cut short by the ostentation of her rash sire. In August, 1477, she gave her hand to Maximilian, the son of Frederick the Third of Germany; and henceforward the fortunes of the Netherlands were bound up with those of the great house of Hapsburg. Maximilian, being in favour with the opulent city of Ghent, found little difficulty in obtaining supplies in men and money, and with these he immediately proceeded to champion the cause of his duchess. He was singularly successful, defeating the French monarch upon the plains of Picardy, and by his victory rescued his wife's dominions from grave danger. Maximilian had the adroitness to attach himself to the now triumphant and powerful faction—the Kabbeljaws: and, so long as Mary lived, he was on the very best of terms with her subjects. But an unfortunate accident removed her from the scene in 1484, and then came a change.

The Flemings, with all their ancient jealousy, withheld what other provinces with little hesitation had conceded, and refused to trust the guardianship and the government, during the minority of their infant son, to a prince whom they knew to have been trained in the worst school of despotic ideas. They chose rather to arrogate to themselves the honour of guardianship, and kept possession of the young prince. The archduke, powerless to resist, submitted, and for a few years disguised his wrath. In 1488 he sought to assume the dignity, and attacked the city of Bruges. The result did not justify his expectations, for the stout burghers defeated him and took him prisoner. The lukewarmness of the northern provinces, and the entreaties of European states interested in his fate—for he had by this time become King of the Romans—led to an arrangement between jailers and prisoner. The latter regained his liberty; the former secured a confirmation of their rights and privileges, and an indemnity against all consequences that might arise out of their dealings in the matter.

But, with that faithlessness so common among the

crowned heads of these times, the liberated prince abrogated the compact as soon as it suited his purpose so to do. The emperor, disgusted with the entire proceedings, despatched 40,000 of his best troops into the turbulent district; and the Flemings, abandoned by their neighbours, succumbed to the superior pressure brought to bear upon them. Maximilian, after a year of vigorous warfare, obtained the guardianship of his son, and—what the unfortunate Netherlanders, having most dreaded, had been careful by stipulation to prevent—unlimited authority over the provinces. The black garments of the functionaries of Ghent and Bruges and Ypres, as they wended their way in slow procession to implore the tyrant's clemency, their prayer, backed by the potent argument of 300,000 golden crowns, show the measure of the despotic Hapsburgher's grip and the why and wherefore of the melancholy calm that followed his triumph.

There was now no gainsaying the despot's will. He had beaten noble, citizen, and burgher to the ground; had placed his foot, so to speak, upon their prostrate bodies. The many pledges which he and his consort had given regarding the liberties of the states were one by one broken. And thus matters went on till the year 1493, when Maximilian having been called by the death of his father to the imperial throne, his attention was diverted from the cares of the Netherlands to the more important concerns of the empire. Moreover, his son Philip, having attained the age of sixteen, had just been proclaimed duke, count, etc., of the principal provinces; and, within a year, the disturbing question of the regency was settled by the prince himself assuming the responsibilities of government.

Matters now wore a more hopeful aspect. The relations and obligations of both sovereign and subject were duly reconsidered, and the moderation of king and people is shown in the fact that the question took the form of a compromise. The Great Privilege was abrogated, but the old liberties of the states were confirmed; while the question concerning Friesland—long the occa-

sion of serious misunderstanding and much bloodshed—was, however unsatisfactorily, settled by the king's waiving his claim upon that province. Philip even went so far in his deference towards the ancient usages of the land, as to consult the States-general upon his marriage projects; and, in 1496, he espoused, with their approval, Johanna, a daughter of Ferdinand and Isabella of Castille and Aragon. Twelve years later (1506), after a comparatively quiet reign—which, while it perhaps added little to its glory, nevertheless considerably furthered its progress—Philip the Fair died in Castille, while on a visit to his brother-in-law of Spain.

Philip's heir was, of course, in his infancy, having first seen the light at Ghent in the year 1500, and a regency was consequently necessary. The honour naturally reverted to Maximilian, who delegated it to his daughter Margaret, a princess of twenty-six years, and, withal, a woman of remarkable talent and energy. The people of the Netherlands hailed with joy her advent to power; and during the era of her sway the land was ruled with talent and wisdom, and its commercial and manufacturing interests were thereby considerably fostered. This was especially the case with the southern provinces. The more northern ones were unfortunately torn with civil contention. Holland was waging war with the Hanseatic League; the Frisians were engaged in a struggle with the dynasty of Albert of Saxony, whom the Emperor Maximilian had forced them to receive as their podesta; Utrecht, in the way to become one of the most mercantile cities of the land, was quarrelling with its prince-bishop, and for the sake of self-preservation, was carrying on negotiations with Charles of Egmont, Duke of Gueldres, under whose powerful protection the inhabitants eventually placed themselves. The consequence of all this was that the stream of trade, which, through the pride of the citizens of Bruges and Ghent, Ypres and Mechlin, had been fast setting northward, was arrested; and a new and temporary lease was thus furnished for these ancient but declining southern marts.

In her dealings with foreign potentates, Margaret equally sustained her reputation as a vigorous ruler. In 1508 she joined the confederation of Cambray—consisting of the Pope, the emperor, France and Spain—in their designs on the liberties of the Venetians. She feared not to offend the great minister of Louis the Twelfth, the Cardinal of Ambois, withstood the pretensions of Charles of Egmont, and forced him to surrender a portion of his ill-gotten dominions in Holland. In 1503 she joined Maximilian and Henry the Eighth of England against the French; and her troops shared in whatever honour attached to the campaign which saw the reduction of the petty town of Terouenne, the hollow fight of the “Spurs,” and the surrender of Tournay.

But the time came when the duties of government were to devolve upon the young prince himself. He had already (1515), when only fifteen years old, been inaugurated Duke of Brabant and Count of Flanders and Holland, and had, by purchase, acquired the sovereignty of Friesland. By this circumstance this free province forfeited its ancient independence, and took rank among the states which were soon to engage in one of the most memorable struggles of the world for political existence. Moreover, the young Charles was next year associated with his imbecile mother in the sovereignty of powerful Spain, of which he shortly became sole sovereign. While scarce arrived at man's estate, the decease of his grandfather, Maximilian, in 1520, opened for him the road to the imperial throne of Germany; and now the simple Charles, duke or lord of a once despised corner of Europe, emerges as Charles the Fifth, Emperor of Germany, King of Spain, Sicily, and Jerusalem, Duke of Milan, “dominator of Asia and Africa, autocrat of half the world”—Charlemagne the Second, indeed, with an ambition as lofty as that of his illustrious namesake, and an earth-hunger equalling that of an Alexander or a Cæsar.

CHAPTER VIII.

CHARLES V.

Changes in the Government—Temper of the Netherlanders—
Comparison of Netherlandish and Spanish Character—The
great Religious Movement—Pretensions of the Clergy—
Progress of the Reformation—The Sovereigns in relation to
it—Excesses of the Reformers—Charles' Repressive Mea-
sures—Persecutions.

THE accession of Charles the Fifth to the kingdom of Spain and the empire of Germany, was destined to introduce a still less desirable condition of things into the Netherlands than had obtained under the late sovereigns. We have seen the jealousy with which ancient liberties and privileges were guarded by the several states of the Netherlands, how sharply their various suzerains had been reminded of their obligations in respect of the constitutional rights of the people, and how ill they had at times fared whenever it happened that they presumed to infringe them. Whatever their pretensions, these rulers were nothing more than presidents of a great and opulent republic; and, whatever may have been the degree of disrelish with which they had regarded this limitation of their authority, there was no chance of their entirely ignoring the fact, inasmuch as, whatever they possessed of power and grandeur, of military and financial resource, was derived from the very institutions which placed so irritating a restraint upon their authority. But things were changing, for, instead of a petty prince, or some mere petty administrator; instead even of a duke of Burgundy or a king of the Romans, they now had for their ruler a powerful monarch, the possessor of immense armies and immense resources, with the unfettered command of the application

of the one and the movements of the other. In his southern dominions Charles was absolute monarch; here, although nominally sovereign, practically he was no more than first citizen. An autocrat of the first brand, to whom civil and religious liberty appeared only in the garb of an uncompromising enemy, he could scarcely be expected to regard with favour its existence in any portion of his dominions, even though its presence was indigenous to the soil and ancient as the hills.

Moreover, the condition of the country was changed in this remarkable respect, that it had become an integral portion of a great monarchy, and as such was, for the first time in its history, introduced in earnest into the politics of Europe. It was the new monarch's intention that, as a part of his dominions, these provinces should bear their due share in the plans and schemes which, yet only in the embryo of their existence, were by-and-by to produce such important results, and to exercise such a mighty influence upon the world of history. The mind of a far less astute man than Charles might easily have perceived that the peculiar form of government which obtained in this division of his realms might seriously interfere with these arrangements, and, be the cost what it might, he was determined to prevent it.

As if by instinct, the Netherlanders anticipated this, and prepared with determination for the consequences his resolve portended. "Never," says Schiller, "were they so alive to their constitutional privileges, never so jealous of the royal prerogative, or more guarded in their proceedings;" and, just as it befel in the great struggle of English patriotism against the Stuarts, the spirit of republicanism was carried to so high a point that the acts of its votaries at length became as unconstitutional as those which had called patriotism into being: in short, "the pretensions of the people were carried to an excess which nothing but the increasing encroachments of the royal power could in the least justify."*

The preservation of a good understanding between the

* *Revolt of the Netherlands.* Bohn's Translation.

Spanish monarch and his new subjects was still further forbidden by the unnatural character of the connection of two such countries as Spain and the Netherlands. "The people of Spain," says Grotius, "and of the Netherlands differed in almost every respect from one another, and therefore, when they were brought together, clashed the more violently. Both had for many centuries been distinguished in war, only the latter had, in luxuriant repose, become disused to arms, while the former had been inured to war in the Italian and African campaigns; the desire of gain made the Belgians more inclined to peace, but not less sensitive of offence. No people were more free from the lust of conquest, but none defended its own more zealously. Hence the numerous towns closely pressed together in a confined tract of country, densely crowded with a foreign and native population; fortified near the sea and the great rivers. Hence for four centuries after the northern immigration foreign arms could not prevail against them.

"Spain, on the contrary, often changed its masters; and when at last it fell into the hands of the Goths, its character and its manners had suffered more or less from each new conqueror. The people thus formed at last out of these several admixtures is described as patient in labour, imperturbable in danger, equally eager for riches and honour, proud of itself even to contempt of others, devout and grateful to strangers for any act of kindness, but also revengeful, and of such ungovernable passions in victory as to regard neither conscience nor honour in the case of an enemy. All this is foreign to the character of the Belgian, who is astute but not insidious, who, placed midway between France and Germany, combines in moderation the faults and good qualities of both. He is not easily imposed upon, nor is he to be insulted with impunity. In veneration for the Deity, too, he does not yield to the Spaniard; the arms of the Northmen could not make him apostatise from Christianity when he had once professed it. No opinion which the church condemned had up to this time empoisoned the purity of his

faith. Nay, his pious extravagance went so far, that it became requisite to curb by laws the rapacity of his clergy.

"In both people loyalty to their rulers is equally innate, with this difference, that the Belgian places the law above kings. Of all the Spaniards, the Castilians require to be governed with the most caution; but the liberties which they arrogate for themselves, they do not willingly accord to others. Hence the difficult task to their common ruler, so to distribute his attention and care between the two nations, that neither the preference shown to the Castilian should offend the Belgian, nor the equal treatment of the Belgian affront the haughty spirit of the Castilian."

The great feature of Charles' reign was the progress of that religious movement which, under the name of the Reformation, was destined ere long to deluge this country, in common with so many other portions of the continent, with human blood. Religious freedom has ever been found to go hand in hand with civil liberty. The same natural instinct which leads a man to question the rights of civil rulers, and to cast off the trammels of despotism, will induce him also to examine the pretensions of those who claim to be his guides in matters spiritual. This same religious liberty was, moreover, the great and burning question of the day; and it would have been strange indeed if such a people as the Netherlanders had taken no part in the controversy; for their whole character, as observable in their past history, and their position midway, as it were, between the two great theatres of action—the German states and England—forbade their regarding such a contest with indifference. Moreover, many other circumstances were operative in bringing this question into their very midst. The Protestant traders brought it with their wares to Amsterdam, Antwerp, and the other marts of the country. The refugees from France, Germany, and England disseminated its doctrines. The young nobility, whose *alma mater* was Calvin's own university of Geneva, came home steeped

in the theology of the great Swiss reformer ; and even the very auxiliaries of Charles himself, the German pikemen and the Swiss guards, helped its progress.

The tree of heresy had indeed struck deep roots in the Netherlands. Two centuries and a half before the voice of Wycliffe was heard to thunder against the errors of Catholicism, the notorious and licentious Tanchelyn, favoured by the disobedience of rulers both temporal and spiritual, had conducted a campaign—impudent and blasphemous though it was—against spiritual wickedness in high places. A half-century later, the doctrine of Waldo began to gain ground with the people, and the Waldenses, the Albigenses, Lollards, and many another sect that arose between the eras of Tanchelyn and Luther, in time formed a determined, if as yet a small phalanx, opposed to the church as at that time constituted.

The power of the church had at this time reached its culminating point. The clergy openly defied the secular arm, refused to listen to the judgment of the temporal courts, and conducted themselves as an independent order. On their own account, they punished heresy in the strictest manner, and exacted not only homage, but money and tribute of every rank and degree. They grew immensely rich, and religious houses without number, with princely endowments, were founded in this age of clerical presumption and oppression.

This very opulence, however, proved the main cause of that ebb of their power, which, by the end of the thirteenth century, commenced to set in. The temporal powers began to question the wisdom of permitting such a condition of things, and a struggle of that kind was carried on which in England produced the Reformation. Unhappily, too, for the church, the conduct of its servants could not bear the ordeal of that wholesome publicity to which they were now on all hands treated. First came Wycliffe, towards the end of the fourteenth century, to preach a new system. John Huss and Jerome of Prague followed less than a half-century later; the former by the irresistible force of his shrewd common sense, the latter

by his eloquence, aided by the good sword of Ziska and his Bohemians, demolished many a bulwark of clerical independence. But the greatest foe of all to priestly presumption and abuse was the translation of the Bible, and the increased facility for the dissemination of its truths through the invention of the art of printing.

Then came the great German reformer to complete the work of these bold pioneers of religious reform by his bold denunciation of the infamous sale of "pardons" and "indulgences," whence the myrmidons of Rome drew so great a share of their wealth. Fortune, too, in the shape of kingly allies, came to the aid of the new movement. Duke Philip of Burgundy forbade to the church the privilege of giving sanctuary. Charles the Bold, in his usual brusque style, trampled upon one of the church's most ancient privileges, and exacted a new contribution from the religious houses. The mind of the Emperor Maximilian, trembling in the balance between the two combatants, conceived the unique idea of a united temporal and spiritual headship, embodied in his own person, and laid his plans accordingly. They miscarried, however; and the scandals which had given rise to the great theological movement still continued.

In no country—North Britain, perhaps, excepted—did the new doctrines make such rapid progress as in the Netherlands. Nor is this to be wondered at. The nation, as we have seen, was the mart of Europe, the trysting-place of the world's merchants—men whose whole education had taught them to be eminently matter-of-fact. It was, too, pre-eminently the abode of free-thought and intellectual culture, and the land was, altogether, a soil than which none could have been better suited to the germination and growth of these new doctrines. Here, as elsewhere, the reformers were opposed by the rulers, both temporal and spiritual. Here, too, as elsewhere, their precepts were promulgated without deference to the conscientious beliefs of others, and were consequently accompanied by acts of outrage and violence, such as gave a colour of right, if not of justification, to the persecutions

of their foes. More damaging than all, perhaps, was the identification of civil liberty with religious freedom, inasmuch as it often gave the spiritual foe the alliance of the temporal powers. The present monarch would, doubtless, have arrayed himself against the Reformers under any circumstance; and when he came to reflect that the question concerning the right of kings was discussed along with that of the pretensions of the clergy, the sense of self-preservation decided him to cast in his lot with the enemies of the new movement.

Charles entered upon the work of suppression with the earnestness which his whole character would have portended. Many and stern edicts were published by him, backed by penalties and pains of the most awe-inspiring nature. The reading of the New Testament was forbidden; religious meetings of every kind prohibited; and even private conversation upon religious topics interdicted under severest penalties. In his blind zeal, he broke down the bulwarks of Netherlandish freedom; and, emboldened by the success of his iron measures, he contemplated introducing that machinery which, under the name of the Inquisition, had elsewhere done so much—temporarily, at least—to uphold, as also to disgrace, the papal cause.

Fortunately for the interest of the down-trodden in this once free land, Charles, though a bigot, was a man of the world. Perhaps no ruler, before or after him, ever exhibited a keener perception of what conduced to his interest than he. The mere rumour of such an innovation had served to paralyse that commerce for which alone he prized this, the least attractive portion of his realm. Moreover, the Spanish monarch had, in his neighbour, Francis the First of France, an enemy more dangerous than free though heretical subjects. These monarchs were, indeed, sworn foes, and thus, like planets which seek to rotate in the same orbit of ambition, could not be expected to avoid collision. It was this consideration that had led the wily Charles to a visit to his majesty of England, and to seek the friendship of his haughty chancellor; and it was a shrewd perception of the

part Netherlandish commerce and its results—Netherlandish wealth—would play in the inevitable combat, that made him pause, when his conscience, perhaps, and certainly his inclination, urged him to introduce this much-dreaded engine of Spanish despotism.

He was consequently compelled to content himself with the issue of certain edicts which promised to check the growth of the new doctrines to which reference was just now made. In every province courts were established whose special duty it was to carry out the purpose of these edicts. Punishments of all kinds were invented to secure a rigid obedience to the king's behests. Sober monk was burned together with fanatical anabaptist; high baron forfeited his fiefs, and the office-bearer his honours. Many were cut in sunder by the sword, more buried alive; backsliders were committed to the flames, and thousands whose only crime was an obedience to the dictates of conscience and an exercise of mere thought, suffered equally cruel deaths. To make the terrors of the tribunals more appalling, the free citizens, despite their ancient laws and privileges, were carried beyond the confines of their states, there to be tried by partial judges and packed or terror-stricken juries. Fifty thousand persons are said to have perished during the reign of Charles the Fifth alone. Nevertheless, in spite of all his measures, the reformed doctrines made their way, more especially among the people of the studious and thoughtful northern provinces. Moreover, persecution served to foster a spirit of deep-rooted opposition; and in this way the germs of a mighty revolution, which was destined to perplex and undo his bigoted successors, gradually began to receive development.

CHAPTER IX

CHARLES V.—*Continued.*

Charles' Aims—Charles and Francis I of France—Chastisement of the City of Ghent—Defeat of Charles at Renti—Decline of his Power—His Abdication—Character—Causes of his Popularity—Wealth of the Netherlands—Their General Prosperity.

CHARLES had but two aims in life—to stamp out so-called heresy in his dominions, and to make of these dominions an empire which should, in its extent and magnificence, out-rival the empire of Charlemagne. To the former of these designs the innate love of freedom and the matter-of-fact nature of his Netherland subjects opposed an awkward barrier, to the latter, the ambition of his French neighbour furnished a formidable check. Upon the vicissitudes of the contest between these two rivals and uncompromising enemies—its frequent pauses and frequent renewals, the diplomatic struggle for the imperial crown, and the ultimate coronation of Charles in 1520; the opening of the war, and the defeat and capture of his opponent at Pavia, the treaties of Madrid, of Cambray, and of Passau, the story of French perfidy, and the brutal sacking of the Eternal City by the Spanish monarch; his imprisonment of the Pope, and his subsequent league with the holy father against the common enemy, Protestantism, and his defeat at Muhlberg in 1547; and finally, his expedition against Tunis and Algiers—we need not enlarge, as they belong more properly to the annals of Spain, France, Germany, and Italy, and not to those of the Netherlands. The stirring incidents of the struggle were enacted, none of them, upon Netherlandish soil. Indirectly, indeed, the nation was

largely concerned in these great events. Netherlandish blood was shed in the monarch's cause, and Netherlandish gold formed the very marrow of the Spaniard's resources. None dared withhold the tribute, under pain of incurring the autocrat's displeasure—and what that displeasure meant was made painfully evident in his dealings with the proud city of Ghent.



GHENT

This chastisement of the city of Ghent, as it was well named, is one of the most remarkable incidents of Charles' reign, so far as the Netherlands are concerned, and it demands special notice as illustrative of the hold he had gained upon the country, and of the prostrate condition of her political being. The misunderstanding

arose out of a refusal of the city to provide their share of a subsidy which had been granted by the states of the Netherlands. The citizens declared the levy illegal, and, producing certain documents which essayed to be evidence of it, broke out into open insurrection.

Such a proceeding, be it remarked, was no gross piece of presumption, inasmuch as the city was a little republic with an imposing population, well fortified, and having jurisdiction over a considerable tract of rich country, dotted with thriving towns and villages; and could, it was supposed, bring into the field a force of 80,000 fighting men. The great bell Roland, which for ages had summoned the citizens to arms, was set a-ringing, and the city itself went mad. In this humour they made overtures to Francis the First, thinking that opposition to his sworn foe would prove a passport to the Frenchman's favour. Never was a confiding people more egregiously deceived. Francis, instead of countenancing their rebellion, at once informed their lord of their intentions, and of their overtures to him. At the same time, he offered him a safe conduct through his dominions into the Netherlands, for, be it remembered, it was only upon special occasions such as these that Charles was to be found in this portion of his realms.

In the February of the year 1540, in great pomp, he entered the rebellious city. The citizens at once lost heart at their lord's advance, and so offered no opposition. The great Flemish mart was at their lord's mercy. With supreme coolness, he suffered a tantalising interval to elapse ere he would announce the nature of the retribution by which he intended to vindicate his offended dignity, and appease his great wrath. A month passed by, and then the execution of a score of the ringleaders announced to the expectant citizens the fact that the king's sentence was ready for publication. Its terms betokened no mercy. They annulled all the charters and privileges of the city, and confiscated its public property, including the oft-offending bell. They insisted upon the payment of the subsidy and increased the amount of it

by fines and perpetual impositions, and commanded that the city's highest functionaries—some barefooted, others half naked and with halters round their necks—should come into his presence, and, bowing down before him, implore his sovereign forgiveness for themselves and their fellow-citizens, promising, at the same time, that they would be guilty of no such seditious action in future.

A day was appointed for the execution of this galling sentence. The murmurs of the humbled city were deep but suppressed, for the array of troops which the monarch—fully alive to the feeling of the populace—had had the precaution to bring with him, was sufficient to check its expression by outward sign. High upon his throne, with the queen-regent beside him, the potentate sat, surrounded by princes, prelates, and nobility, and duly guarded by a levy of archers and halberdiers. The senators and burghers approached with their emblems of contrition, and repeated certain prescribed sentences. A pretty piece of acting—resembling that connected with the siege of Calais by Edward the Third of England—followed. While the monarch affected to hesitate, the queen-regent turned to his majesty and begged he would, in consideration of its being his birthplace, accord to the city his gracious pardon. The offended sovereign affected to hesitate; and then, with feigned reluctance, conceded the petition for her sake, as he said, and in consideration of what she had urged in its behalf. The farce then ended.

The latter part of Charles' reign witnessed a considerable decline in his power. The affairs of France had passed into the hands of Henry the Second, and its prospects had materially changed with the accession of the new monarch. Henry joined the ranks of the Protestant league; and by the aid of his redoubtable captains, the Duke of Guise, and the constable Montmorency, wrested from the emperor the imperial fortresses of Metz, Toul, and Verdun, and defeated him at Renti. Moreover, he had been completely outwitted and worsted by the Elector of Saxony; and there was every other intimation of the fact that the tide of his fortune had considerably

ebbed. Racked by the tortures of gout, enervated by the general infirmities of age, overwhelmed by the perplexities arising from the cares attending the government of so many heterogeneous territories, and moved perhaps by motives of policy, he was induced in 1555 to withdraw from active life, and to seek the retirement of the monastery of St. Justus, at Placentia, in Estremadura. Accordingly, towards the end of that year, he convened a general assembly of the Netherlandish states; and, accompanied by several of his family, he addressed the members in pathetic strains—requesting them to transfer their fealty and affections to his son Philip, whom he, at the same time, exhorted to govern his Netherlandish subjects with justice and benignity. A sorrow—real or affected—permeated the assembly when he formally resigned the crown to Philip.

The abdication was by this act, so far as the Netherlands were concerned, complete. His surrender of the imperial crown, the sceptre of Spain, and his other territories and honours was to ensue in due time. To follow this celebrated monarch to the seclusion of Placentia would be needless; yet it were not out of place to enquire how it was that, when at Brussels with tears in his eyes, he implored the forgiveness of his subjects, if, as he said, he had unwittingly offended them, the assembly, among whom were those he had persecuted, and others whose nearest and dearest had, through his despotic decrees, been thrust into felon's graves, should have bestowed upon him a single regret! Still more are we compelled to wonder that the spirit of rebellion, which broke bounds under the sway of his successor, should have been so effectively controlled by him. To account for the former, we must remember that, notwithstanding his many and serious failings, this monarch was by no means unpopular with his Netherlandish subjects. "He had," says Mr. Motley, "a singularly fortunate manner. He spoke German, Spanish, Italian, French, and Flemish, and could assume the characteristics of each country as easily as he could use its language. He could be stately with Spaniards, familiar with Flemings, witty

with Italians. He could strike down a bull in the ring like a matador at Madrid, or win the prize in the tourney like a knight of old; he could ride at the ring with the Flemish nobles, hit the popinjay with his crossbow among Antwerp artisans, or drink beer and exchange rude jests with the boors of Brabant."*

The second question is amply answered by the remarks of Schiller. "Charles' dreaded supremacy in Europe," says he, "had raised the commerce of the Netherlands to a height which it had never before attained. The majesty of his name opened all harbours, cleared all seas for their vessels, and obtained for them the most favourable commercial treaties with foreign powers. Through him, in particular, they destroyed the dominion of the Hanse towns in the Baltic. Through him, also, the New World, Spain, Italy, Germany, which now shared with them a common ruler, were, in a measure, to be considered as provinces of their own country, and opened channels for their commerce. He had, moreover, united the remaining six provinces with the hereditary states of Burgundy, and thus given to them an extent and political importance which placed them by the side of the first kingdoms of Europe.

"By all this, he flattered the national pride of this people. Moreover, by the incorporation of Gueldres, Utrecht, Friesland, and Groningen with these provinces, he put an end to the private wars which had so long disturbed their commerce, an unbroken internal peace now allowed him to enjoy the full fruits of their industry. Charles was therefore a benefactor of this people. At the same time, the splendour of his victories dazzled their eyes; the glory of their sovereign, which was reflected upon them also had bribed their republican vigilance; while the awe-inspiring halo of invincibility which encircled the conqueror of Germany, France, Italy, and Africa, terrified the factions; and then, who knows not on how much may venture the man, be he a private individual or a prince, who has succeeded in enchaining

* *Rise of the Dutch Republic.*

the admiration of his fellow creatures. His repeated personal visits to these lands, which he, according to his own confession, visited as often as ten different times, kept the disaffection within bounds; the constant exercise of severe and prompt justice maintained the awe of the royal power. Finally, Charles was born in the Netherlands, and loved the nation in whose lap he had grown up. Their manners pleased him, the simplicity of their character and social intercourse formed for him a pleasing recreation from the severe Spanish gravity. He spoke their language, and followed their customs in his private life. The burdensome ceremonies, which formed the unnatural barriers between king and people, were banished from Brussels. No jealous foreigners debarred natives from access to their prince, their way to him was through their own countrymen, to whom he entrusted his person. He spoke much and courteously with them, his deportment was engaging, his discourse obliging. These simple artifices won for him their love, and while his armies trod down their corn-fields, while his rapacious imposts diminished their property, while his governors oppressed, his executioners slaughtered, he secured their hearts by a friendly demeanour."*

The foregoing sketches assist us to understand how it was that, during this era of arbitrary authority, the Netherlands flourished more and more, that while the nation was sinking towards the lowest depths of political degradation and poverty, her riches increased in an inverse ratio. The tide of prosperity had set in for the Netherlands, and its steady flow continued in spite of tyrannical edicts and enormous taxation. This very taxation, indeed, supplies an index to the situation; for the mere ability of the states to raise the enormous subsidies required by the soldier-monarch, speaks of their flourishing and opulent condition. Of the five millions which this potentate drew annually from all his dominions, nearly one-half came from these provinces; while Spain itself contributed but half a million, and the Indies another.

* *Revolt of the Netherlands.* Bohn's Translation.

Charles had been so careful to avoid sealing the fountains whence flowed the wealth of this portion of his realm, that he had even exempted the merchants from interference in the matter of the modified form of the Inquisition which he thought proper to introduce here, and left the commercial city of Ghent to the exercise of its own conscientious views.

Thus protected, therefore, and having the advantages which an extended commerce brought, there is little wonder that, upon the whole, the land continued to flourish. It was indeed her day. The recent discoveries westward and southward had diverted the old channels of eastern commerce. Venice and Genoa, once the great trading centres of Europe, were out of the race. The ports of the Hanseatic League generally had declined. Western Europe had gradually acquired what was once the exclusive possession of more eastern lands, a taste for luxurious display and epicurean fare. The fabrics of the Netherlands were the highest in demand; her cattle were the finest in Europe, her fisheries the most productive; her agricultural products most greatly esteemed; while, to crown all, she had become the centre of taste for the Continent. The skill of the Fleming in the arts, both mechanical and fine, was unrivalled. Music was cultivated to a higher degree than elsewhere; and the painting of the Van Eycks, recently rendered more effective by the invention of oil colour by John of Bruges, originated a school which has ever been held in the loftiest estimation. Within the boundary of what was known as the seventeen United Provinces, there were more than 200 walled cities—many of them of the most stately character, 150 chartered towns, and upwards of 6000 villages. Among the former, Antwerp, more fortunate in its geographical position than its older rivals, had become the most important. The population of this small area was three millions, and its interests were guarded by a cordon of threescore fortresses of amazing strength, and an army of fighting men such as could not be surpassed for cool determined courage in all Europe.

CHAPTER X.

PHILIP II.

The Netherlandish Provinces—Character of Philip's Rule—Truce with the French King—Renewal of the Struggle—St Quentin—Peace of Câteau Cambresis—Patriotism of the Prince of Orange and Count Egmont—Address to the Estates of Ghent—Appointment of the Duchess of Parma—The Spanish Troops—Granvelle's Zeal—Opposition from the Nobility—William the Silent—Unpopularity of Granvelle—His Retirement—Viglius—Egmont's Mission.

AT the time when Charles resigned the sovereignty of the Netherlands into the hands of his son, they may be considered as having attained the meridian of their opulence and splendour. They consisted at the time of seventeen provinces—namely, the duchies of Brabant, Limburg, Luxemburg, and Gueldres; the counties of Artois, Hainault, Flanders, Namur, Zutphen, Holland, and Zealand; the margravate of Antwerp, and the lordships of Friesland, Mechlin, Utrecht, Overysse, and Groningen *. Though far inferior as regards area, the Netherlands were relatively far superior in population to his peninsular kingdom, more compact, more wealthy in the diversity and character of its resources, far more stable in its position, and possessing elements of enduring success which that aggregation of ancient monarchies could not boast.

This highly favoured realm was destined to pass through a new and painful ordeal. For many a long year it had felt the oppressive hand of a despotic, but withal worldly-wise, master—one who, it will have been observed, had not failed to perceive the identity of interest between sovereign and subject, nor neglected to act upon its

* Gueldres, Utrecht, and Groningen had been annexed by Charles the Fifth.

promptings : an alien sovereign, doubtless, but a fellow-countryman, who secretly admired the greatness of his native land, and the instincts perhaps that upheld it, though his admiration might be mingled with annoyance at the check they offered to his authority. Now the concerns of the realm were in the keeping of another despot, whose ideas of government were untempered by any considerations either of prudence or respect. Born at Valencia, and reared in his father's Spanish dominions, he knew little of the Netherlands, and cared less for their peculiar notions and aspirations ; and thus the work of social, political, and religious disorganization begun by his father was shortly to proceed at so rapid and reckless a pace, that the fabric which had taken centuries of careful labour to erect was—at a blow, so to speak—ruthlessly demolished.

There is, however, no unmixed evil in this world, and the doings of a tyrant have frequently proved a means by which an over-ruling Providence directs the affairs of humanity to happy issues. The hereditary bigotry of the two monarchs will be found to have defeated the purpose they had in hand. It had indeed had the desirable effect of securing that which the sway of a benign ruler must have sorely hindered, inasmuch as it caused the various states of the Netherlands to put aside their many differences, to unite in one grand purpose, and thus to develop a free and homogeneous nation, destined to rank among the richest and most enterprising among the communities of the earth.

It was singularly unfortunate that he who was destined to rule over a nation whose ideas of freedom were boundless as the ocean whence they seem to have emerged, should have been bred in the narrow school of Spanish thought and Spanish politics. Philip's naturally cold and unsympathetic temperament had been nurtured by priests, who had, moreover, taken care to inspire him with a hatred of heresy, to foster whatever was superstitious in his nature, and to render him an unscrupulous bigot. Whether it was the result of a cool calculation, or whether,

knowing the spirit of his people, something whispered to him that it were better to observe caution at the commencement of his reign. He appeared to take an interest in their ancient political usages, revoked some of the edicts of his predecessor against heresy, left the various functionaries unmolested in their offices, and in other respects presented a striking contrast to his sire. He found little difficulty in procuring large subsidies—so large, indeed, that he was thereby relieved of the trouble of making an annual call upon the states for supplies; and thus, in effect, he had craftily placed himself in a position of independence so far as they were concerned. In due time his motives oozed out. Meanwhile, he was revolving plans for the carrying out of his ideas of a model government and of true Christianity. For the furtherance of these he despatched agents to Rome, and kept upon the frontiers a mixed army of Spaniards and Germans, who, he knew, would be prepared at the proper season to execute his behests.

One of Philip's earliest steps was to conclude the war with France, for, though equally ambitious, he had not the soldierly talents of his sire and predecessor. A five years' truce was arranged between him and the French monarch, which, however, was speedily broken by the intrigues of Pope Paul the Fifth. Henry the Second of France, at the promptings of this pontiff, attacked Naples. The superstition of Philip was such that he hesitated to take up arms against the holy father, even in self-defence; but, these conscientious scruples once allayed, he entered into the struggle in good earnest. Assisted by his English consort, Queen Mary, and ably supported by his Netherlanders, his captain, the Duke of Alva, defeated the pontifical enemy at St. Quentin, and captured the town (1557). The carrying on of a lengthy war, however, was calculated to interfere with the pursuit of his darling schemes; so, surrendering all the advantages the victory had given him, after a few weeks of desultory fighting, in which Calais was lost to his English ally, he concluded, in 1559, the peace of Câteau Cambresis. By this treaty he

secured many important advantages—not the least being the goodwill of the Pope; but he meanly sacrificed the interests of his allies, both English and Italian; while he superstitiously attributed his success to the aid of St. Lawrence, which had really been brought about by the valour of the Netherlanders under Count Egmont.

The misunderstanding, so much dreaded by his subjects, began to show itself just before his departure for Spain. Whatever machinery his cautious policy had provided to his hand was duly seized. Heresy was to be sharply met by the decrees and institutions that already existed—these being made to do duty until such time as certain contemplated means of a more thorough-going character could be conveniently introduced. In secret he had made provision for the success of his plans, for one of the conditions of the treaty he had lately established with the French king, stipulated for French assistance against his Netherlandish subjects in case of need; while the foreign legions, notwithstanding the cessation of foreign hostilities, were still retained in the country. This occupation of the country by an alien soldiery was considered by the Netherlanders as a standing menace; and, with a show of national humiliation, they besought their removal.

Their application, however, met with but partial success. The king took some steps to mitigate the anger of his people. He offered the command of the obnoxious troops to William of Orange and the Count Egmont, who, with true patriotism, declined the proffered honour. He next offered to maintain them at his own private expense, and finally engaged to withdraw them so soon as he considered himself free from apprehension concerning a foreign invasion. The troops were, however, kept in the country eighteen months after this promise. The disgust of the people was further enhanced by the proceedings of the king in relation to public matters. He affected, indeed, to bow to their desires by the appointment of a provincial government, composed mainly of the leading nobles of the land; but his appointment of foreigners to

all the purely national offices was a grave breach of the constitution, and, withal, a matter of deep solicitude. Moreover, the nobility had become, by training and interest, so steeped in the principles of absolutism, that the populace as a body could not trust them.

Previous to his departure, Philip assembled the estates of Ghent (1559). The monarch being unacquainted with any other than the Spanish tongue, they were addressed by his favourite minister Granvelle, bishop of Arras, a Burgundian whom the king had, contrary to law, forced upon the Flemings. Through this man the king informed them, among other matters, that, with a view to their interests, and studiously regarding their susceptibilities, he had decided to overlook the claims of his son, Don Carlos, to the regency, and had chosen a countrywoman of theirs—namely, Margaret, duchess of Parma, his natural sister. This lady, however, was not the choice of the states. Had they been consulted, the honour would have fallen to the lot of one of the two patriotic nobles who had so magnanimously rejected his overtures in the matter of the military command before referred to. By the same mouthpiece, the monarch was informed of the grievances under which his subjects laboured concerning the edicts, the Inquisition, and the foreign soldiery, the taxes, the introduction of foreigners into the public offices, and the general administration of the country. Through the same medium came an answer back from the king to the effect that he would alleviate their burdens if he did not altogether remove them, and an exhortation to uphold his interests and the authority of his nominee during his absence in Spain followed. He was then and there told the price of such loyalty by some of the more fearless spirits of the assembly—namely, liberty of conscience. This, however, was a price he could not afford to pay; and, in reply to the more moderate of his counsellors, he only exclaimed—"Better not reign at all than rule over a nation of heretics!"

With such unsatisfactory relations did king and people part. Philip took his departure for Zealand, thence to

embark under the escort of Count Horn, the lord-admiral of the United Provinces, never to set foot upon the soil of the Netherlands again. Ere his departure, he had changed from a political to a personal enemy the future leader of the patriotic movement, William, Prince of Orange. This he brought about by an accusation, flattering in itself, but annoying by reason of the contemptuous tones with which it was delivered. "This double incentive," says Schiller, "accelerated the great enterprise which tore from the Spanish crown seven of its brightest jewels"

The government, nominally in the hands of the duchess, was really administered by three undesirable individuals, who formed the regent's counsel or *consulta*—namely, Viglius, Granvelle, and the Count de Berlaumont. The duchess herself, a timid woman, had a mind to govern—so far as her lieges' wishes and arrangements permitted—in harmony with the spirit of the nation; but, as by arrangement, the Bishop of Arras and Mechlin had been made superintendent of all acts of judicature and controller of her administration, her good intentions were entirely frustrated.

From the very commencement, therefore, the government did not work well. Indeed, upon the question of the foreign troops, it literally broke down. Promises of their departure were given and broken, again given, and yet again broken, till the hoodwinked populace, in a condition of frenzy, contemplated the opening of their dykes and an inundation of their insulted country. With all this, it was not till the year 1561, when their presence upon another theatre was necessary, that the long-promised withdrawal took place. The popular impatience became still more apparent when the regent proceeded to carry out Philip's intentions with regard to the clergy—to remove the free and independent Netherlands bishops, and to establish in their stead a hierarchy upon such principles as should answer his own despotic ends. The ill-advised measure produced a universal outcry. Clergy and laity, gentle and common, orthodox

and heretic, were alike offended at this violent infringement of the national institutions, and the augmentation of royal powers which it promised.

Such machinery as existed was now turned by his new agents to the best account in furthering the ends of the king. The royal decree charged all governors and magistrates to assist his spiritual helpers in the work. Some, through fear, obeyed, others refused to conform. In Flanders and Aitois, Holland, Zealand, and Utrecht, where the Prince of Orange and Count Egmont were stadtholders, no persecution was permitted, and elsewhere, wherever the king's mandate was obeyed by the rulers, the people offered such strenuous opposition that the peace of the country was seriously jeopardised. Of all the provinces, Brabant suffered most from the consequences of Philip's plans, but then it was the most persistent and the most violent in its opposition. To counteract the baneful effect of the new order of things, a demand was made, through the already generally acknowledged leader of the popular cause—William, Prince of Orange—for a provisional government. Such an appointment was not calculated to advance the schemes of the monarch, and it was accordingly rejected by the astute Granvelle. Thwarted in this endeavour, the prince moved for an assembly of the States in order that the present situation might be duly considered. In this endeavour also he met with no success. Failure, however, served the popular cause better than success could have done, inasmuch as it drew attention to the real motives by which the sovereign was actuated, and at once showed Granvelle in his true colours.

To be rid of this unscrupulous agent of a tyrannical sovereign was now the one great aim of all who cared for liberty. Even the duchess-regent joined in the popular outcry for his removal. This removal, it was thought, must operate in altering the entire course of things, as it had long been felt that he and his colleagues overrode the entire assembly. This triumvirate, inspired by their crafty head, made one grand mistake. When Philip came

to his inheritance he had but one estate to fear—the commons; because the interests of the sovereign and of the higher stratum of society had long been in many ways identical; but the arrogance of his delegates had made enemies of the Netherlandish nobility. Its most powerful members had been publicly and privately injured and insulted; and now, when the tide of democracy was at its highest, the dams which might have served to check its career had been ruthlessly removed. The rapid progress which, despite the dreaded edicts, the Reformation made during the administration of Granvelle in the Netherlands, is without doubt to be ascribed to the lukewarmness of the nobility in opposing it. If the minister had been certain of the support of the nobles, he might have scorned the fury of the mob, which must have helplessly flung itself against these natural barriers of the throne; but now it was otherwise.

The woes of the citizens lingered long in tears and sighs; but soon the acts and example of the nobility called forth a louder expression of their sentiments. A confederation was formed for the purpose of accomplishing Granvelle's overthrow. Of this confederacy, William of Orange was, by tacit consent, regarded as the leader. Indeed, there was really no other choice. The nursling and companion of kings, trained in one of the most practical schools of diplomacy that Europe ever witnessed; of a powerful intellect, cool, and beyond measure reserved; a tried leader in war; and experienced in the duties of the senatorial chamber; and, withal, a trusted patriot, there could have been no better choice. As patriots, indeed, the Counts Egmont and Horn shared with him the popular confidence; but it was the transcendent abilities of William the "Silent," as history has named him, that inspired the Netherlanders with a hope and a confidence that by him the inevitable struggle would be directed to happy issues.

The earliest essay of the then popular leaders was to write to the king in Spain, conveying a faithful account of the condition of affairs in the country, and urging the

removal of the obnoxious Granvelle, lately raised to the dignity of a cardinal. As might have been expected, the king's reply was evasive, and his action a course of double-dealing. He cunningly essayed to sow dissensions among the popular leaders, but William's keen intellect penetrated the veil of duplicity, and the scheme miscarried. The king was soon made provokingly aware that all his power could not suffice to maintain the odious minister in his position. He had become an object of antipathy to the entire nation. He was mercilessly lampooned by the wits of the time; the poor refused to be the recipients of any of his favours, one and all declined his friendship, none dared to speak a word in his favour, or indeed cared to do so. Shunned and despised by all, and far removed from him who alone could have rendered his position bearable, he was, perhaps, far from sorry to receive the commands of his royal master to relinquish a country in which he could find nothing congenial to his tyrannical and deceitful nature. He quitted the country in 1564, carrying with him the ill-will of all good Netherlanders.

The retirement of Granvelle, however, was found to do but little towards the improvement of the people's condition. None of the king's odious edicts were repealed, or even so much as suspended. The cardinal's place was promptly taken by the unbending Viglius, and the hand of a despot was still traceable in every movement of the cabinet. For a time, indeed, there was a calm begotten of hope that an amicable arrangement might now be possible, but this temporary quietude proved but the precursor of one of the most tremendous tempests on record. The nation was abruptly awakened to the delusion with which they had been beguiling themselves, when the king gave orders for a strict enforcement of all the edicts which had been promulgated by the emperor against heresy, and of the present government, together with the decrees of the Council of Trent. The spirit of the nation was at once made manifest. The governors of the provinces refused to publish them. The Prince

of Orange counselled the duchess to disobey. The new hierarchy protested; and even Viglius himself, overwhelmed by the popular agitation, was constrained to hesitate.

By the advice of the popular leaders, Count Egmont was despatched to Madrid (1565) to remonstrate with the infatuated monarch. He was received with apparent cordiality, and the fairest promises were made by the royal despot. The envoy therefore returned in the full hope that his mission had been a thorough success. Never were hopes more slenderly grounded. The perfidious monarch, it transpired, had made him the unwitting bearer of the most diabolical order that had as yet emanated from the nation's rulers. The Inquisition in its most appalling form, though veiled by an artful phraseology, was found to be the true response to the national appeal for just and considerate treatment. It was, however, sufficient to complete the welding process which had been so long in silent operation throughout the realm. Viglius himself was terror-stricken—properly discounting, as he did, the consequences. The patriotic leaders retired from their places in the council-chamber, and left to the duchess and her unpopular council the entire responsibility of government. Notwithstanding the contrary advice of Viglius, the terrified duchess feared to disobey, and from that day the tide of troubles in the Netherlands may be said to have thoroughly set in.

CHAPTER XI.

EVE OF THE REBELLION.

The Adventurers—The Patriotic Movement—Condition of the Government—Astute Policy of the Duchess—Fraternity of the Gueux—Dilemma of the Patriotic Leaders—Development of the Patriotic Movement—Field Preaching—Influence of the Prince of Orange—Meeting at St. Trond—Obstinacy of the King—The Iconoclasts.

THE nation had drifted to the verge of revolution. The more moderate, indeed, were content to await with patience the development of events, but, unfortunately for the peace of the country, though fortunately perhaps for the cause of liberty, there was a bankrupt class of nobles and gentlefolk in the country to whom the changes and chances of the battle-field would be most welcome, as furnishing them with congenial employment, and probably with the means of restoring them to a position whence they had, from mischance or improvidence, or worse, descended. There was likewise another order equally ready to hail the advent of such a stir—namely, those whose pride had been injured by the neglect with which they had been treated in the general distribution of honours by the sovereign at his accession. What such a body lacked in patriotism was fully compensated in an overweening conceit and a reckless daring, and what they might need in the matter of supplies was at hand in the wealth of the Protestant merchants—the richest, and, at the same time, the most zealous portion of the community concerning the great question of the day.

At present this fighting material was but an incoherent mass; and a difficulty existed as to the means of reducing its elements to anything like a compact and effective body. The difficulty was, however, overcome in a singular man-

ner. The nuptials of the regent's son, Prince Alexander of Parma—of necessity a great and national event—drew to Brussels the entire array of the Netherlandish nobility. The excited condition of politics in the country forbade that the peculiar condition of the nation should be ignored in the general conviviality which accompanied the incident. A kind of freemasonry, begotten of the exceptional circumstances of the times, was established. Ancient friendships were cemented, and new ones formed. Mutual confidences were exchanged, and plans compared. Meetings, other than convivial, followed, and sympathising foreigners were admitted to the confidence of the new brotherhood in the persons of two German nobles, the Counts of Holle and Schwartzenberg, then on a sojourn in the Netherlands, and these, in turn, assured the confederates that the disposition of the princes of the empire was favourable to the enterprise in which they were about to embark.

For the present, however, the recognised leaders of the patriotic party, duly discounting the consequences of rebellion, held aloof. Still, the movement was no ill-considered undertaking. Every circumstance seemed to favour the scheme. The government was in the hands of a feeble woman, the king himself far away, ruling a nation whose diverse elements were not yet fused, and meditating schemes of far-reaching enterprise, the provincial governments disaffected, disobedient, and disposed to connive at the sedition of their charges; no trustworthy army in the country, the court divided and uncertain, the population with the movement well-nigh to a man, even the military commanders secretly favouring the cause; and, finally, an empty royal treasury. The movement quickly developed; till, in the spring of 1566, it had become an openly armed organization. The Prince of Orange, Counts Egmont and Horn, and other popular nobles still holding aloof, the leadership was given to Count Louis of Nassau, brother of William, and Henry de Brederode, Landgrave of Utrecht, a descendant of the ancient counts of Holland.

In such a dilemma, the duchess had no resource but to convene an assembly of such members of the council as were at hand. This, however, was so difficult a matter that four months elapsed before they could be brought together, and in the meantime the movement gained strength. In the ranks of the confederates were found, besides the classes already mentioned, some of the most illustrious of the Flemish nobility; and these all had sworn a solemn oath not only to oppose the introduction of the Inquisition, but to stand by each other in the common cause of political and religious liberty.

The duchess, however, had not been inactive. She had taken counsel of Egmont, Berlaimont, and others; and, pending the meeting of the Council of State, had despatched messengers to Spain, put on a bold front, and proceeded to place the fortresses in a defensive condition, and endeavour to scare or amuse the people with reports of the coming of the king. The council eventually met; but the opinions of its members were sorely divided. The Prince of Orange was loud in his complaint against the perfidy of the monarch, and indirectly justified the movement. The debate, however, turned chiefly upon the subject of a petition which the Lords of Convention had prepared for presentation at Brussels. Some were for admitting the procession accompanying it into the city; others for refusing it. But even while the deliberations were in progress, their presence in imposing array in the city was announced. The danger was too imminent now to be lightly regarded, and the deputies were in consequence received with courtesy and treated to the fairest of promises.

Hitherto the confederates had experienced a difficulty in finding a suitable name for the fraternity. A suggestion of Count Berlaimont, made in the ear of the duchess and overheard by one of their number, helped them out of the difficulty; for the next day, while assembled at a feast as guests of De Brederode, the seemingly opprobrious title of the "Gueux," or the "Beggars," to which they had been treated by De Berlaimont, was adopted

with acclamation. The mirth waxed fast and furious; intoxication aided enthusiasm; the Gueux was toasted amid great uproar—the host considerably assisting the excitement by appearing in the garb of a mendicant, with grey suit, wallet, and a cup or porringer. This latter was passed round to the assembled guests, and was afterwards hung, an admired object, upon one of the walls of the banqueting-room.

The tumult became ungovernable when the Prince of Orange and the Counts Egmont and Horn, who, while casually passing, had been attracted thither by the tumult, unexpectedly made their appearance in the hall. The buffoonery of the banquet-hall spread to the city, and thence to the country. The quaint costume of the Gueux was adopted by the citizens, who dressed their families in cloaks of grey, bedecked with small wooden cups, clasp-knives, and other symbols of mendicity; whilst a medal was struck and worn on the breast, on the one side of which was an effigy of the king, together with an inscription setting forth their loyalty; and on the other, two hands clasped, with the motto, "*Jusq' à la besace*" (Even to the wallet). After another interview with the duchess, the fraternity of the Gueux, leaving behind them a committee of vigilance, dispersed abroad to spread their views, to aver their determination to hold by the oaths they had taken, and to endeavour, by every constitutional means, to rescue the nation from the political and religious bondage in which they were so tyrannically held.

The duchess and her council, so soon as the danger was over, acted with consummate craft. They did not—they dared not—absolutely reject the "petition of the nobles;" but a mitigated form of the edicts was drawn up, which should present a mean between the mandates of the king and the demands of the confederates; and, pending its presentation for approval at Madrid, the States were to be sounded as to their views. Montigny, brother of Horn, an expert in such questions, was, much against his inclinations, commissioned to convey the missive to the

Spanish capital. Meanwhile, the Prince of Orange and his friends were in a difficult strait—duty being sadly opposed to inclination. Their hearts were with the new confederacy, while their talents were retained for the service of the king. To withdraw from the affairs of state altogether would render their position less perplexing; but their presence at the council-board was so necessary to the furtherance of the popular cause, that they necessarily hesitated to take such a step. There was, however, no alternative. Too honest to attempt to serve two masters, the patriots withdrew—Egmont repairing to Aix-la-Chapelle, ostensibly for the restoration of his impaired health; Horn retiring to his patrimonial estates, while the Prince of Orange remained for a season in Brussels.

Meanwhile, time had imparted strength and consistency to the great political movement. That which at first had been despised as the wild escapade of a band of bankrupt nobles, had become a national affair. The introduction of a significant name, accompanied as it was by an equally significant symbolism, had proved a very master-stroke of policy, and now the mercantile classes and well-to-do families generally were not ashamed to identify themselves with the movement.

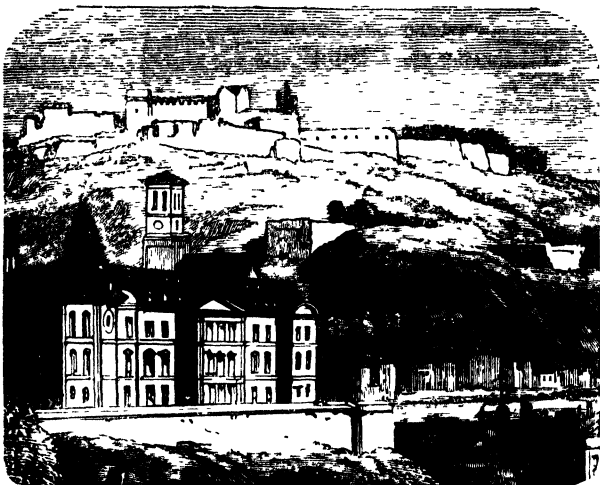
The Inquisition had meantime produced its fruits; but not such as had been anticipated by the royal despot. Despair had begun to take the place of terror, and, like a stag at bay, the whole Protestant community—Anabaptist, Calvinist, and Lutheran—turned upon the royal pack and made it pause. The duchess and her council were fain to advise moderation towards the heretics, and the magistrates eagerly caught at that which offered them a means of escape from a disagreeable duty. Elated by such a triumph, feeble though it was, the indomitable reformers ventured now to do what they had never dared before, and boldly came forth from the protection of secrecy and midnight darkness into the full glare of open day. Field-preaching now began. In the neighbourhood of Ghent, one Hermann Stuycker, known also as Hermann

Modet, a native of Overysse, and a converted monk, drew immense crowds after him, and defied the authorities to molest him.

Similar boldness was evinced in other quarters, when, like the Israelites of old, the services dedicated to Jehovah were performed by bands of worshippers armed and ready for battle. Peter Duthenus in West Flanders, Ambrose Wille, a Huguenot, Peregrine de la Grange and Morabais at Tournay, Valenciennes, and Antwerp; Marnier, Guy de Bray or Francis Jumirs, and Peter Gabriel at Haarlem, addressed noble, gentle citizen, and burgher, in their thousands. In vain did the bewildered duchess issue manifestoes and commands. The forbidden doctrines were preached and promulgated in spite of all the persecuting zeal of the royal agents, and the forbidden books were purchased with a most marvellous avidity. At Antwerp, so immense an assemblage was got together under the auspices of De Brederode, as to cause serious alarm to the authorities of the place, and those generally who feared the consequences of an outbreak applied to the Prince of Orange as the only man capable of averting what they could not but consider a calamity. His arrival in the city was the signal for the most tumultuous exhibitions of popular enthusiasm. An immense concourse of people, with De Brederode at their head, came out to meet him, and greeted him with acclamations; and it speaks volumes for the popularity of this remarkable man that, at a word from him, every semblance of sedition and opposition to regal authority at once disappeared. His stern logic soon restored order in the city, and brought about a fortunate settlement, though it was but a temporary one.

The success which was found to attend the duchess' appeal to the Prince of Orange urged her to call upon the confederate lords to the end that their influence likewise might be exerted in the cause of order. A full meeting of these took place at St. Trond in Liege, but the only result was a yet more solemn pledge to exact all and more than they had, in the name of the people, heretofore de-

manded. Considering these demands extravagant and impossible, several of their number, including the Count Mansfeldt, withdrew entirely from the confederacy.



LIÈGE

At the suggestion of the duchess, deputies from the tumultuous meeting of St Trond now met William of Orange and Count Egmont at Duffel. It resulted in little else than a discussion by the popular leaders of the many grievances under which the country laboured. A document was, however, to be drawn up which was to be laid before the duchess embodying the views of the confederates. The character of this document served to infuriate the duchess. Her reply was haughty and ambiguous. She, however, exhorted the petitioners to be patient until the reply of the sovereign to the moderated petitions should arrive, and despatched the Marquis of Bergen to Madrid to accelerate it. The king, it would seem, was found to be as stubborn and bigoted as ever. He would not yield, even though advised that

way by the more moderate of his Spanish counsellors—excepting, indeed, that he gave a promise to abolish the Inquisition in its more odious form, and substitute the ecclesiastical machinery that had been introduced by his predecessor.

Anticipating the worst, he ordered the duchess to levy troops, and sent her funds for the purpose. The miserable concession had come too late. Men's passions had been heated to a serious pitch, and patriotism had given place to frenzy, and now began that system of iconoclasm which, here as elsewhere, disgraced a movement that had for its object humanity's noblest aim—religious freedom. Mobs of vulgar people—some in a spirit of mere lawlessness, others animated with a sheer love of mischief—finding themselves, for the time, beyond the pale of legal restraint, roamed the country at will, and gave full vent to their brutal passions. The churches were broken into, and the altars, images, and monuments within the sacred edifices torn down and committed to wholesale destruction. These outrages occurred in the Walloon provinces. St. Omer was the first to receive the attentions of the impious destructives. It was a seductive pastime, and the mania quickly spread. At Lille, at Ypres, at Mechlin, Valenciennes, and other places, similar atrocities were committed in the name of indignant piety. It reached Antwerp in due time, whose matchless architectural monument, the cathedral, offered a fair field for their destructive operations; and here the havoc raged for days and nights together. Hardly a statue or a painting escaped their destructive hands. Mechlin, Ghent, and the splendid ecclesiastical city of Tournay, suffered equally from the extravagant proceedings of the frenzied mob. Utrecht and Zealand fortunately suffered but little in comparison with the more southern states, whilst the extreme northern provinces were happily well-nigh exempt from these extravagances.

CHAPTER XII.

EARLY STAGES OF THE REBELLION.

The King's Ideas—Terror of the Duchess—Defections among the Patriotic Ranks—Firmness of the Prince of Orange—Meeting at Termonde—Earliest Engagements—The Test—Retirement of the Leaders—Emigration—Alva in Command—Council of Blood—Retirement of the Duchess—Persecutions—Efforts of the Prince of Orange

THE king, far removed as he was from the scene of these unpardonable outrages, might well be excused for identifying the Reformers, as a body, with the extravagances of these wild destructives, for even those whose presence upon the spot gave them the opportunity of a close observation, either could not or would not distinguish between a lawless rabble and a band of patriots, and the evil doings of the iconoclasts were consequently traced to the conference of St Trond. The confederates were too well acquainted with Philip's nature to hope that they, however eminent their position, or well-known their moderation, would escape the general condemnation; and this knowledge greatly assisted to precipitate an open rupture which, through the prudence of William and his friends, on the one hand, and the embarrassments of the duchess, on the other, had been so long held in abeyance.

Terror-stricken beyond measure, the duchess essayed flight; but Viglius and other members of the council, first by solicitation, and then by the employment of force, arrested the fatal step. A new plan was adopted. The Prince of Orange, and the popular leaders, were once more called upon to act the part of mediators. They were instructed to effect, if possible, a compromise with

the confederate captains. These were to receive an amnesty for all that they had done, and were to be shielded from the consequences of the acts of their more outrageous followers. The Inquisition was to be suppressed, together with the edicts against heresy, and permission was given to preach outside the city walls. The confederates, on their part, were to promise fidelity to the king, and to aid in bringing the iconoclasts to justice. With whatever reluctance the duchess put her seal to this instrument, there was no help for it. The efforts of the patriotic leaders, and of the confederate rulers, were successful in time in establishing some sort of tranquillity. Numbers of the rioters paid the penalty of their misdeeds by death.

Meanwhile, the duchess had transmitted an account of all that had happened to the king, who, at the time of its reception, was ill at Segovia. He forthwith called together his counsellors, who, foreseeing perhaps the consequences of an open rupture between their sovereign and fellow-subjects, again advocated moderation, and suggested that the matter should be submitted to the arbitration of the emperor, by which process, they hoped, all semblance of partiality would be avoided. His own inclination was to march at the head of an army, and administer to the patriots the rebuke he considered their great presumption had merited, but, perceiving that this rough and ready method presented difficulties which he cared not to face, he forwarded to the duchess despatches replete with the accustomed prevarication. At the same time, he stated that he should shortly be amongst them; and meanwhile he affected to trust to the general good sense of his Netherlandish subjects to uphold the cause of law and order. This same good sense had been sadly wanting; and the confederate cause had by this time begun to present in a marked manner the effects of its absence. The intrigues of the iconoclasts had been unfortunately identified with the patriotic movement, and many of its firmest sympathisers had on this account withdrawn from it in disgust.

The government was not slow to take advantage of this declining strength. By the employment of flattery, and by other means, the fidelity of the leaders was seriously sapped, and a general mistrust followed. The report of the king's coming, too, was a stroke of consummate policy, inasmuch as the very thought of his august presence had created a perfect dread among the weak and wavering, and from this cause alone many supporters were lost to the popular cause. The movement gave signs of a collapse, for even the patriotic Egmont succumbed to the arts and blandishments of the wily king; the duchess and her advisers, and one of the most popular of the leaders of the political movement was therefore lost to it. It seemed as if the Prince of Orange were the only one among them upon whom these considerations could have no effect. The unrivalled penetration of this man would probably have enabled him to detect the aims and intentions of the king, had he not been made acquainted with them in an unmistakable manner by proofs that would admit of no refutation. Others, then, might confide in the integrity of the king, but not he.

In this unsatisfactory state of things, he proposed a meeting of himself, Egmont, his brother Louis, Count Horn, and others, at Termonde, there to deliberate upon the course best to be pursued. The confederate leader Louis was for instant rebellion. The prince himself urged further patience and caution, and increased vigilance, while Egmont avowed his determination in any case to stand by the sovereign, in whose honour and good sense he thoroughly confided. This defection of a great military leader, and one who possessed in a larger degree than any other noble the confidence of the military, and moreover was a popular idol, prevented any satisfactory arrangement. The arguments and entreaties of his colleagues were alike impotent to turn him from his purpose. Even the proofs of Philip's perfidy, which William produced in the shape of a letter from the Duke d'Alava to the duchess, wherein he confidently assured

her of the king's intention to visit the Netherlands with his vengeance, failed to move him.

Assured by overwhelming evidence of the decline of the popular movement, the duchess and her council decided to commence operations forthwith. Dissension was more freely sown. Troops were raised, and the more loyal and confiding among the nobility were entrusted with their command, and thus the great and memorable revolution began.

The first blood of the conflict was drawn at Lille, where an undisciplined rabble of the Gueux had assembled to lay siege to the place. At Tournay, the main body of them were subsequently surprised and captured by the royalist general, Noircarmes, and their captain, John de Soreas, was slain. Ere the confederate leaders committed themselves to extremities, they sought a last interview with the duchess, who unfortunately widened the breach by a refusal to admit De Brederode and his colleagues within the city. A remonstrance was drawn up and presented to the duchess, wherein she was bitterly reproached for her breach of faith, and asked for a performance of her promise that the reformers should not be molested in the free exercise of their religion. Furthermore, they asked that the royal troops, then investing Valenciennes, should be withdrawn, and the new levies disbanded. Messages as reproachful, and full of defiance, were the only reply to these requests. The die was now cast, and thus once flourishing land was destined for many a long year to endure the horrors of a civil strife, in every respect among the most remarkable in the annals of mankind.

The earliest regular encounters between undisciplined patriotism and well-handled loyalty, were everywhere favourable to the latter. In the neighbourhood of Antwerp, John de Marnix was signally defeated by the Count Lamory; while Valenciennes was reduced after a vigorous bombardment. Several other important positions were surrendered by the insurgents, and the royal army—the masters, for the time at least, of the whole country—the

north alone excepted. As yet, the Prince of Orange held aloof—his superior penetration telling him that the movement was premature. His situation, as the hope of the popular party and the adviser of royalty, had become so embarrassing that he contemplated temporary flight, and it needed only the discovery of further royal machinations to settle his determination. The duchess and her council had proposed a new oath of allegiance, to which every state functionary was expected to swear. The terms were such that few of those who had the cause of civil and religious freedom at heart could subscribe to them. It is almost unnecessary, therefore, to say that every inducement held out to the prince failed to elicit his consent to so humiliating a test.

Strong as was William's affection for the Netherlands, and strong as was his inclination to serve his country, he was constrained to regard expatriation as his only alternative against danger. The royal forces were triumphant; the confederates were scattered to the winds, and the Duke of Alva was advancing with an overwhelming force. Resistance was, for the present, at an end. Ere, however, the prince turned his back upon the land he loved so well, he sought an interview with his ancient friend and compatriot Egmont. They met at Willebroeck. Their views had become widely diverse. Egmont still chose to place unswerving reliance upon the honour of the king; William still continued to regard him as the epitome of dissimulation and hypocrisy. No wonder, then, that they should utterly fail in a mutual endeavour to dissuade one another from the line of conduct each had adopted. They parted, and, a few days later, William set out with his family, and found refuge in Germany. Many of the confederate lords followed the prince's example, and the unfortunate Reformers were thus left to the tender mercies of an implacable tyrant. Others, unable from many causes to fly, through sheer terror took the new oath of allegiance, and the movement so inauspiciously begun abruptly ended (1567).

The king had now begun to carry out his plans in

right good earnest; but the bare thought of an occupation of the country by foreign troops again quickly had the effect of driving the people in thousands to voluntary exile. England and Germany began to swarm with expatriated Netherlands; and every effort of the duchess and her council to put a stop to the undesirable exodus failed. In vain, too, did the alarmed regent lay her apprehensions regarding the situation before the king, and implore him to hold back the dreaded army. Her representations only served to render him the more determined in carrying out his designs. Alva was ordered at once to move; and, in a few months, this celebrated commander, with a veteran army of 15,000 men, encamped before Brussels.

His arrival put an end to all idea of further resistance; and the nobility of the land, even Egmont himself, turned out to do him honour. It was soon found that something more than the command of the army had been entrusted to him; and the duchess and her ministers were, however reluctantly, compelled to submit their counsels to his guidance. The new governor *de facto* was not long in developing the plans of his royal master. Having made a most skilful disposition of his troops, he proceeded to summon a Council of State, at which the nobility in general were invited to attend. With the utmost effrontery he proceeded to take advantage of the presence of so many influential personages of the nation to stop their power for mischief. Counts Egmont and Horn were arrested, and many others were seized in like manner. The young Count Mansfield, an early renegade from the ranks of the confederates, escaped through the prescience of his father, as did also the Count of Hoogstraten. Wholesale executions of the leaders summarily followed; but the Counts Egmont and Horn were reserved for future dealing.

The Inquisition was now re-established, the decrees of the Council of Trent promulgated, and the concessions originally granted by the duchess abrogated. At the same time, contrary to all the forms of the constitution,

a special tribunal, consisting of Spaniards, was established, which was to inquire into whatever matters Alva, as president, should choose to bring before it. This council was named by its author the Council of Troubles; but, from the horrors that followed upon its verdicts, the people designated it the Council of Blood. Nothing and no one was regarded as sacred by this infamous institution—a Court of High Commission and of Star Chamber in one. Noble and peasant, clergyman and layman, were dragged before its awful presence without warning or indictment; and such as, in despair of justice, chose to disregard the summons of its officers, were pronounced contumacious, the sentence of exile was passed upon them, and their possessions confiscated.

The rapidity with which the business of this abominable tribunal was got through was astounding. Its victims were daily sent to the gallows, the block, and the stake by the dozen; and from its pitiless and iniquitous sentences there was no appeal. The inordinate savagery of its members was supplemented by cupidity, the estates of the condemned—portions of which were made over to them—furnishing ample remuneration for their labours, and the end in view an adequate excuse for any misgivings they might entertain as to the illegality of their proceedings.

In this condition of things the people of the Netherlands awaited with eagerness the coming of the king—thinking that matters could not possibly be worse, and might improve by his presence. They, however, waited in vain. Philip never had entertained any idea of again setting foot in a land so thoroughly uncongenial. The duchess, who, to do her justice, had endeavoured as well as she could to mitigate the severity of Alva's measures, at length sought permission to retire from a position in which she had become so utterly impotent. Her resignation was accepted with the greatest avidity by the monarch, who, in secret, gloated over the brave work done by his newly-appointed agent. Bad as had been the condition of the Netherlanders under the duchess, the

contrast presented by the virtual sway exercised by the Duke of Alva was so deplorable that she, for little merit of her own, carried with her into Italy the benedictions and regrets of the people—a fact which speaks volumes for the miserable condition of the nation.

The thirst of the infamous Alva and his colleagues for retribution could not be satiated by the blood of those nobles whom a blind confidence or fate had placed within their reach. The Prince of Orange and his family, and those of the confederate lords who had had prudence sufficient to cause them to place themselves beyond the reach of tyranny, were summoned to attend the tribunal, there to answer the charge of treason. The same prudence which had heretofore urged them to seek safety in flight taught them to hold to the security of their various asylums, and judgment, of course, went by default. The confiscations which followed amply repaid their judges for any insult which such a wholesale disobedience to their mandates implied. Montigny, the envoy of the confederates to Madrid, less fortunate than those who had claimed the protection of the empire, was thrown into prison at Segovia, and there secretly beheaded. His companion, the Marquis of Berghen, escaped this fate only by having recourse to poison.

Still the bloody work went forward. Thousands emigrated to England, and there repaid the kindness of their benefactress, the queen, by carrying thither the industry and the skill which had served to place their own nation in the forefront of the thriving and opulent realms of the world. It needed but little more to work the national spirit into a pitch of perfect frenzy, and to draw forth the remonstrances of foreign courts: and that little was shortly to be supplied by the judicial murder of the Counts Egmont and Horn. The fate, indeed, of these two nobles was, in one respect, no more sad than that of hundreds of others who had fallen victims to Alva's merciless tribunal; but their rank, their pre-eminence, and their innocence, and the general pathos which attaches to their execution, have constituted the

circumstance a favourite theme for the poet and the painter ; and no more touching or melancholy episode is recorded in the annals of any nation than this judicial double murder.

Disgusted beyond measure with the bloody doings of Alva and his colleagues, the Emperor Maximilian proceeded to warn their royal master of the danger which attended them, but the infatuated monarch only returned answer to the effect that, as the Netherlands no longer formed a part of the empire, he had no need to trouble himself with their concerns. The representation of the Protestant princes, of course, he treated with all the disdain which a keen hatred dictated ; but that he should have turned a deaf ear to the advice of the holy father in such a matter seems astonishing.

The time, it seems, had now arrived when the Prince of Orange considered that he might strike, for the first time, in behalf of his wretched country. The sufferings of the devoted people had elicited the sympathies of Europe—Catholic and Protestant. It was with the aid of the Reformers of Germany, France, and England that William made his first essay. The contest began in Friesland, where a division of the prince's army, under his brothers, Louis and Adolphus, defeated the royal troops under Gonsalvo de Bracomonte at Heiligerlee. The victory, however, cost the life of Adolphus, who thereby became the protomartyr, so to speak, of that illustrious family, whose blood was destined to be so freely shed in behalf of civil and religious liberty here. Alva, seized with apprehension, now took the command in person, and hastened to Friesland to encounter Louis. He met the insurgent forces at Jemminghem, near Embden. The numbers of the combatants were pretty equal, but discipline and skill were decidedly upon the side of the royal troops. The consequence was that the patriotic forces were thoroughly routed, and the whole province of Friesland reduced.

Successful in this undertaking, the duke now essayed to try conclusions with the main force under William

himself. To this end he turned southward ; but, well knowing that delay would be on his side, he stood upon the defensive—with Fabian policy declining every opportunity which his opponent gave him of coming to an engagement. It was, consequently, a campaign of manœuvre in which two consummate strategists were matched. No conflict ensued , and the prince, in time, straitened for lack of supplies, felt compelled for the present to disband his followers, thus leaving the dreaded duke master of the situation.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE REBELLION—*Continued.*

Arrogance of Alva—The Naval Movements—Return of William of Orange—Progress of the Rebellion—Withdrawal of Alva—Requesens—His Policy—His Embarrassments—Meeting of Royal Troops—Conferences—Death of Requesens—The Provisional Government—Excesses of the Royal Soldiery.

THIS enterprise, abortive though it was, had not been without its good effects, inasmuch as it begat in the triumphant Alva an extravagant presumption which lured him to his ruin. In the plenitude of his vanity, he caused his statue to be cast in brass, and to be placed upon the site of the hotel of Culemborg—the scene of that memorable banquet of De Broderode, at which originated the confederacy of the Gueux, and lately razed to the ground by his order. Furthermore, in supreme disregard of the advice and representations of his colleagues, he proceeded to impose taxes of his own authority, and that in so injudicious a manner that the industry of the land was in a fair way of becoming paralysed. By this means, hundreds of hands, under the pressure of forced idleness, were committed to a life of lawlessness and mischief. Even the merchants of Antwerp and Amsterdam joined in a new movement which, however reprehensible its character, was destined one day to develop into a chief means of resistance to despotic authority, and to re-establish the lost liberty of the nation. The seas began to swarm with pirates and privateers, to whose vessels the ports and harbours of England were as open as those of the Netherlands, and much damage was by their operations caused to the commerce of Philip's peninsular dominions.

The king at length began to awaken to the consequences of his arbitrary and stern policy, and to be dissatisfied with the doings of his agent. His unwar-

rantable presumption in the matter of the effigy had given grave offence; moreover, he had already had occasion to warn him in the matter of the taxes; and, as he had begun to detect in the duke signs of insubordination, he determined, upon the first convenient opportunity, to recall him. A successor to this man of blood was appointed (1572) in the person of La Cerdu, Duke of Medina Cæli, who, after a damaging engagement with the patriotic fleet, arrived in Brussels. Then a difficulty occurred. Alva was contumacious, and actually refused to be superseded, alleging that his term of office had not yet expired, and that he was, moreover, bound to stamp out all semblance of disaffection before he relinquished the seals of office. The newly-appointed governor, therefore, had no alternative but to return in disgust to Spain. Flushed with his success, and left, for the time at least, in undisputed possession of authority, Alva persevered in his old course of oppression, and the condition of the country became truly wretched.

Deliverance, however, was at hand. A change in the policy of the English queen, who had hitherto been one of the Prince of Orange's greatest hopes, precipitated matters. In order to avoid an open rupture with Philip, Elizabeth had refused the protection of her ports to the buccaneers who had been wont to play such havoc with Spanish commerce, and thus driven to extremities, the patriot fleet, under the command of the impetuous William de la Marck, count of Lunoy, surnamed the Wild Boar of the Ardennes, turned backwards, and sought safety in its own waters. Steering his course towards the island of Vorn, off the coast of Holland, he captured the town of Brille, which, though insignificant as regards size, gains importance as being the earliest incident of the resuscitated revolution.

The capture of this place was the signal for a general revolt throughout the provinces of Holland and Zealand—excepting indeed in such places as Amsterdam, where Alva's garrisons were strong enough to check it. To add to the duke's perplexities, his old enemy the Prince of

Orange at this time appeared once more in the Netherlands with an army of Germans, French, English, and other sympathisers, and was now making a triumphant march through Brabant; while his brother Louis, in conjunction with a considerable body of Huguenots under De Genlis, was emulating their doings in Hainault.

The war of the revolution had, indeed, commenced in earnest. Louvain, Mechlin, Oudenarde, and other fortresses fell to the prowess of the prince, and Mons was captured by Louis and his gallant colleagues. Mons was indeed retaken after a gallant defence, but, for the present, the prince met with no serious reverse of fortune. The fever of revolt spread with amazing rapidity, especially in the north; and here the siege of Haarlem forms one of the most memorable incidents, both from the obstinate defence of the place, and the stern cruelty of its besiegers and ultimate captors. Atrocities were likewise committed at Mechlin, at Naerden, and elsewhere. The shocking cruelties perpetrated by the Spaniards called forth reprisals on the part of the patriots, and their doings were of the two perhaps more sanguinary than those of their enemies. Even the great captain of the patriotic navy so far forgot his manhood as to carry on his operations with a sternness equalling his successful daring. To such an extent, indeed, were these unchristian deeds carried, that the Prince of Orange, moved to virtuous indignation, deprived him of command, choosing rather to lose the services of a skilful commander than to permit the cause he had in hand to be brought into disrepute through the excesses of one of its champions.

William had been encouraged in his expedition by hopes and even promises of assistance from France. The French king, however, played him falsely, and the terrible massacre of St Bartholomew's Day removed every hope from this quarter. Nevertheless, the conflict had begun, and it must needs go on, for although the Netherlands had met with many reverses, there was still much to encourage them. Their undisputed dominion of the seas was asserted in a great fight which took place upon the

waters of the Zuyder Zee, when the Spanish admiral, the Count Borsu, was captured, together with a considerable number of his best seamen. Moreover, the numbers of the patriots were swollen to considerable proportions, as town after town, perceiving that revolt, even though unsuccessful, could not add to their miserable condition, threw off the hated yoke and declared for the popular cause. The advantages of discipline and experience were, of course, with the supporters of tyranny, but an indomitable courage, begotten of despair, and a steady determination upon the other side, perfectly adjusted the balance, so that ere long the contest came to be a pretty equal one. More successful in the west than elsewhere, the prince was constrained to assure the struggling bands by his presence, and he, therefore, withdrew to Holland. All his exertions were, however, ineffectual in saving Haarlem from capture, and matters once more began to look anything but promising.

The king, however, had seen enough of the mischief which his bloodthirsty agent had wrought. It was nothing but the profound confidence which he reposed in his devotion to the cause of arbitrary authority, and the faith he possessed in his consummate military skill, that caused him to overlook the insult which his refusal to make way for the Duke de Calí implied, and when, at length, he discovered that he was powerless to hold in check the elements of mischief, which his own policy had let loose, there was really nothing to stand between Alva and his royal master's displeasure. Towards the latter end of the year 1573, Don Louis Zaneza y Requesens, lately governor of the Milanese, arrived in Brussels to supersede the duke, and, in the space of a month, laden with ill-gotten wealth, and with the execrations of all classes of the people, Alva set out for Spain, there to justify, as best he might, his conduct to an offended and chagrined master.

Requesens had come out with instructions to pursue a different policy. Unfortunately, however, for the sake of peace—fortunately, perhaps, for the cause of civil and

religious liberty—the change came too late. The unhappy Netherlanders had had too much reason to be mistrustful of kingly promises to rely upon royal honour now; and, even if they had possessed the requisite confidence, the terms offered would not have sufficed to establish a reconciliation. In vain, then, the new governor reminded the Netherlanders of Alva's triumph and presumption—alike offensive to king and people; equally ineffectual was the dissolution of the Bloody Chamber, and the repeal of the obnoxious taxes; worse than useless was the promulgation of a general amnesty in all the provinces, because the royal pardon was naturally interpreted as an exhibition of weakness, and it therefore elicited contempt.

There was evidently nothing left to the new governor but to pursue the war policy of his predecessor. It was indeed no light task. The condition of the exchequer was deplorable, and no way out of the perplexity presented itself, inasmuch as the sources of home supply had been wantonly destroyed, while those from without were not to be depended on. The pay of the soldiery was considerably in arrears, and insubordination had begun to set in. To make matters worse, the Spanish troops were foiled in an attempt upon Middleburg, and the royal squadron under De Glimes and Van Hamstede thoroughly defeated by Louis de Boisot, the doughty admiral of Zealand (1574). The position of Requesens was at this time most unenviable. The condition of the country at the time of his appointment was such as to demand the employment of extraordinary tact and talent. The Netherlanders were in open rebellion, and the patriotic cause was in the hands of one of the most consummate geniuses of the age. The new governor himself was a man of mere ordinary capacity, and was, moreover, embarrassed by the insubordination of a mercenary soldiery, upon whose aid he was compelled mainly to rely for the execution of his policy.

His operations, however, met with some success. His celerity prevented a junction of the forces of William of

Orange and Count Louis of Nassau ; and, upon the plain of Hookerheyde, his general, Sanchez d'Ávila, totally overthrew the army of the latter, slaying their indefatigable leader, together with his brother Henry and the Prince Palatine. His triumph was, however, but transient ; for the mutinous troops at once broke from control, and, marching upon Antwerp, took possession of it. Here they threatened to commit the most atrocious outrages if their pay were longer withheld. The citizens, in terror, did what they could by means of free gifts to appease their wrath, and their services were shortly employed once more in besieging the town of Leyden. The defence of this place is another of the memorable episodes of the war. The inhabitants, closely beset, were reduced to the utmost straits, and were scarcely kept from mutiny by the firmness and determination of the governor, when a novel idea of the prince at once brought relief to the beleaguered garrison and confusion to their enemies. He caused the dykes of the neighbourhood to be opened, and the sluices to be raised. The sea immediately flowed in, and submerged the country for leagues around, destroying the enemy's camp, and drowning numbers of the soldiery. Provisions were conveyed to the suffering town by means of boats constructed for the purpose, and all danger was for the present removed.

The king of Spain had by this time come to perceive the gravity of the situation, and now, for the first time, he appeared ready to listen to overtures for an adjustment of the difficulties which had so long and so painfully estranged him from his Netherlandish subjects. Under the auspices of the Emperor Maximilian, two conferences were arranged at Breda, at which deputies from each side met ;—to no purpose, however. The deliberations broke down over the crucial question of religious toleration—the very matter that, above all others, had led to the troubles. The attempt thus collapsed. The members separated, to meet again perchance, but in combat of a different kind. The conflict was renewed. Requesens, however, did not long survive this, the most brilliant,

and in every way most remarkable, episode of the war. He was seized, in the autumn of the year 1575, while on his way to Brussels, with a virulent fever, which carried him off with only a few days' warning.

The suddenness of this event had, of course, served to leave the Netherlands without a governor, and, pending the arrival of Don John of Austria, the king's natural brother, the affairs of state were confided to the care of the Council of State. This council was, at the time, made up of nine members—among whom the Duke of Arschot, Viglius, Barlaimont, and Count Mansfeldt, were among the most prominent. This arrangement was no doubt permitted by the king, in the hope that a seeming display of confidence and good faith upon his part might have a wholesome effect upon the revoltors. Unfortunately, the absence of a leader of commanding talent was unmistakably apparent in the unseemly misunderstandings of the council-board, and the anarchy prevailing in the country, consequent upon the unbridled extravagance and licentiousness of the royal soldiery. Many of these were now in open rebellion, and by their enormities rendered the land a very Pandemonium. They took the town of Alost, and followed up their depredations by attacking Maestricht, Antwerp, and Ghent. They carried Maestricht by assault, and there committed unheard-of extravagances. The wealthy city of Amsterdam fell into their hands, and the enormities of Maestricht were here outdone—the finest buildings being destroyed, and the inhabitants put to the sword without mercy. In vain the mutineers were proscribed by the Council of State, and a call made upon all loyal and peace-loving members of the community to wage uncompromising warfare against them. They were masters of the situation, and for the present their extravagant operations went forward unabated and uncontrolled.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE REBELLION—*Continued.*

The States-general—Pacification of Ghent—Union of Breda—Don John and the Perpetual Edict—Perfidy of the New Governor—Rivalries—The Archduke Ernest—Appointment of the Prince of Parma—Union of Utrecht—The Duke of Anjou—Attempt on the Life of William of Orange—Anjou's Perfidy—Assassination of William.

IN this condition of things the States-general were convoked, and a prospect of better times was thus opened. But, ere the machinery of government could be brought into working order, a new phase of administrative perplexity occurred—the members of the council being unexpectedly arrested, by the grand bailiff of Brabant, upon the charge of treacherous intercourse with the Spaniards. The States-general were now in effect the executive as well as the legislative power. The Council of State indeed existed, but its authority was a merely nominal one. The country was for a time virtually a republic, and the States-general, in the exercise of an unfettered authority, issued manifestoes, and invited the aid of foreigners. A close union was formed between the various provinces by means of a congress held at Ghent; and here the celebrated treaty, known as the Pacification of Ghent, was established (1576).

The spirit of this treaty, which comprised twenty-five articles, was to the effect that the northern and southern states should mutually support each other in the council-chamber and in the field, live in perfect harmony and good fellowship, and equally keep in view the grand object of the league—namely, the expulsion of the detested Spaniards and the foreign mercenaries of their sovereign. Its conditions likewise pledged them to a

perfect toleration and respect for those who chose to adhere to the precepts and practices of the ancient religion; to suspend all edicts against heresy, annul all confiscations and sentences passed by the Spanish governors, and to efface, as far as possible, the monuments of national humiliation which the high-handed Alva had set up.

The execution of this important treaty was accompanied by universal expressions of joy, and followed by the expulsion of Spanish garrisons from the city. In the midst of their exuberant mirth, the newly-appointed agent of the Spanish monarch arrived in the country. He immediately proceeded to notify his arrival to the States-general in a missive replete with conciliatory phrases. Alarmed at the unexpected turn matters had taken, and perplexed by reason of the condescension evinced in Don John's letter of greeting, they applied to the Prince of Orange for advice. William, with his usual caution and penetration, bade them withhold all recognition of the new governor, and refuse all negotiation with him, until the foreign troops should be withdrawn from the country, and the terms of the late treaty duly recognised. The advice of their great counsellor was taken, and, for the sake of further acquainting the new governor with the condition of popular feeling, a second compact was prepared and signed by the most influential members of the community - ecclesiastical and lay, known as the Union of Breda (1577).

For a time everything progressed pleasantly. By means of a document known as the Perpetual Edict, Don John engaged to govern according to the terms of the Pacification of Ghent; and his promise was certainly made good. The obnoxious garrisons were, one by one, removed, and their places supplied by Flemish and Walloon troops, while, in every way, he was careful not to overstep the bounds that had been placed upon his authority.

The hopes of the confiding, however, were shortly dispelled, and the suspicions of the distrustful realised; for, from some inscrutable reason, his line of conduct in time

took a diametrically opposite turn. He began the command of the forces, and the control of the national revenue. Meeting with fierce opposition from the States, he sent secretly to Spain for support. The despatches were intercepted by Henry of Navarre, and forthwith handed to the Prince of Orange. When the treacherous documents were published by the prince, the indignation of the country was intense. The governor, however, was determined upon having absolute authority; and he was not the man to go back from his resolve. Pursuing the system of treachery which his secret despatches to King Philip had inaugurated, he got possession of Navarre, whilst Namur and Luxemburg were at once induced to give him their support.

On the other hand, the States-general, inviting William of Orange to Brussels, conferred upon him the title of governor of Brabant, and invested him with dictatorial powers. However politic such a step might appear, and however worthy the prince to receive so great an honour, it proved a false one. The elevation of William to so exalted a position mightily offended the pride of the aristocracy, who, by way of placing a check upon his authority, constituted the Duke of Arschot, the representative of a rival house, governor of Flanders. This unseemly feud entirely vitiated the advantages of the Pacification of Ghent, and strengthened the hands of Don John. Not that the opposing, or Catholic party, as it might be termed, had any intention of submitting to the arrogant governor, or of abandoning the cause they had in hand. On the contrary, as an earnest of their determination to carry on the conflict with determination, they immediately essayed to select a captain to lead their patriotic bands. Their choice fell upon the Archduke Ernest, son of the German emperor, and a near relative of Philip himself. The Prince of Orange, with great magnanimity, acquiesced in the new arrangement, and employed his talents in the preparation of a document which set forth the duties of the youthful governor, and indicated the bounds of his authority.

The great genius of the Prince of Orange was too valuable at this crisis to be dispensed with; and he was readily constituted lieutenant to the new governor, while the Catholic representative, the Duke of Arschot, was soon reduced to a comparative nonentity. The duke, indeed, had little reason to be grateful to those who, to serve their own envious ends, had made him their champion. The bloody persecutions of Alva tenaciously lingered in men's memories, and, unfortunately, the religion which he had so extravagantly championed, had become to the vulgar and thoughtless identical with all that was cruel and intolerant. No wonder then that the hatred conceived for the creed itself should be shared by its votaries, and above all, that the recognised upholders of its interests should receive the greatest share of the general opprobrium. An ill advised remark of the duke's served to fill up the measure of popular indignation. He was seized and conveyed away a prisoner, while several others in high authority were, upon indefinite charges, cast into prison. The two leaders of the movement—Ryhove and Hembyse—then divided the government between them.

Alarmed for the success of the patriotic cause, the States-general despatched the Prince of Orange to Ghent; and it needed all his tact and eloquence to procure the liberation of the imprisoned duke, and to restore some kind of tranquillity to the disturbed city, for they had at their command as many as 20,000 well-armed and enthusiastic followers.

There were now, of course, two great rivals for supremacy in the Netherlands—the one upheld by an autocratic monarch, the other by as autocratic a people. Further collision could not, therefore, under such circumstances be avoided, and the civil warfare was consequently renewed. The royal governor, it was shortly seen, had not flung down the gauntlet unadvisedly; for, as soon as the need came, 20,000 Spanish, Italian, and Portuguese soldiery sprang, as it were, from the forests of Luxemburg and the soil of France, with an experienced general

—Alexander Farnese, prince of Parma, son of the duchess, the late governess of the Netherlands, at its head. The patriots were not without a considerable force; but they were not prepared, it would appear, to meet in combat the well-disciplined troops at the command of Don John.

The first encounter of importance occurred early in January at Gembloux, 1578. The result of it was the complete overthrow of the patriotic forces under De Goignies, and the loss of all their artillery and baggage. Louvain and other places surrendered to the victors, and the archduke, considering himself in danger, retreated with his council to Antwerp. Despair, however, was forbidden by the action of the city of Amsterdam, which, at this time, declared for the patriotic cause, and by hopes of assistance from beyond the frontiers. Elizabeth of England, though she declined to face the consequences of an active participation, gave them help both in men and money, and subsidised a large body of German Protestants under the Prince Palatine Casimir; whilst Henry the Third of France permitted his brother, the Duke of Anjou, to resume the title of their protector, and assisted them in many underhand ways.

It was well for them that these beacons of hope shone out so brilliantly in their front, for there was otherwise much to depress the spirits of those who had the success of the cause at heart. Dissensions were already rife in the motley ranks of the patriots, and insubordination existed among the rank and file, while the more southern or Walloon provinces, whose narrow ideas of religious duty had hitherto limited their aspirations to mere civil freedom, seceded altogether from the cause, and maintained throughout the conflict a tantalising neutrality.

Towards the end of the year, the great author of the renewed troubles was suddenly removed by death; and his office was at once taken by his lieutenant, the Duke of Parma. The circumstances of his decease are surrounded with mystery. It is alleged that he was poisoned by order of the king, who had reason to suspect him of complicity in a plot against his sway in the Netherlands.

This, however, it is but fair to say, is mere matter of surmise. It was the unbounded suspicion which the king entertained of his brother that prevented Don John from thoroughly stamping out the rebellion at this time; for the king's orders were so embarrassing, that, while his enemies were exposing themselves to the attacks of the Spaniards through their unseemly quarrels, the governor was compelled to let a golden opportunity slip, and to lie idle at Namur.



NAMUR.

This inactivity of the royal commander gave the Prince of Orange breathing time. Deserted by the Duke of Anjou and the Prince Palatine, the prince determined upon drawing the bonds of union among the provinces more closely. Accordingly, eschewing the equivocal alliance of the Walloon provinces, he convened a general

assembly of the States at Utrecht; and the deputies from all the provinces signed the compact known as the Union of Utrecht, which gave a name to the confederation, and became the foundation and plan of their constitution.

The Prince of Parma, on the other hand, was immediately supplied with the necessaries that had been denied to his predecessor; and, fully equipped, he advanced to Maastricht. The place was captured in the summer of 1579, and, in accordance with the usages of the times, delivered over to the passions of the soldiery. The Union of Utrecht was followed, within a year, by an assembly of the States-general at Antwerp (1580), who, with some opposition on the part of the Catholic deputies, abrogated at once and for ever the authority of the king of Spain, and declared the United Provinces—as the confederation was now officially called—a free and independent state. This step was taken in consequence of the failure of further negotiations which had taken place at Cologne, having for their object the reconciliation of the country to the Spanish monarch. This congress was attended by some of the most eminent statesmen of Europe; but all the arguments which the friends of peace could adduce were **wasted** upon the Envoy of the intolerant Spaniard, **whose** instructions were to the effect that no compromise should be made in the direction of religious liberty. Acting upon the advice of the Prince of Orange, the States-general offered the sovereignty to the Duke of Alençon, afterwards Duke of Anjou, who accepted the honour tendered him, and promised to support the struggling patriots with a large army so soon as the King of France, his brother, should be delivered from the perplexities which at that time beset him. At the same time, he gave a solemn promise to observe the articles of the Union of Utrecht, and to govern in every way in accordance with the wishes of his new subjects.

So bold a step was sufficient to fill up the measure of Philip's wrath against the most prominent actors in this movement, and, indeed, in all that had gone to thwart

his arbitrary schemes; and he, accordingly, issued in March, 1579, the infamous edict of prescription against the Prince of Orange, which branded him as a public pest—the author of all the troubles under which the country laboured, and advised his assassination. To this infamous document the prince nobly replied by his famous “Apology,” the arguments of which serve to refute all the heinous charges the enraged monarch had brought against him.

The effect of this nefarious design upon the life of a popular idol was to make the prince’s assassination a subject of study for the bigoted and avaricious. The earliest attempt against his life was that made by a young Biscayan named Jaureguay, who, while presenting him with a petition, fired a pistol at him. The bullet struck him behind the ear, but, fortunately, the shot did not prove fatal. In this nefarious attempt his employer, a merchant of Amsterdam, and a Dominican monk were implicated, and all three suffered the penalty of their crime. But it testifies significantly to the religious notions of the times that these would-be murderers were after their execution honoured by the Jesuits as martyrs to a holy cause, and their relics held up to public veneration.

Meantime the war progressed, though languidly. The chief exploits were the siege of Cambray by the Duke of Parma, its relief by the new sovereign, and the surrender of Lannoy, after a gallant resistance, to the governor. As this campaign waxed more determined, many vicissitudes marked its progress, towns being captured and recaptured with marvellous rapidity.

The patriots had soon another difficulty to contend with in the perfidy of their chosen sovereign, who, probably, impatient of a limited sway, proceeded to play his subjects falsely, and to seize upon the chief of the Flemish strongholds. His main object at this time appears to have been to get possession of the strong fortress of Antwerp, and to place it in the hands of his French soldiery. At a preconcerted signal the Flemish guard was suddenly overpowered, and a band of his followers entered

the city with shouts of triumph. The citizens, perceiving at once the condition of matters, flew to arms. All ranks joined in the common work of defence against the insidious enemy, who were everywhere worsted and driven from the city. The duke himself, who was present and had given the signal, barely escaped the popular vengeance by flight to Termonde, which place, among others, had fallen, by a similar employment of treachery, into his hands. The influence of his friend, the Prince of Orange, shielded him from the popular resentment, and it was through his earnest pleadings that the perfidious duke was reinstated in his position. He did not, however, long survive his treachery and unexpected good fortune. Unable to endure the scorn of those whom he had intended so grievously to wrong, he withdrew to France upon a trifling pretext, and never again set foot upon the soil of the Netherlands. He died suddenly in the summer of the following year (1584).

The death of the Duke of Anjou had now left the United Provinces without a ruler, and, in the exercise of their right, they sought to invest the sovereignty in the person of him who had been their virtual leader throughout the vicissitudes of their career of rebellion. It was at a time of great perplexity that the great man was called upon to assume the dignity his genius and unflagging honest patriotism had earned him. The men of Flanders had grossly offended his honour by unfounded suspicions, the governors of the northern provinces of Friesland and Groningen had gone over to the King of Spain, the town of Bruges had been basely surrendered to the Spanish governor, and the demagogue Hembyse was contemplating a similar process with regard to Ghent. The Prince of Orange had, however, the confederation at his back, and was otherwise greatly strengthened in his position. Unfortunately for the patriotic cause, the great man was not spared to grapple with the difficulties that beset it. The cowardly and dreadful edict of the Spanish king had but too well produced the effect its promulgator had intended. The fate

of the would-be assassin Jaureguay and his accomplices had failed to inspire the fanatical with a wholesome dread of the consequences of such an act ; for another miscreant, two years later, tried his hand, and, unfortunately, with too much success. On the 10th July 1584, a native of Franche Comte, Balthazar Gerard, under colour of seeking a passport, shot the patriot as he was leaving his dining-room in company with his wife and sister. Three balls entered the body of the prince, who at once fell mortally wounded into the arms of an attendant. He was conveyed to an adjoining apartment, where he soon after expired. The assassin was seized, and, a few days afterwards, paid the penalty of his great crime. He was condemned to a cruel death ; but he bore his fate with a stoicism worthy of a better cause. The confessions of the murderer implicated many, and among them the prince-governor himself, who, it is alleged, knew of the project long before its execution.

CHAPTER XV.

THE REBELLION—*Continued.*

Appointment of Prince Maurice—Parma's Successes—Siege of Antwerp—Friendship of Elizabeth of England—Leicester—Sidney and Zutphen—Philip's Ambition—The Great Armada—English Sympathy—The Expedition—Fate of the Armada—Spanish Reverses on Land—Success of Parma—His Death.

If the agents of a foul murder hoped to effect anything beyond a mean gratification of private resentment by the nefarious deed, they were grievously disappointed. Such base methods never yet advanced a cause, bad or good ; and this essay was destined to form no exception to the rule. The removal of the great statesman inflicted, no doubt, a stunning blow to the patriotic movement, but it quickly revived. The struggling patriots abandoned at once whatever projects they had entertained in the way of compromise, and girt up their loins afresh for further conflict. The youthful son of the murdered prince, the afterwards renowned Prince Maurice, bending over his father's lifeless corpse, vowed to follow in the glorious steps of his sire, and to him, young as he was, they gave the confidence they had been wont to place in the great departed.

For the present, indeed, it appeared as though the cause of despotism would triumph over that of patriotism ; for, ere the astounded provinces had thoroughly recovered from the effects of so sudden a blow, the Prince of Parma was able to overrun the southern provinces ; and, by reducing Ghent, Mechlin, Termonde, Ypres, Brussels, and other fortresses, virtually to detach the provinces of Flanders and Brabant from the confederacy. The process, however, had left these provinces in so wretched a condition that the acquisition of their

allegiance was but a doubtful gain. Half of the inhabitants, choosing the hardships of the campaign to the despotism of the Spaniard, emigrated northward to swell the ranks of the patriots, whose resolution, even in the face of so much that tended to depress, had not yet flagged; while the fine country itself, once the garden of the Netherlands and the seat of her industrious and opulent life, shortly became a tangled wilderness—its once proud and opulent cities impoverished, and their citizens reduced to beggary. Antwerp, the greatest and most valued city of the south, was still in the hands of the patriots, and to this important fortress the Prince of Parma now (1585) laid siege.

This undertaking is undoubtedly the most remarkable incident of the war, both from the stubborn resistance offered by the citizens, under Philip De St. Aldegonde, and the soldierly qualities displayed by the Prince of Parma, who himself conducted the operations of the siege. In no part of his military career did the great general more truly merit the confidence which the king had reposed in him than now. From its peculiar position, this fortress seemed to defy attack; but the prescience and consummate ability of the assailants overcame every obstacle, and, after a siege of some two years, in which various novel expedients were tried both by besiegers and besieged, and many a stubborn and sanguinary hand-to-hand encounter occurred, in which the prince himself, fighting as a common soldier, performed prodigies of valour, the devoted garrison, cut off from every means of supply, was forced to surrender (1585). Such of the population as would not submit to the Spanish yoke were permitted to retire and share, if they chose, the fortunes of the patriots; and many of the inhabitants of the captured city consequently migrated northward.

Pending the operations before Antwerp, the patriotic leaders had taken counsel together, and had made overtures to the King of France and the Queen of England. Not yet aspiring to republican independence, they made an offer of the crown first to Henry the Third and then

to Elizabeth. The former was too deeply engaged in the embarrassing concerns of his own realm to do more than accord to their ambassador an honourable reception, to treat them to fair promises, and wish them god-speed. Elizabeth, with that caution which the perplexities of her situation at the time warranted, declined the honour of sovereignty, but she held out to them promises of future assistance; and, as an earnest of her sympathy, advanced them money and sent a small body of troops to Holland, under her favourite courtier, Robert Dudley, earl of Leicester, undertaking at the same time the protection of the seven united provinces.

Leicester's incapacity as a military commander and his talent for intrigue were soon brought to light; and the disappointed Hollanders were not long in transferring certain honours they had intended to confer upon Leicester, by way of flattering the English queen, to their own prince, the young Maurice, whom they created stadtholder, captain-general, and admiral of Holland and Zealand. The upright and talented Johann Van Olden Barnaveldt was meanwhile appointed to direct the government of the provinces. The illustrious Sir Philip Sydney, whom Elizabeth had made governor of Flushing—which port, with others, had passed, by way of security for sums advanced, into the hands of the English—with the English forces at his disposal, maintained the reputation of his country in the art of war by attacking and capturing Axel and routing the Spanish troops in the battle of Zutphen. The chivalrous knight paid the penalty of his valour with his life, which he forfeited upon this memorable field. The balance of success was, however, with the Prince of Parma, lately created a duke. The presence of Leicester, who behaved with all the presumption and haughtiness characteristic of him, had become embarrassing to the Hollanders, who soon, therefore, learned to despise him for his incapacity, to hate him for his pride, and to mistrust him for his double-dealing and treachery. His position here, in time, became so irksome that, to the joy of the patriotic leaders, he returned to England

(1587), where he was called upon to justify his conduct to his queen.

Prince Maurice was now at liberty to develop his plans for the complete severance of the United Provinces from the trammels of Spain, and the ultimate establishment of a kingdom which was destined to take foremost place among the powers of Europe. His great military genius was largely assisted by circumstances. The King of Spain had evidently over-estimated his strength, and his colossal schemes were destined to miscarry by reason of the inadequate means at his disposal. As if the determined resistance of a portion of his dominions, and the disaffection and threatened revolt of another (Portugal), had not furnished him with sufficient employment for his statesmanship and means, and labour enough for his soldiery, he must needs proceed to interfere in the concerns of France, and finally, to commence hostilities with England, by despatching a great Armada thither for the invasion of her shores.

Philip had indeed received no slight provocation from England; and, regarded from a fair point of view, there was a certain amount of justification in the undertaking. The encouragement which the patriotic Netherlanders received from England must have sorely vexed him. It could not be otherwise than galling to him, an autocrat of the most rigid school, monarch of the New World, and master of the fairest and wealthiest portions of the Old, whose armies, trained for years in the stern school of the battle-ground, and possessing a world-wide reputation as the first warriors of Christendom, and the most daring and accomplished soldiery the world had seen since the fall of the mighty Roman empire; who had frustrated the great military powers of the Continent, and shattered at a blow the might of the Saracens, to reflect that, through the instrumentality of one nation, despicable in point of size and hated for its heretical leanings, opposition to his will had become a perplexing problem, and might be carried to a successful issue.

It was scarcely to be supposed that the revolt of the

Netherlands unaided could be successful—the sublime devotion of the nation and its skilful leadership notwithstanding. It was the sympathy and aid afforded by England that mainly prevented a collapse of the patriotic struggle. Not by the queen alone was this useful assistance given; indeed, the sympathy of Elizabeth was perfect indifference when compared with the enthusiasm which her subjects, of almost every persuasion, rank, and calling, displayed in behalf of the struggling patriots—"While Elizabeth," says Mr. Green,* "dribbled out her secret aid to the Prince of Orange, the London traders sent him half-a-million from their own purses, a sum equal to a year's revenue of the crown. Volunteers stole across the Channel in increasing numbers to the aid of the Dutch, till the five hundred Englishmen who fought in the beginning of the struggle rose to a brigade of five thousand, whose bravery turned one of the most critical battles of the war."

The great Armada, comprising one hundred and thirty vessels of all classes, of which sixty-four were of a size and tonnage hitherto unconstructed, left the Tagus in the month of June 1588, under the command of the Duke of Medina Sidonia. This colossal array was furnished with 2400 pieces of artillery, and a well-stocked magazine. On board were 30,000 men—mariners of tried skill, and soldiers who had seen long and hard service in the field, while 34,000 more, of a similar character, lay encamped in the Netherlands, under the Prince of Parma, ready to embark in the event of a successful landing.

Formidable as the expedition appeared, it found England fully prepared. This was indeed no secret, even to the invaders. "When I shall have landed," wrote Medina Sidonia to his sovereign, "I must fight battle after battle." And thus it would have been, but for the interposition of an all-wise Providence, who willed it otherwise. For a force numerically stronger than his own, trained in the same stern school, moved to the highest enthusiasm by the stirring utterances of a brave

* *A Short History of the English People.*

queen, and animated by the most lofty sense of patriotic devotion, lay between him and the capital, ready to cross pikes with the invaders should they succeed in effecting a landing. But the first line of defence, and that upon which the country most relied, was the navy of England, notwithstanding that it was an unimposing force of merely 80 vessels, utterly insignificant as regards size, and greatly undermanned. Nevertheless, its official strength represented an aggregate of nautical skill and daring that the world has perhaps never before or since seen. The chief command had been given to Lord Howard of Effingham, a devoted papist, but a still more devoted Englishman. Under him were Drake, the prince of buccaneers; Hawkins, the intrepid destroyer of Spanish exclusiveness in the Indian seas; Frobisher, the hero of the North-West Passage, and a host of sea-dogs, in whose ears the howling of the storm and the thunder of artillery were but agreeable music.

With the details of this memorable contest, all readers of English history are familiar. How the elements in their might fought upon the side of England, and the brilliant courage and seamanship of our ancestors completed the work which the forces of nature commenced; and how, after escaping the onset of their foes, the luckless residue of this mighty armament, in attempting a passage round the north of the island, were driven, some upon the coast of Norway, others to founder upon the rocks of the Hebrides and the far-off shores of Galway; the rest, mere wrecks, and laden with pest-stricken and dying men, finding shelter in the friendly harbour of Cadiz, to carry to Spain the story of the prowess of the islanders, and of the still more terrible ocean which guarded their home.

In the overthrow of the great Armada, the Netherlanders had taken a part, and to them, therefore, belongs a share of whatever glory attaches to the event. What we may now call the Dutch fleet, under the command of Justin of Nassau, had done good service by blocking up the Flemish ports, whereby a junction between Parma

and Medina Sidonia was prevented; and thus the strength of the Armada was in a measure reduced. This, however, was but a simple duty of the Netherlanders towards a nation that had done so much for them.

During the preparation of the armament the operations of the war in the Netherlands had been of necessity at a stand-still. So soon, however, as the Duke of Parma could recover from the staggering blow which its defeat administered, and had justified his conduct to his royal master, he once more turned his attention towards the pursuit of his old plans. Fortunately for the cause of the Netherlands, his services were, at this time, required in another field. The Leaguers, under Henry the Fourth, had lately gained the decisive battle of Ivry, and their general success was such that the appointment of a competent general to command the opposing forces was found to be absolutely necessary to avert a collapse of the Spanish schemes.

Important as, at this juncture, was the presence of Parma in the Netherlands, he was despatched to this new field. His military genius retrieved the waning fortunes of his sovereign; but it was with the greatest possible annoyance that he had abandoned the project so dear to his heart—namely, the complete subjugation of the Netherlands. His constitution had been already undermined by the fatigues of an active life, and the anxieties of a responsible and difficult position, and perpetual disappointments, added to bodily infirmity, shortly occasioned his dissolution. He died at Arras, 1592, in the forty-eighth year of his age. His mind was vigorous to the last, and at the time of his death—enfeebled though he was in body and racked with pain—he was planning new schemes and new campaigns against the defenders of civil and religious liberty, in whatever regions of the earth they might be found to exist.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE REBELLION—*Continued.*

Count Mansfeldt—Prince Maurice of Nassau—His Successes—
The Archduke Ernest—Fuentes—The Archduke Albert and
the Infanta Isabella—Engagements at Turnhout and Cadiz
—Death of Philip—Progress of the War—Battle of Nieu-
port—Overtures for Peace—Comparison of the Opposing
Forces—Siege and Capture of Ostend.

THE removal of the Duke of Parma caused no cessation of hostilities, for if the king had lost in his vicegerent a determined leader, his enemies had gained as determined a one in the person of Prince Maurice of Nassau. The deceased duke was succeeded as governor by the Count Mansfeldt, whom, while living, he had selected, and whose choice the king at once confirmed. Unfortunately for the well-being of his cause, he had, by the despatch from Spain of the Count of Fuentes, created a dual government; and the patriotic leaders were not slow to take advantage of the confusion which divided counsels in their enemies' camp occasioned. Another circumstance aided Prince Maurice. The king, whose deep interest in the affairs of France was shown in his despatch of Parma against Henry of Navarre, had long begun to grow cold in the matter of the Netherlandish rebellion, or at least to regard it with secondary concern. His French schemes necessitated the employment of all his available forces, and a constant drain was therefore made upon the troops employed in the country. The forces arrayed against the Netherlanders were consequently greatly weakened.

The successes of Prince Maurice were henceforth uniform and considerable. The conversion of Henry the

Fourth to Catholicism, and the consequent disruption of the League, by and by checked this drain upon the royal resources; but, on the other hand, the power of the enemy had increased in a wonderful degree. In particular, the possession of a gigantic fleet had given the northern provinces a manifest advantage; for they were not only able to drive a lucrative commerce with neutral states, but to play havoc with the colonies, and especially those of Portugal, which country then formed an integral portion of Spanish territory.

It was felt by the disappointed king that the time had come when he must either strike a decisive blow, or abandon the entire project of bringing the republic under the yoke of Spain. Since the death of Parma, his armies had met with nothing but irritating reverses; and he had begun to perceive how much of this want of success was due to the absence of a ruler of firmness, whose operations should be untrammelled by the presence of a coadjutor. He decided now to appoint such a ruler, and his choice, when made, fell upon the Archduke Ernest, brother of the emperor. The appointment of this estimable prince should have been regarded as an omen of happier things, and so far as he himself was concerned, the first expectations which his upright character promised were justified. He at once entered into communication with the States with a view to a compromise; but the Netherlanders could not yet forget the past perfidy of his royal master, and all his advances were consequently rejected with the firmness which success warranted. Moreover, that natural outcome of bigotry and revenge, assassination, was still rampant, and on more than one occasion, Prince Maurice ran great risk of sharing the unhappy fate of his father. The public temper was such as to cause it—and not unnaturally—to recognise, in certain attempts upon the prince's life, the hand of the newly-appointed governor. The breach was therefore not in a way to be closed, for even while yet, with a forlorn hope, the prince persevered in his endeavours for peace, victory was attending the arms of Prince Maurice, who succeeded

in capturing from his enemy the town of Groningen, which proved, from its commanding position, an acquisition of no mean value.

The excellent Prince Ernest did not long maintain his position as governor. His health broke down beneath the pressure of anxiety and disappointed hopes; and in the early part of the year 1595, he succumbed to an attack of fever. His place was temporarily filled by the Count of Fuentes; and this commander, in conjunction with the renowned Spanish general, Mondragon, gained some important advantages over the French who had lately declared war against Spain. The same generals were equally active in the Netherlands; but their successes did little to advance the royal cause here, and within a year of Prince Ernest's death, his brother, the Archduke Albert, arrived to supersede Fuentes as governor of this troublesome portion of the Spanish dominion; for, from a Spanish point of view at least, the revolted provinces were yet an integral part of Philip's kingdom.

The wily monarch had a deep motive in this appointment. He possessed great confidence in him both as a soldier and a statesman, that confidence had been well earned during his governorship of Portugal, but there was more than this to suggest the choice. Every overture that had been made by his predecessor to the revolted provinces, it has been remarked, was rejected by them, and little hope could be entertained that they would ever again be brought to acknowledge, either by force or otherwise, the Spanish supremacy. These were therefore, in effect, lost. The southern provinces, however, to which only the name of Netherlands should henceforth strictly apply, were yet subject to Philip, though their fealty was but a sullen one. He had it now in contemplation to form of these provinces a separate principality, and, by the appointment over them of a popular sovereign, to gain their unequivocal allegiance, and perchance, by their instrumentality, to win back the revolted provinces of the north. This sovereign was no other than his daughter, the Infanta Isabella, in whose

interest he had risked much in France, and whom now he despaired of ever seeing upon the French throne, or indeed of succeeding to any of her French titles. Once queen of the Netherlands, she was, by means of a papal dispensation, to wed her cousin, the newly-appointed governor. The appointment of the Archduke Albert was necessarily intended as a preparative measure; for he was expected first to gain the good-will of his future subjects, the rest being expected to follow. At the same time, he was to prosecute the enterprise so dear to the royal heart.

His operations were, for the present, confined to a counteracting of the plans of the French monarch, and in these he exhibited much military skill. The United Provinces he treated meanwhile to diplomatic overtures, whose aim was reconciliation. In this worthy endeavour he hoped to secure the good offices of the Prince of Orange, who, as Count Beuren, had paid the penalty of an over-confidence in Philip's chivalry by years of incarceration in a Spanish prison. His presence in the camp of the enemy, and his very advocacy of the Spanish suit, however, had aroused the suspicions of his countrymen; and the new governor consequently gained nothing by his instrumentality.

Disappointed in his endeavours, and despairing of regaining the allegiance of the provinces, he determined at length upon an invasion of their territory. A detachment of his forces, under the Count of Varras, was met by Prince Maurice at Turnhout. The engagement was an affair of cavalry, in which the Dutch entirely routed their enemy, with a loss of men variously estimated at from 1000 to over 2000, including Varras himself. A successful attack upon Cadiz at this time, by a united English and Dutch squadron, assisted this brilliant engagement in giving the United Provinces spirit, and to console them for the reverse their French ally sustained in the loss of Amiens, which took place soon after (1597.)

These successes of the Spaniards in their contest with Henry of France were, however, but transient, as the

captured fortress was quickly restored to its former owners; but, as circumstances were shortly to render French success or failure a matter of comparative indifference to the provinces, their cause was much more effectively advanced by the triumphant operations of Prince Maurice, who had reduced fortress after fortress in rapid succession.

A treaty of peace was concluded, May 1598, with France; and falling quickly upon this, the Archduke and Isabella, lately affianced, were invested with the sovereignty of Burgundy and the Netherlands. Their relations with Spain, however, were not in the least affected by this arrangement. Spanish ministers superintended the affairs of the newly-constructed territory—Spanish principles guiding their administration; and Spanish generals—or those of Spanish appointment—with Spanish troops, still fought upon the side of coercion. Albert and Isabella were not styled Duke and Duchess of Burgundy, but—without distinction of sex—simply “the Archdukes.” Their offspring—should they be blest with any—were not to marry without the consent of the King of Spain; and, in the event of their being childless, their dominions were to revert to the Spanish crown. The only real mark of separation between Spain and the Netherlands was, that the subjects of the new sovereigns were to be excluded, like foreigners in general, from the privilege of trading with the East and West Indies. The prostrate Netherlanders were glad to accept even this show of political independence, while the United Provinces—true to the cause they had in hand—regarded them in their correct light, namely, that of a decoy employed to entice them back to their allegiance to the Spanish crown.

The independence of the Netherlands then—even in so far as the Netherlands proper are concerned—was but a shadow. With regard to the United Provinces of the north—though they had become, in effect, a free and independent republic—from a Spanish point of view, they were yet part and parcel of the Spanish realm. Imme-

diately after the execution of this important act, the Infanta delegated to her affianced husband the sovereign control of the land; and his inauguration, which was accomplished at Brussels in August, 1598, was attended with much pomp. He lingered a while in the Netherlands for the purpose of setting in motion the machinery of government, when, leaving the affairs of the country in the hands of the cardinal, Andrew of Austria, he set out for Spain to celebrate his nuptials, and to bring his consort into the land of her future sway. Ere he reached his destination, he heard of the demise of Philip, which, after long and severe suffering, borne with a fortitude which forms the one redeeming feature of his hard character, occurred in September, 1597, in the seventy-third year of his age. The archduke did not reach Spain till the spring of 1599, when the nuptials were celebrated at Valencia.

Six months later, the archdukes arrived in the Netherlands. They found matters anything but quiet in their dominions. The cardinal Andrew and his lieutenant, Francisco Mendoza, had so mismanaged matters during their absence, that, while the contumacious northern provinces had been able to preserve their soil inviolate from the tread of the Spaniard, their high-handed proceedings had given grave offence to several of the German princes, who were not slow to retaliate. Fortunately for the interests of the newly-created sovereigns, the preparation of the German expedition could not have been planned with less wisdom, nor a worse appointment made than that of placing the Count de la Lippe at its head. The expedition from which Prince Maurice had expected so much that was favourable to the cause he championed, proved a miserable failure, for, after the first unimportant engagement with the enemy, the entire force became thoroughly demoralised, and further operations were therefore out of the question.

Thrown completely upon his own resources, the prince determined no longer to be content with mere defensive measures; but to organise a system of aggression. He

consequently proceeded to equip a powerful fleet for the purpose of making a demonstration upon the Spanish and Portuguese coasts, and of attacking the Spanish colonies in Africa. The expedition proved almost as barren of results, however, as had that of the German princes: though this arose mainly from causes over which no human skill or foresight could have had the least control.

Such was the condition of things with the United Provinces when the archdukes set foot in the Netherlands. Matters did not, however, progress smoothly with them. The vigour and genius of Prince Maurice soon restored the lost balance. The archdukes' forces were wasted in a winter campaign, and their schemes frustrated by a mutiny in the camp and by the embarrassment of an empty exchequer. Availing himself of his enemy's perplexities, the prince determined upon a vigorous aggressive movement. His schemes were laid with such profound secrecy that the archdukes had no suspicion of their enemy's intentions until his troops were upon the threshold of their dominions. The plan of the prince was to make an irruption into Flanders—the very heart of his enemy's country. To this end, in the summer of 1600, he assembled his whole disposable force, to the number of 17,000 men, in the island of Walcheren, whence they disembarked upon the Flemish coast, and made their way to the neighbourhood of Bruges. Here, disappointed in his expectations of co-operation or connivance upon the part of the citizens of this once patriotic centre, he marched forward to Nieuport, which place he immediately invested.

The first effect of surprise over, the Archduke and his consort proceeded to adopt counter measures, and ordered a muster of the troops at their disposal at Ghent. Here they were passed in review before Isabella, and here she addressed them in tones of encouragement and exhortation to loyalty. These spirited utterances were duly responded to in the sequel by the enthusiasm with which they went forward to meet her foes. With the Archduke

Albert at their head, the enthusiastic soldiery pressed onward towards Prince Maurice's position. On their way, the archduke's troops re-captured several of the fortresses which had lately fallen before the advance of the invaders, and drove back a detachment of Scottish troops, under the command of Count Ernest of Nassau, whom he forced to seek shelter in Ostend, then in the hands of the northern soldiery. Their work, however, had scarcely yet begun; for, whilst the defeated count had been thus disputing the ground with the archduke, Prince Maurice had well employed the time in making a careful disposition of his forces. Resolved to stake everything upon the decision of battle, he, with heroic bravery, emulated the conduct of the immortal Cæsar, cutting down his bridges and burning his boats.

He had, indeed, caused to be removed the fleet of transports and their convoy from the coast, by which plan he hoped to move his soldiery to the valour of despair, and so render victory the more certain. At the same time he was careful not to neglect the precautions of an experienced general, and made such a disposition of his forces as secured to him the greatest advantages in the attack which his opponent was under the necessity of making.

The opposing armies were pretty evenly matched both in numbers and quality. Both commanders brought into the field some 10,000 men, and both forces exhibited a motley array of natives and foreign levies from most of the European states. The result, therefore, depended more largely upon the military skill of the leaders than upon the prowess of their battalions. It proved, for the most part, a terrific hand-to-hand conflict of sword and pike, in which each side maintained its ground—the advantage, such as it was, being upon the side of the Hollanders, whose main object it had been to resist the onslaught of the Netherlanders, and thus to maintain their position. For several hours the conflict raged in this uncertain manner. At length the archduke, having received a severe wound, was compelled to retire from

the field. A panic ensued, which shortly spread along the whole line. Prince Maurice, who had been patiently awaiting his opportunity, now gave orders for a general advance, which he directed in person. The panic-stricken enemy were quickly overpowered and driven from the field, leaving their artillery and baggage in the hands of the victors. Mendoza was among the slain, but the archduke managed to escape to Ghent, whence he passed with his consort to Brussels.

Upon the face of it, so decisive a victory would seem to have placed the Hollanders in such a position that their aims and aspirations could not in future be gainsaid. The same resolution and skill which had sufficed to bring about this important triumph, does not, however, appear to have been displayed in securing the advantages it presented; for although Nieuport was retained for a time, the conqueror was shortly forced to quit Netherland territory, and retire with his troops into Holland. It had, however, this effect upon the enemy, namely, that the Netherlanders, heartily tired of a war in which they had everything to lose and nothing to gain, began to insist upon a further attempt at a reconciliation with their ancient compatriots and formidable neighbours. The archduke, whose views had been all along in favour of peace, gladly yielded to the popular clamour, and opened negotiations with the United Provinces with a view to a cessation of hostilities. The efforts of the commander, who met the delegates of the States-general at Bergen-op-Zoom, were frustrated by the nature of their demands; for they were unreasonable enough to suppose that the Hollanders—flushed with success, and glorying in the name of a republic—would listen to proposals having for their object a return to the authority of Spain.

Little time was lost over those negotiations. A re-opening of hostilities was seen to be inevitable, and the following winter was therefore occupied by both sides in making preparations for a new campaign. The initiative was taken by Prince Maurice, who, in the spring, took the

field with a respectable force of well-disciplined and enthusiastic warriors, among whom was a very large proportion of the usually antagonistic elements, French and English. Indeed, the progress of this war of independence was, in many ways, a curious spectacle. The armies on both sides—besides being a motley assemblage of the earnest spirits of those lands in which the burning question of religion was most rife—often numbered men of the same nationality in the opposing forces. Thus the persecuted English papist was often opposed to the equally persecuted Protestant, and the disappointed Huguenot fought against the triumphant opponent of the League. With this force, which numbered some 16,000 men, the prince captured the town of Rhinberg and some other places. He was, however, unsuccessful in his operations against the more important fortress of Bois-le-Duc.

But all these operations were soon to be dwarfed into insignificance by an exploit which, in many respects, has no parallel—excepting, perhaps, in the celebrated siege of Antwerp by the Duke of Parma, some twenty years before—namely, the siege and capture of Ostend; not, however, because of its advantages as a position, but from the perseverance of the besiegers and the tenacity of its defenders, the consummate strategy displayed by both commanders, and the terrific waste of human life which the work entailed. The siege lasted more than three years; and the operations were conducted by water as well as by land. It was here that the brothers Frederick and Ambrose Spinola made their mark—the one as a naval, the other as a military commander; and hither students of the military art resorted as an effective training-school. Frederick did not survive the siege; but Ambrose lived to be the soul of the operations, and to his prescience—no less than to his skill and fertility of resource—it is owing that this fortress was secured to the Netherlanders (September 1604).

Its capture was, however, made at a fearful sacrifice both of men and material. "The victors marched in over

its crumbled walls and shattered batteries. Scarcely a vestige of the place remained, beyond those terrible evidences of destruction. Its ditches filled up with the rubbish of ramparts, bastions, and redoubts, left no distinct line of separation between the operations of its attack and its defence. It resembled rather a vast sepulchre than a ruined town, a mountain of earth and rubbish, without a single house in which the wretched remnant of the inhabitants could hide their heads—a monument of desolation on which victory might have sat and wept.”

* *Cabinet Cyclopædia.*

CHAPTER XVII.

THE REBELLION—*Continued.*

Death of Queen Elizabeth—Its Effects upon the Struggle—The Dutch East India Company—Battle of Roerood—Successful Engagements at Sea—Suspicious Conduct of Prince Maurice—Negotiations for Peace—Barneveldt—John de Neyer—The Armistice—Character of Prince Maurice—Intolerance of the Dutch—Treaty of Antwerp—General Condition of the Country.

WHILE this memorable siege of Ostend was still in progress, the capricious ally of the Dutch, the Queen of England, died. The assistance she had afforded the struggling nation, though great, had been always uncertain, and at times perplexing, and the indifference, if not the positive relief, with which the news of her decease was received here, serves to show that the sympathy and private aid of her subjects had been more highly appreciated by the recipients than the alliance of the great Tudor monarch. Moreover, the rapid extension of their commerce had placed them in a position of comparative independence, so far as supplies were concerned, and the wealth of England had certainly been the principal factor in their dealings with Elizabeth.

Knowing how much depended on the national commerce, the government had encouraged private adventure; and now upon the sea she was, in the number of her vessels and in the enterprise of her seamen, second to no European nation. In 1602, she had established the Dutch East India Company—the first venture of its kind; and whereas she had been in days gone by compelled to seek in Lisbon the rich produce of the East,

and later on, by reason of their exclusion from the Portuguese ports, deprived of them altogether, she now obtained them direct from the Indies themselves; and Spanish commerce was sadly crippled thereby.

The United Provinces had therefore little to lose by Elizabeth's decease, and, moreover, hoped to gain by the removal of an imperious and exacting Tudor, and the accession of an entirely new dynasty. By way of introduction to the new monarch's favour, his accession was welcomed in Holland by the ringing of joy-bells and the lighting of bonfires throughout the country; while, to secure, if possible, his alliance, an embassy was despatched to London, in which the grand pensionary Barneveldt figured as chief speaker. A tantalising disappointment awaited the earlier efforts of the anxious envoys. Down to the time of James' accession, little was known concerning his views as to the relations of governor and governed. Time proved him to be far more extravagant in his ideas of kingly prerogative, and of a people's obedience, than any Tudor had been; and little wonder is it, therefore, that he was found to regard the patriotism of the northern states merely in the light of rebellion against divinely-established authority! The persuasions and arguments of the eloquent Barneveldt, backed by the representations and the influence of the French ambassador, the celebrated Duke of Sully, in time elicited a promise of protection and even assistance, but, if the struggling nation reposed any confidence in this promise, never was it more egregiously misplaced; for that same year he made peace with Philip the Third of Spain, and thus the labours of Barneveldt and his colleagues were rendered nugatory.

The war was pursued with fluctuating fortunes—a state of things that might be expected to arise from the conditions of the combat—two equally well-disciplined and enthusiastic armies being opposed to each other, and led by captains of equal merit and renown. An attempt of Prince Maurice to conduct another expedition into Flanders was frustrated by the skill of his antagonist; while,

in imitation of his own tactics, Spinola invaded the territory of the United Provinces, and penetrated as far as Overijssel, capturing some fortresses in his advance. He was followed thither by the prince, and compelled to fall back upon the Rhine. He came up with the army of Spinola at Roerord, and here a battle took place in which the vicissitudes of the campaign were well reflected in the fluctuations of fortune that occurred during the encounter. The result of the fight, however, was so far favourable to Spinola, that he was able to maintain the position he had chosen. At sea, the success of the Dutch was undoubted. Their admiral Hautain defeated the Spaniards near Dover; whilst, off the Indian coast, Wolfert Hermanszoon overthrew another Spanish squadron sent out for the purpose of ruining their East Indian trade, and thus the seas were comparatively cleared of hostile vessels.

Prince Maurice had by this time learned thoroughly to respect the genius of his adversary; and, as a consequence, his movements henceforward were conducted with greater caution. This Fabian conduct, indeed, was pursued to so unwarrantable an extent, that it by-and-by gave rise to the gravest suspicion on the part of military critics and thoughtful onlookers generally as to the honesty of his motives; for, after having with consummate generalship baffled every attempt upon the part of his opponent to deal an effective blow against the integrity of the United Provinces, with a force numerically superior to that of Spinola, and far more manageable, he declined to engage his adversary, and even withdrew his army from the presence of the enemy at a time when victory should have been considered certain.

In a far different manner was the contest conducted upon the ocean. Off Cape St. Vincent, indeed, the Dutch scarcely maintained their high reputation for naval skill and daring; but in an action fought near Gibraltar, in which the Dutch admiral Hoemskirk heroically attacked a Spanish fleet that lay anchored in the bay, and won a complete victory, whatever of disgrace had attended the

previous action was thoroughly redeemed, and the hopes of the struggling provinces reanimated.

It had by this time become thoroughly apparent that the efforts of Philip, even though backed by a commander of Spinola's genius, must prove ineffectual in reducing the insurgent provinces—long recognised by every nation, except Spain itself, in the light of an independent republic—to its former or indeed any kind of allegiance. To no man was this more evident than to him who had so long borne the greatest share in the obstinate conflict; and now, perplexed with the clamours of mutinous troops, at a loss for adequate supplies, dunned by impatient creditors, and utterly unable to discover new sources of revenue, he by-and-by cast into the scale of the peace party the weight of his representations and advice. He himself, he owned, could make no progress; the archduke was weary of so unquiet a sway, and the Netherland provinces, never enthusiastic, as will be readily supposed, had become heartily sick of the war.

There was a peace party likewise in the United Provinces, and at the head of it was Barneveldt. The prospects of a change were therefore so favourable that, in the year 1607, negotiations in the direction of peace were opened. The envoy chosen was John de Neyen, a Franciscan monk of Antwerp. It seemed, however, as though the spirit of intrigue had so thoroughly infected the royal atmosphere, that its diplomacy could not be carried on without it. Neyen, in imitation of that subtle dealing which would appear to have been initiated by the late monarch, began by prevarication. The States-general had demanded a full recognition of their independence previous to the consideration of any part of the question; but, though the royal envoy had made several journeys to and fro between Brussels and the Hague, they could obtain no definite reply concerning the important preliminary. When at length, through the good offices of Henry the Fourth of France and James the First of England, an understanding was arrived at concerning this point—so that an armistice for eight months was

concluded between the belligerents—it was found that he had been busy in endeavouring to circumvent the Hollanders by bribery and corruption.

Not alone did the royal envoy stand in the mire of underhand dealing. Prince Maurice himself has been accused of a connivance—if not an active participation—in the intrigues of the Franciscan. The military talent of this scion of the house of Orange was undeniable, and the service he had performed in behalf of his country brilliant in the extreme. Beyond this, his capacity was of a commonplace order. He was no statesman—no consummate ruler of a people. As a commander of armies, he far surpassed his great sire, but he had none of his qualities in the many other important respects. He had none of the wisdom and penetration which distinguished him; none of his knowledge of men and character; none of his keen perception of a favourable opportunity which so often assisted him to bring his plans to happy issues. These failings were, doubtless, as obvious to the mind of the prince himself as to his countrymen in general; and, hence, he felt that his sword alone was the passport to his country's confidence. Sheath that sword by the conclusion of a peace, his occupation might possibly be gone, and all his ambitious ideas perish for ever.

Frequent conferences were held during the period of this truce. At these the courts of England and France, besides that of Spain, were duly represented. Matters had taken a sweeping change since the days of the Gueux and the great representative of the house of Nassau. Time was when permission to obey the dictates of conscience, and the free exercise of religious rites, such as their notions dictated, would have been hailed with ineffable delight by the revolutionary provinces; now they were pleased to treat such a condition of things as a matter of course, and, in their turn, to imperil the success of the negotiations by obstinately refusing the boon to those who did not think as they did. In thus emulating the worst feature of Philip's sway, the provinces justly forfeited the sympathy and support of all true lovers of

a charitable toleration outside the pale of diplomacy, and even at the council-board; and it scarcely speaks in favour of these profound champions of civil and religious freedom, that the difficulty should have been obviated by the good sense of one in whom bigotry might be confidently expected, namely, the king's confessor, Fra Inigo Brizuela, who persuaded the prime minister, the Duke of Parma, for the sake of peace to make the concession.

But there remained yet another question of vital import, namely, the right of trade with the Indies. Upon this point the Spanish monarch was as firm as the Hollanders had been in the matter of religious toleration; and as the latter could not be prevailed upon to imitate the conduct of the Spaniards, the negotiations seemed likely to collapse. That a people, to whom religious liberty appeared a necessary condition of existence, should deny the precious boon to others, is well nigh paradoxical, it would, on the other hand, have appeared quite as incomprehensible had this eminently commercial nation not hesitated before consenting to an arrangement that should interfere with their great pastime—the very alpha and omega of their national existence. Concerning this matter, then, they were inexorable, and, as the Spaniards refused to concede anything in this direction, matters were naturally at a deadlock. The king's determination upon the trade question soon became so patent that the States had no alternative but to dissolve the congress, and proceed to address themselves once more to the concerns of war.

In this dilemma assistance came from the French and English ambassadors who, by way of compromise, suggested a lasting truce. The king and the archduke were glad to hail the promise of rest which this interference gave; but Prince Maurice, doubtless considering that his occupation was about to depart, offered a stout resistance to the proposal. With the aid of the patriotic Barneveldt, who had incessantly laboured to restore peace to his suffering land, the foreign envoys succeeded in securing the consent of the States-general to a truce which should be

binding upon both belligerents for the space of twelve years. This arrangement is known as the treaty of Antwerp, and was signed in the April of 1609.

The treaty of Antwerp settled for a time the question at issue. The archdukes, in their own names and in that of the King of Spain, renounced all claims upon the United Provinces, which they now, for the first time, declared to be free and independent. Thenceforward, therefore, these provinces took their station among European nations—their independent existence being now universally, and without question, recognised. The rebellion consequently had ended thus far disastrously for Spain, that, after years of untold horrors, wholesale slaughter, and humiliating reverses, she had secured nothing but the lasting enmity of her northern appendages, and had lost for ever the alliance of seven of the most populous, thriving, and industrious of its provinces.

The clauses that bore upon the recognition of Dutch independence were unequivocal. Those which referred to the great point in dispute were so vaguely worded that both Spaniards and Dutch could interpret their meaning according as it severally suited their interests. Yet, unsatisfactory as the upshot seemed, the delight throughout the Netherlands knew no bounds. For the first time during many a long year, the inestimable boon of rest and peace was theirs. Netherlands and Dutch alike rejoiced, as well they might. Each was now under the government of its choice, and to each was presented an opportunity of renewing that peaceful rivalry which, while the sun of freedom yet warmed with its genial beams, had made both great and wealthy.

In the race for pre-eminence there could be little doubt as to which would take the lead. The government of the archdukes was, for mildness and wisdom, all that could be desired; but the manufacturing industries upon which the greatness of the land had, in days gone by depended, had been ruined; and the looms of England and Ger-

many had secured the markets of the world—including even those of the Netherlands themselves. Not so, however, with the United Provinces. Their commerce—the mainstay of their existence—had been actually improved by the circumstances of the struggle. These changes had, indeed, been long observable in the decline of Ghent and Bruges, and the growth of Amsterdam and Antwerp, and circumstances had since served to accelerate the upward progress of the one and the downward tendency of the other.

CHAPTER XVIII.

PERIOD OF THE TRUCE.

The Hollanders—Factions—Ambition of Prince Maurice—Patriotism of Barneveldt—Their Opposition—Theological Disputes—The Arminians and Gomarists—Persecutions—Labels upon Barneveldt—Synod of Dort—Trial and Execution of Barneveldt—Intolerance—Emigration.

THE Low Countries then—that is to say, the whole extent of country lying between France, Germany, and the North Sea—were, for the first time, politically severed, and henceforth their fortunes must be separately followed. The events connected with the northern, or United Provinces—which may now be comprehended under the name of Holland—from their interesting character, demand the foremost place in our consideration. If it were hoped that the conclusion of hostilities would bring perfect peace to the newly-enfranchised nation, never was mortal more egregiously disappointed. The clash of arms, indeed, and the general din of warfare had passed away from the hearing of the wearied northerners; and yet the land had no rest, by reason of the ambitious jealousies and hates of those who affected to be the leaders of the new republic. The spectacle was anything but an edifying one, and the upholders of despotism might well be supposed to have contemplated it with supreme delight, and the ancient friends of struggling humanity have regretted that they had ever afforded the patriots support.

The moving-spring of this unseemly exhibition of selfishness and intolerance was undoubtedly the great representative of the house of Nassau: the redoubtable

champion of the patriotic cause, and the astute leader of its forces—Prince Maurice. The great and, in many respects, glorious revolution had left matters thus far unsettled that the newly-established nation was without a recognised head. There was at present no occupant either of the kingly throne or the presidential chair; and without one, the change could not be regarded as complete. We may, perhaps, excuse the aspirations of Prince Maurice in this direction. He was the son and representative of the great man who, in life and death—through evil report and good report—had secured the confidence of the people, and whose memory was treasured as a sacred thing. The prince himself had, by his military talent, done more, perhaps, than any living man to bring about the establishment of the nation; and his good sword might yet be needed to defend the independent existence so grudgingly accorded to her. On the other hand, we may be permitted to exonerate the nation if it failed to repose an implicit confidence in the great soldier. They admired his military ability, and were thankful to perceive that they had in him a tower of strength, but they mistrusted his statesmanship, and feared his ambition. "War," it has been said, "was his element. By his genius he improved it as a science; by his valour, he was one of those who raised it from the degradation of a trade to the dignity of a passion, but, when removed from the campaign to the council-room, he became all at once a common man. His frankness degenerated into roughness, his decision into despotism, his courage into cruelty."*

His chief opponent was the pensionary Barneveldt—a purer patriot, a wiser man. He had long been prominent as the great advocate of peace. When the doughty deeds of Hoemskirk at Verhoof had so taught the Spaniards to respect the capacity of the rebels as to cause them to make advances in this desirable direction, Barneveldt advised a favourable consideration of their overtures; and it was mainly through his perseverance in the same charitable path, that the treaty of Antwerp

* *Cabmet Cyclopædia.*

became possible. Every effort of his life, indeed, was put forth for the good of his country ; and no truer patriot—not even the great Prince of Orange himself—ever lived and died in his country's cause than Barneveldt.

For years these two men—great in their respective ways—were in a condition of perpetual and uncompromising warfare ; and the great combat between the stadtholder and the pensionary gives the only—though painful—interest to the history of these few years of peace. The gap which diverse politics had placed between these two leaders was further widened by religious differences. Here, as in other lands in which the doctrines of the Reformation had been introduced, the Reformers had not been content with a mere abrogation of the papal authority, and of opposition to the practices of the Romish church. It has always been found to be much more easy to detect what is wrong than to decide upon what is right. Conscience, whose claims had been upheld by the great leaders of the religious movement, had been brought to bear upon the question to such an extent, that numerous beliefs had sprung into existence, which were at once championed or deprecated with all the zeal and with all the rancour that had marked the times when it was the almost simple question of Rome or Secession. The prominent apostles of the times were Jacob Arminius, a learned minister of Amsterdam, and Francis Gomar or Gomarus, a Dutch divine of no little celebrity. The former may be said broadly to have represented the Lutheran theology ; the latter that of Geneva or, in other words, of Calvin.

The controversy became, in time, a disturbing element in Dutch society as powerful as the original question of a free or fettered conscience. This was not confined to the clergy. Men of all ranks, positions, and professions joined heartily in the all-absorbing controversy. "The whole strength of the intellects," it has been remarked, "which had long been engaged in the conflict for national and religious liberty, was now directed to metaphysical theology, and wasted interminable disputes

about predestination and grace."* None entered into the strife more warmly than Prince Maurice and Barneveldt, and whether prudential considerations dictated their choice or not, these two great political opponents took opposite sides in this question also—the former siding with the Gomarists, the latter as staunchly holding by the views of Arminius.

The most unfortunate phase of the controversy was the uncharitable and intolerant spirit which accompanied it. It might have been supposed that a nation which had so recently and painfully experienced the effects of intolerance would have avoided the spirit which they had so strongly condemned in others, and have confined their operations to mere moral suasion. Persecution became so rife in the land that, after the death of Arminius, both Arminian and Gomarist clamoured for a national synod which should settle the points of difference. The Arminians took the initiative in this movement, and so were ever after distinguished as Remonstrants (1610). The Gomarists followed, and received the title of Counter-Remonstrants. The States-general declined to interfere in any such way, and the painful agitation grew stronger than ever. The pedantic king of England was tempted to enter the lists upon the side of the Gomarists, and his arguments were urged with the asperity and impatience which usually characterised his reasonings; so that his presence served rather to add fuel to the flame than to subdue it.

This polemic strife was dexterously employed by Prince Maurice in the furtherance of his ambitious ends. To his success there seemed to be no barrier, save the firmness of Barneveldt. The zealous Gomarist—supported by the powerful house of Orange, the king of England—Prince Maurice's fast friend and Barneveldt's bitter enemy—by degrees obtained such a mastery over their more quiet adversaries, that outrages of every description were wrought upon the Arminian supporters throughout the country. In vain the peace-loving Bar-

* *Cabinet Cyclopædia.*

neveldt interfered in behalf of his persecuted co-religionists. His appeals to the stadtholder and to the civil authorities generally were alike disregarded. By-and-by, however, his suggestions to the magistrates had this effect, that a national militia was established, whose duty it was to preserve order. It was found, however, that this step only served to render the confusion greater. The prince-stadtholder was fain to watch with cool complacency the progress of events, fully knowing, as he did, that they must by-and-by prepare a way for the development of the plans of which he had, by Barneveldt and his republican followers, long been suspected; and which, indeed, to do him justice, he had not altogether been at pains to conceal.

The crisis came. In the interests of peace and order, as he alleged, Prince Maurice seized upon the Brille—one of the towns which Barneveldt had recently redeemed with much difficulty from the hold of England—and proceeded to garrison the same with his tried soldiery. To such a proceeding the inhabitants naturally objected, as being a violation of their local privileges. But right, however clear, could not hold its own against might in this case, and the ambitious stadtholder, disregarding remonstrance, hastened to justify his conduct at the expense of his chief opponent, who, he alleged, was contemplating the surrender of this important fortress to the Spaniards. Now, it had been solely through an apprehension lest the king of England, who, at the time of the negotiations respecting this place, was contemplating a matrimonial union with the Spanish royal family, should take this course, that Barneveldt had employed every gift with which nature had endowed him to redeem it from the possession of the Spaniards. Upon the face of it, therefore, the excuse implied a calumny. It, however, served his purpose in as far as the proverb goes, which instructs us, that "any excuse is better than none."

Calumny of every kind was now heaped upon the pensionary, who, in his perplexity, tendered his resignation. But the States-general, unwilling to lose the

services of so able a man in such a season of turmoil, declined to accept it. Patiently he bore with the libels of his enemies, till at length, considering that longer silence might be interpreted as an admission of guilt, he put forth his apology, which, in terms of quiet dignity, purported to deal with the question in an exhaustive manner. However convincing the arguments arrayed in this document, they certainly had not the effect its author had intended; for, instead of allaying the fever of partizanship, it served to add fuel to its flames, and to render the outrages committed in the name of religion more frequent and shocking. The fate of the Arminian doctrines was, however, henceforth sealed. The Calvinists, strong in the numbers and the rank of their supporters, clamoured for a national synod, and, despite the exertions of the more moderate men of the time, who clearly foresaw the result, the assembly was decided upon—the place chosen being the town of Dordrecht, or Dort.

Prince Maurice, now Prince of Orange, through the death of his brother, had, by the course of events, no less than by his statescraft, become master of the situation. His influence had recently increased through the elevation already referred to, and, notwithstanding remonstrance and advice from all quarters, he failed not to employ it in the furtherance of his ambitious projects. Success would seem to have changed the whole nature of the man; and he is henceforth to be considered not less in the character of a bigot than in that of a leader of armies. His aim was unmistakably imperial sway, and his great endeavour to remove from the world the man who stood most determinately in his path; and this the Synod of Dort enabled him conveniently to do.

This celebrated assembly commenced its sittings in November 1618, and its deliberations continued to the end of April of the following year. There were present—besides the most celebrated of the Dutch divines—representatives from the English, Scottish, and other Protestant churches. Their proceedings opened with a

piece of injustice—inasmuch as the Arminians, instead of being permitted to appear on an equal footing with their opponents as debaters of an unsettled problem—were regarded in the light of defendants in a suit. Such a proceeding had the effect of causing the withdrawal of the Arminian party from the assembly in a body. Judgment, consequently, was perforce permitted to go by default. The doctrines of the Arminians, as set forth by five points laid before the assembly, were, of course, almost unanimously condemned, and a general confession was drawn up, which became the public confession of the Belgic churches as at this day professed.

The decrees of the synod were upheld by the States-general, now completely swayed by the Prince of Orange. All who refused to submit to the decision were punished by banishment, fine, or imprisonment, while all known professors of the Arminian belief were, by the church, deposed from ecclesiastical offices, and from the mastership of schools and colleges in the United Provinces. The great leaders of the Arminian party—the pensionary Barneveldt, Hoogerbeets, Grotius, and Ledenberg—had been arrested by order of the prince, and now a melancholy tragedy was upon the eve of enactment. The venerable patriot, who had by this time passed the age of three-score years and ten, was, with his friends, brought to a mock trial before a bench of prejudiced judges, and condemned to die upon the scaffold. The result of the trial had, of course, been a foregone conclusion; but the bare fact that the English church, the Protestants of France and Germany, and the university of Geneva even, rejected its decision, testifies forcibly to the fact that Barneveldt and his friends were sacrificed to a man's ambition rather than to a laudable zeal for the purity of religious belief.

Grotius and Hoogerbeets were each sentenced to perpetual imprisonment; Ledenberg was likewise cast into prison, and by-and-by terminated his existence by suicide. More fortunate, perhaps, than his fellows, the aged Barneveldt met his death upon the scaffold. In consideration of his rank, his age, and the great services he had per-

formed in behalf of his country, much concern was manifested regarding his untoward fate; and supreme efforts were made to induce the Prince of Orange to procure a mitigation of the sentence. But to every representation and petition, the implacable stadtholder turned a deaf ear—even to an earnest, though by no means cringing, appeal to him by the aged pensionary himself. As he lived, so he died, fearless of the sword, and with a pious meekness and resignation which places him high up upon the roll of those who have died in defence of their religious convictions. His letter of farewell to his wife is still preserved, and is regarded as a model of pathos and pious resignation to fate.

The decrees of the Synod of Dort, and the vigorous measures adopted in dealing with its leading votaries, soon succeeded in suppressing all signs of what was now termed the Arminian heresy. The usual course was followed: those who chose to adhere to the dictates of conscience made up their minds to quit the land of their nativity; and thus a wholesale emigration was the consequence; till the bewildered government, as in many another instance, alarmed at the danger such a movement threatened, was constrained to connive at the breach of their own decrees; and thus that waste of the country's resources in the shape of useful manhood, which the process signified, and soon again destined largely to be drawn upon, was fortunately checked.

CHAPTER XIX.

RENEWAL OF THE WAR.

National Prospects—Interference in the Thirty Years' War—
Unsuccessful Negotiations of the Archdukes—Death of the
Archduke Albert—Isabella Governant of the Netherlands—
Intolerance of Prince Maurice—Attempt upon his Life—
His Alliances—His Failures—His Death.

THE time had come when it was found to be absolutely necessary that the Hollanders should proceed to set their house in order. The twelve years' truce had expired ; and what with the disgusting divisions in the world of theology, and the selfish ambition and tyranny of him whom once they were accustomed to regard as the champion of that constitutional freedom for which they and their forefathers had so cheerfully shed their blood, the country was in no position to renew the inevitable struggle. Moreover, religious persecution had in every way more seriously affected the population than the continuation of the war could have done. Its patriotism was now a thing of the past, its support from abroad had become uncertain by reason of the deaths of old allies, or by the coldness consequent upon the long term of abeyance in which the question had been held, the finances of the country were anything but satisfactory, and, beyond all, Prince Maurice had not now the confidence once reposed in him, whilst his once famous soldiery, long doomed to comparative inaction, shared the national misgivings.

The few later years of the truce, indeed, had introduced the Dutch troops to some little service. The great struggle between Catholic and Protestant going on in Germany, which, under the name of the *Thirty Years' War*, has become famous among the great contests of the

world, in the stirring character of its incidents no less than in the importance of its issues, offered a temptation to the champions of Protestantism too great to be resisted, and they accordingly prepared to take a part in it. To the far-seeing policy of Barneveldt this step appeared to be impolitic, and while yet his voice could be heard at the council-table, he had strenuously advised non-interference in the strife, knowing well that the time was fast approaching when a severe trial of the national strength would be made; to meet which, he considered, there was every need carefully for them to husband their resources. But he interposed in vain. The tomb had scarcely closed over the famous pensionary when the country declared for the tottering cause of the Elector Palatine. Under the Count of Mansfeld and Prince Christian of Brunswick, they gained some success, but their *protegé*, deserted by his father-in-law of England and others of his allies, was defeated by Ferdinand the Second at the battle of Prague, and driven from his dominions.

There was, however, as had been expected, work for the lovers of warfare to do at home. At the expiration of the truce, the archdukes, in the interests of peace, entered into negotiation with the States-general with a view to a reunion of the whole of the Netherland provinces under their sovereignty. Such an alliance was more unlikely now than it had ever been. The bigoted Spaniard, indeed, was no more, and the benignity and justice of the archducal sway was on all hands admitted; but others of as intolerant a nature as the Philips and the Charleses had arisen, and now stood in the path to reconciliation—namely, the Dutch leaders themselves, whilst a barrier equally insurmountable existed in the ambition of the Prince of Orange. The advances of the archdukes were received with all the pride and haughtiness which had come over the Hollanders, and it was with the utmost difficulty that the ambassadors of peace escaped uninjured to Brussels.

The year 1621 witnessed the expiration of the long

truce; and, in the ordinary course of events, the war should have been renewed; but the death of king Philip the Third that same year had the effect of postponing it for a while. It is open to question how long this desirable truce might have been extended had this monarch survived; for he had been taught by sad experience to perceive the unstable condition to which unsuccessful military undertakings had brought his country; and it is therefore more than likely that he would have hesitated before slipping again the dogs of war upon this portion of what Spaniards were yet pleased to regard his dominions. His inexperienced son and successor, Philip the Fourth, urged onward by the ambitious and warlike Olivarez, had none of the salutary misgivings of his sire. Totally disregarding the representations and advice of the more experienced Archduke Albert, he resolved to resume the struggle. The archduke did not long survive his relative of Spain, and his widow, Isabella, was left sole ruler of the Belgian provinces. Henceforth the title of archduke was changed for the less pretentious one of Governant of the Netherlands.

The renewed contest opened with the siege of the important fortress of Bergen-op-Zoom by the veteran Spínola. In this undertaking he was baffled by his ancient adversary the Prince of Orange, who, with all his wonted energy, hastened to its relief, and forced the besiegers to retire with considerable loss. The Dutch arms were elsewhere also crowned with success; and, for the time at least, therefore, the nation was safe—safe from the tyranny of Spain, but subject to a domination as wearisome perhaps as the yoke of a Philip could be. The Prince of Orange had become a domestic tyrant, utterly intolerant of every opinion opposed to his own. The condition of the proscribed Arminians was no better than that of the Reformers under the prince of bigots had been. Upon the whole, the persecuted votaries of this creed bore their wrongs with a remarkable patience; but it was not surprising that he who was regarded as the author of their wrongs, and who certainly was their most relentless per-

secutor, should come to be regarded by the more impatient, zealous, and unscrupulous of the sect as a fitting object of vengeance no matter what form it might take.

As the zealots of a generation since, therefore, had been encouraged in the notion that the death of William of Orange would be a universal boon, so those of the present time were urged to regard Prince Maurice in the light of a public enemy, and means were taken to compass his destruction—with this difference, however, that in the one case the theory of “killing no murder” was published, while in the other it was a secret understanding. In the present instance, too, an overstrained sense of filial duty became an incentive to the nefarious process—the chief conspirators being the sons of the martyred Barneveldt. Considerations of several kinds, therefore, assisted in producing this attempt on the life of the prince, which was to be followed, in the event of success, by a general rising throughout the country. But for the credit of humanity, if not for the furtherance of free thought, the plot miscarried. Due warning was given to the intended victim, and the conspirators were most of them seized. One of the sons of Barneveldt escaped; the other was taken, and executed without mercy, together with fourteen others of those who had been concerned in the conspiracy.

These wholesale executions served to increase the odium with which the once popular prince was regarded by his fellow-countrymen, while, to make matters worse for him, his reputation as a military commander, or at least as an active and energetic soldier, was fast fading away. In the new campaign he was found to be no match for his old antagonist Spinola, who made several successful incursions into the Dutch provinces, laying siege even to the town of Breda, which formed a part of the estates of the Orange family. Unable of himself, in the embarrassed condition to which his inordinate selfishness and ambition and imprudent statesmanship had reduced the land, to engage the enemy with a chance of success, he had no alternative but to look abroad for aid.

Arrangements were made with the French Court and with the English monarch for supplies of men and money. The latter, offended at the treatment he had received through his ambassador to the Court of Spain, the Duke of Buckingham, and annoyed at the failure of his matrimonial scheme, willingly provided assistance, in every way, for the sole purpose of vexing Spain.

The Prince of Orange, however, did not survive to redeem the character he had forfeited. Indeed, subsequent undertakings—the aid he had secured notwithstanding—served to convince him of the hopelessness of his efforts against his great adversary. Within two years of his escape from the daggers of the sons of Barneveldt and their coadjutors, he fell a victim to a surer, though a less summary process. His constitution, undermined by the fatigues and anxieties of an active life; overwhelmed with chagrin at the failure of his military undertakings, vexed with a morbid jealousy at the sustained renown of his opponent; and troubled, no doubt, with the warnings of a remorseful conscience, lapsed into a condition of severe prostration of body and mind. He expired at the Hague, ere he had reached the age of threescore years, upon the 23d of April 1625, leaving his honours, if such they could be called, and his embarrassments to Prince Frederick Henry, his brother.

CHAPTER XX.

PRINCE FREDERICK HENRY—WILLIAM II.

Prince Frederick Henry—His Fabian Policy—Successes at Sea—Death of Isabella—The Archduke of Toledo—Vicissitudes of the Campaign—Van Tromp—Further Naval Successes—De Mello—Condé—Battle of Rocroi—Capture of Dunkirk—Death of Prince Frederick—Character—William II—Treaty of Munster—Peace of Westphalia—Despotism of William—His Death.

PRINCE FREDERICK HENRY was a commander of tried reputation in the field, and he soon showed that in the political arena he was the superior of his predecessor. The exigencies of the situation required in him who had the honour of leadership a combination of both gifts. The departed prince had left matters in a condition of great confusion, while upon the frontier lay an enemy who was not likely to let pass the opportunity these perplexities offered him. Deserted by old allies, Prince Frederick had no alternative but to act upon the defensive—awaiting meanwhile an opportunity to enlarge his field of operations against the enemy.

This defensive policy, however, was confined to the land forces. At sea the Dutch seemed to be almost supreme. Whilst disaster was attending their arms in Europe, and the domestic outlook was most gloomy, their fleets were riding triumphant in the Indian and American seas—intercepting Spanish treasure and Portuguese merchandise, and playing havoc with the colonial ports of both nations. It was this supremacy alone that enabled them to bid defiance to the powerful nations with whom it was their destiny to come into collision. It was this supremacy too, that led Charles the First of Eng-

land to court the alliance of the States in his war against Spain; and it was with the knowledge that their great enemy could be most sorely crippled by operations abroad, that their most experienced navigators were despatched across the Atlantic to measure their strength with his fleets in the West Indies.

The command of the Dutch West India Company's interest was in the hands of Peter Heine, a mariner of great experience and univalled hardihood. In 1627 he brought a fleet of the enemy to action, and, with a far inferior force at his command, thoroughly defeated it. This brilliant feat was outdone the following year by an action—if not more glorious and thorough—yet highly effective, inasmuch as the booty secured by it largely assisted to restore the almost bankrupt condition of the exchequer, and thereby removed a check upon the military operations of the stadtholder. With the necessary supplies at his command, Prince Frederick, in conjunction with certain members of his family, took the field (1629). The Hollanders were everywhere successful, and so harassed the enemy that the government of the Netherlands was anxious to come to an understanding with her formidable foe. The negotiations that followed came to nothing, for the Hollanders—whatever their opinions upon other points—were determined as ever not to entertain for a moment terms which should constitute them again a portion of the dominion of Catholic Spain, or render such a consummation in future possible.

During these operations civil discord was unusually rife; and it was only a shrewd perception of the danger of disunion at this time that preserved the country from the unseemly spectacle of a civil war. This condition of things is still traceable to the religious question. The house of Orange—in the person of the stadtholder—still leaned to the side of the Gomarists; and his partiality was extremely irritating. The arch-enemy of the Hollanders, Cardinal Richelieu, was not slow to foster the spirit of discontent, and the ranks of the anti-Orange party were, by his policy and intrigue, considerably

strengthened, the issue being disastrous to the noble and patriotic house.

The unvarying success which attended the operations of her fleet, encouraged the Dutch to persevere in their undertakings by land. In 1630 the Prince of Orange, in conjunction with 12,000 Swedes of the army of Gustavus Adolphus, attacked Maestricht on the Meuse, and Rheinberg on the Rhine, and captured them; and thus Holland was secure, for the present, against invasion upon the side of Germany. In the year 1633, Isabella, governess of the Netherlands, died, and the interests of Spain here were confided (1634) to the keeping of the king's brother—the Cardinal Archduke of Toledo—a man of talent and great perseverance. He had not long succeeded to the high office when an alliance between France and Holland was entered into, and a French army of 30,000 men, in co-operation with another of similar strength, invaded Flanders and Brabant. At first perfect success attended the movement of the allies. They defeated the Spaniards at Avein (1635), and recovered the towns of Tirlemont and St. Trond. But the extravagances of the victorious soldiery materially injured their cause. The prince-cardinal took immediate advantage of his enemies' blunder, recaptured several of the lost places, and caused the invaders to withdraw. The French retreated upon Ruremond, where numbers of them were smitten with disease. The residue embarked at Rotterdam, and returned to France.

The Dutch were, as usual, more fortunate at sea. They defeated a Spanish squadron off Dunkirk; and, having blockaded that freebooting station, secured the safe return of her merchantmen from the Indies. The military undertakings of the next few years present nothing startling or even interesting. The prince-cardinal, by his raids into the French provinces, showed himself a commander of no mean capacity, whilst, on the other hand, the Prince of Orange well maintained the reputation of his house, chiefly by the masterly manner in which he toiled the enemy in their persistent

attempts to compel him to raise the siege of Breda, which city he finally captured (1638). The year 1639 is remarkable from the first appearance upon the scene of the celebrated Van Tromp. This renowned admiral attacked a Spanish fleet near Gravelines; and, after a long and obstinate fight, totally defeated it. The great reputation of this commander, however, is derived from his success in an action fought a little later on in the Downs, whither an immense Spanish armament had sailed for refuge. Here, despite the remonstrances of the British admiral, Pennington, who urged that the Spanish fleet was in neutral waters, the spirited Dutchman began the attack. The result was a glorious triumph for the naval arms of Holland. Fifty ships of the enemy were captured, burned, or sunk—a miserable remnant, under the admiral D'Oquendo, seeking the shelter of Dunkirk harbour.

Whilst these brilliant successes were waiting upon the arms of Holland in European waters, the operations of her mariners were not less effective in other parts of the world. Admirals Loof and Huggins attacked the Spanish fleets under Count de la Torre in Brazil, and after an action which lasted several days, completely vanquished them; whilst expeditions, despatched to the shores of Africa, succeeded in capturing Congo, the island of St Thomas, and other establishments of the Portuguese at this time in the hands of the Spaniards. The Portuguese had suffered so considerably from their forced connection with Spain—chiefly in the loss of her numerous colonies—that they were glad to enter into alliance with the Dutch, concluding a treaty with them for ten years, in the hope that their lost provinces might, by this means, be regained. This hope, however, was not well-founded.

The death of the Prince Cardinal Ferdinand in 1641, constituted Don Francisco de Mello governor of the Netherlands. He was a man of talent; but it was his misfortune to be opposed by one of the most consummate generals of the age—Louis, Duke d'Enghein, afterwards known as the great Condé. In 1643 Condé met the

Spanish and Walloon forces upon the field of Rocroi. The triumph of the French general was complete. The Spanish infantry—hitherto considered, in fair fight, the finest in the world—were completely routed; and the palm of valour was henceforth accorded to the French. The victory of Rocroi facilitated the capture of Thionville. The great general followed up his success by defeating the enemy at Freiburg and at Nordlingen. The taking of Dunkirk, in conjunction with the soldiery of Cromwell in 1646, closed the career of this great man in the Netherlands for the present, as his services were required in Catalonia.

Notwithstanding, however, the brilliant successes of their allies, the United Provinces were scant gainers by them. They had, by this time, begun to feel that they were little else than a cat's-paw for French ambition. Cardinal Richelieu was dead, and had been followed to the grave by Louis the Thirteenth. He was succeeded by Cardinal Mazarin—a man with equal ambition and greater capacity for intrigue, so that the outlook for the struggling nation was gloomy enough. This consideration, together with a knowledge of the frightful condition of the national exchequer, led the perplexed stadtholder to welcome the prospects of peace which negotiations—recently opened at Munster—presented. Pending these negotiations, the policy of the cardinal excited so much suspicion that the States-general entered into a treaty with its enemy Spain, whose willingness to make great concessions was now well known.

Ere, however, the boon of rest came to his suffering country, Prince Frederick Henry was removed from the stage by death. A thorough soldier, he could not, even during the progress of the negotiations, resist the promised luxury of a campaign. He was, however, signally unfortunate in his military undertaking; and, in the spring of 1647, he died, "leaving behind him a character of unblemished integrity, prudence, toleration, and valour. He was not of that impetuous stamp which leads men to heroic deeds and brings danger to the states whose liberty

is compromised by their ambition. He was a striking contrast to his brother Maurice, and more resembled his father in many of those calmer qualities of the mind, which make men more beloved without lessening their claims to admiration. Frederick Henry had the honour of completing the glorious task which William began and Maurice followed up. He saw the oppression they had combated now humbled and overthrown; and he forms the third in a sequence of family renown, the most surprising and the least chequered afforded by the annals of Europe."*

Frederick Henry was succeeded by his son William—a man of tried skill and bravery, and ambitious to emulate the doughty deeds of his renowned ancestors. Happily for the nation over which he was called to rule, his counsels were not influential enough to overcome the efforts of the peace-loving, and, in January 1648, peace was established between the United Provinces and Spain by the treaty of Munster so long under consideration. By the terms of this treaty the United Provinces were established as an independent nation, the right of trading with the East and West Indies was secured to them; and their foreign possessions were guaranteed them, together with many other advantages. Thus, after fourscore years of warfare, in which thousands of valuable lives were sacrificed, and untold miseries heaped upon the devoted nation, the wisdom, energy, patience, and perseverance of the race, guided by the statesmanship and the soldierly qualities of the Orange family, and assisted by interested or sympathising allies, had triumphantly given the United Provinces a place among the nations of Europe. The security of the newly-founded nation against her jealous and angry southern neighbour was guaranteed for the time, at least, by the more comprehensive peace of Westphalia, concluded towards the end of the same year.

The career of William the Second was brief and inglorious. It was the misfortune of this young prince to be imbued with the idea of absolute government, which

at this epoch found its most notable exponent in the unfortunate house of Stuart. The fate of the obstinate, though well-meaning Charles the First of England—to avert which, William, as a kinsman, had exerted himself in no mean degree—might have warned him against that career of despotism which was so shortly to be curtailed by the hand of death. His great aim seems to have been the establishment of an absolute monarchy; and, in order to do this more effectually, he attempted to secure the control of the national forces. He was obstinately opposed by the province of Holland, whose cause was championed by Cornelius Bicker, a burgomaster of Amsterdam. The quarrel was brought to a climax when



AMSTERDAM.

the prince gave orders for the arrest of Admiral de Witt, and six of his captains, upon the charge of a breach of etiquette. So bold a stand was made by the states of Holland against what they held to be an invasion of their rights and a subversion of the constitution, and so determined was the prince—curiously enough backed by the States general—to maintain that he was acting

within his prerogative as stadtholder, that the country was once more seriously threatened with the horrors of a civil war.

The deputies of the province of Holland were summarily arrested by order of the prince, who immediately proceeded to get possession of Amsterdam. The attempt, directed by William, Count of Nassau, miscarried—chiefly through a threat on the part of the citizens, to the effect that the sluices should be opened and the country flooded, which operation would ensure the destruction of the assailants. After this failure, better counsels seemed to have prevailed. Negotiations were opened between the contending parties. The prince pocketed much of his chagrin, and withdrew many of his pretensions, whilst his chief opponent, Bikker, on his part, resigned his offices. The imprisoned officers were forthwith set at liberty. It is probable that in consenting to such an arrangement as this—which virtually gave the victory to his adversaries—the stadtholder was merely temporising. This, however, can never be certainly known—inasmuch as, before he could take any further steps towards effecting his great object, he was somewhat suddenly cut off by the hand of death. He died of a fever at the Hague in November 1650, being then only in the twenty-fifth year of his age.

CHAPTER XXI.

WAR WITH ENGLAND AND FRANCE.

Jealousy between Dutch and English—War with England—Blake and Van Tromp—De Witt—De Ruyter—Humiliation of the Dutch—Renewal of the War—The Dutch enter the Thames and Medway—Peace of Breda—The Triple Alliance—John de Witt—William of Orange—War with France—Alliance with England—Peace of Nineguen.

THE death of William without heirs left the nation without a chief, and the army without a commander. The prerogatives of the stadtholder were, however, assumed by the people, and the success which attended the national undertakings at this time showed that they were by no means incapable of taking care of their own interests. Trying times were upon them. The supremacy of their arms at sea had been long questioned by England; and it was a mutual jealousy, arising from commercial considerations, that had, more than any other circumstance, kept these two free-thinking people from that cordial alliance which seemed so necessary and natural. A flourishing co-existence had come to be considered by each as incompatible with national interests; and a measuring of each other's strength could no longer be delayed.

The Dutch—either from a prudent fear regarding the result of such a struggle—seeing that, in Cromwell, the affairs of England were directed by a wise head and firm hand—or, hesitating to commit themselves to a conflict which, as republicans and Protestants, must have appeared to them an incongruity—could not be prevailed upon to take the initiative. Hostilities, however, commenced from the other side; and thus began one of the most remark-

able naval struggles, perhaps, on record. A pretext was afforded by the assassination of Dr. Dorislaus, the British envoy at the Hague, which was supplemented by the revival of an old-standing grievance regarding the massacre of some Englishmen at Amboyna. The passing of Whitelock's celebrated Navigation Act, which prohibited all nations from entering English ports with merchandise not the produce of their own country, precipitated matters. The act was an insult and an injury to a free and commercial nation like the Dutch—against whom, as carriers for the world, its clauses were really, if not ostensibly, directed. The honour of the nation suggested that, be the cost what it might, no course was open to them but to try conclusions with her old ally, and now unreasonable and relentless rival.

The war was preceded by the capture of Dutch merchantmen by the British, and reprisals on the part of the Dutch. Negotiations had been going on during these hostile acts, they failed, however, and, in the year 1652, the contest began in good earnest. Robert Blake, the hero of Santa Cruz, and Van Tromp, the equally distinguished destroyer of Spanish power in the Indies, were severally appointed to the chief command of the English and Dutch navies. While yet hostilities were undeclared, the rival fleets met off the North Foreland. An absurd point of honour occasioned a collision. Mutual recrimination followed the action, but the onus of having taken the initiative rests, equally perhaps, upon both commanders. The action was indecisive—though, if there were any advantage, it was on the side of the English, who sank one of the enemy's vessels, and captured another. Even now the Dutch showed an aversion to entering the fray, and sent over Pauw, the grand pensionary of Holland, to apologise and explain.

The English parliament, however, bent on war, would hear of no explanation, and demanded a money compensation for losses and expenditure. Finally, England declared war in July, and hostilities forthwith began in earnest. Blake succeeded in interrupting the Dutch

herring-fishery in the north. Van Tromp met with so little success, that he was superseded by De Witt. De Ruyter attacked Blake off the Kentish coast, but with little profit, and Van Tromp was restored to command with De Ruyter under him. Fortune now appeared to favour the Dutch, whose admiral, having caused Blake to retire, sailed triumphantly up and down the Channel with a broom at his mast's head, by way of intimating that he had swept the English fleet from the sea. But the triumph of the Dutch admiral was premature. The English fleet was shortly refitted, and Monk and Dean were joined in command with Blake. The hostile fleets once more met (February 1653) off Cape La Hogue. An obstinate engagement took place here of two days' duration—the Dutch finally retiring with the loss of several of their men-of-war, and upwards of a score of the merchant vessels convoyed by the fleet. Nevertheless Van Tromp was able to save the greater part of the merchantmen under convoy, and this piece of good fortune served—notwithstanding his defeat—to preserve his reputation as a naval leader, and enabled him to retain his command.

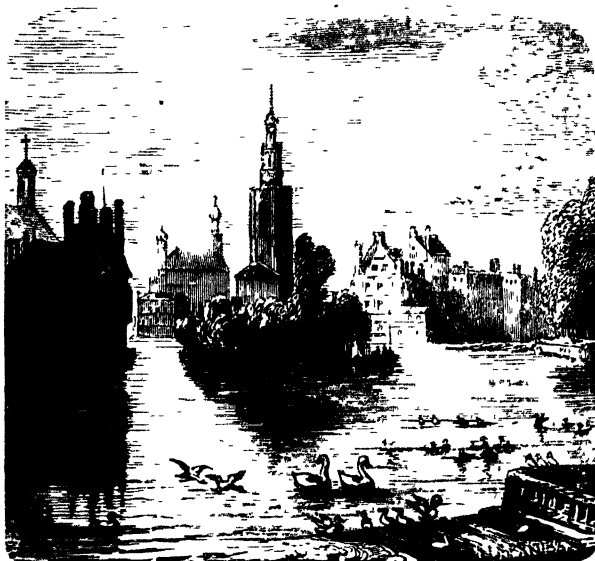
The last of these obstinate and sanguinary engagements occurred at Scheveling. Van Tromp was determined to bring matters to a conclusion. The English squadron was under the command of Monk. The Dutch admiral's enthusiasm lost him the battle. While in the act of encouraging his men, he was shot through the breast with a musket-bullet. The action terminated in the complete overthrow of the Dutch squadron—nearly twenty vessels of which were either captured or sunk. The body of the deceased captain was carried to Delft, and there interred with the ceremony due to one who had done so much to make his nation respected by the foreigner. The Dutch, however, never recovered from this defeat and loss. They hastened (1653) to negotiate with the great man at the head of affairs in England. The terms Cromwell imposed were thoroughly characteristic of his stern and exacting nature—to Dutch

pride humiliating; to their trade distressing; and to their ideas, as a free nation, revolting. For political considerations, Cromwell, among other things, made the stipulation that a defensive league should be established between the two nations; and that no member of the Orange family should henceforth be invested with the title of stadtholder, while the mercantile interests of the British nation were guarded by clauses of an unequivocal character.

The nation, well-nigh bankrupt from the expenses of the war and the fines imposed by the victors, without the means of internal or external defence, and thoroughly disorganised by reason of the unexpected upshot of the struggle, had no alternative left them but submission. That same attribute of patience, however, that had won from the ocean the land on which they dwelt, and had maintained it inviolate against the repeated attacks of their watery enemy, enabled them to bear in silence the burden of misfortune and humiliation, while they persevered with the indomitable energy of the race in making preparations for one day casting off the irksome trammels, and retrieving the national honour. That time came. A brilliant naval campaign with the Swedish navy, in which their admirals, Opdam and De Witt emulated the feats of Van Tromp, De Ruyter, and the elder De Witt, replaced them upon the pinnacle of maritime greatness from which they had been for a while dislodged. The Dutch—thanks to the efforts and the wisdom of John de Witt—were soon in a position to raise their heads once more among the powers of the continent, and to treat with them upon equal terms; and, finally, when the great pilot of the destinies of England had passed from earth, and its helm was in the keeping of a frivolous representative of the Stuart dynasty, the opportunity for retaliation—so long and patiently awaited—came.

Time was, when everything promised a close union between the two nations. Prince Charles, an exile from the shores of England, had found a congenial asylum in

the hospitable land of the Hollanders; and, at the Hague, he had, in perfect safety, kept his court. At his restoration to power in England, he had, previous to his embarkation, been honoured by the hearty congratulations and flattering farewells of that nation, and, in these acts of national courtesy, the hopeful failed not to perceive a bond which could not well be severed. But, whatever the good side of the Stuart character may have been, gratitude certainly formed no part of it; and the remembrance of bygone favours failed to fortify Charles against the warlike clamours of his jealous countrymen, and the solicitations of his brother James, Duke of York, the Lord High Admiral of England.



THE HAGUE.

In the spring of 1665, therefore, England declared war against the Dutch. War having been long considered

a foregone conclusion, many acts of a hostile character had previously been committed by both sides—upon the African coast, in North American waters, and in the West Indies; but now the contest began in earnest. In the June of this year, the fleets came to action off the coast of Suffolk. They were commanded—the English by the Duke of York and the Earl of Sandwich, the Dutch by the renowned Admiral Opdam. During the action the Dutch admiral's vessel blew up. The circumstance served to create a panic among the Dutch crews; and with the loss of eighteen of their ships, they sailed away and took refuge in Texel. The news of the victory fell but flatly upon the ears of England, for this was the terrible year of the plague; and men's minds and thoughts were perforce more deeply centred in the struggle going on between them and an enemy more formidable than the Dutch.

Before hostilities re-opened, the Dutch had been joined by the French, and now, as on many another occasion of national depression, all private differences, hates, and resentments were, for the time, laid aside, whilst their rulers made a grand effort to retrieve their late disaster, and to wring from their daring foes that sovereignty of the seas which was the essence of their existence. The Dutch, under the command of De Ruyter and the younger Van Tromp, met that of the English, under Prince Rupert and the Duke of Albemarle (Monk), and, after a running fight of four days' duration, obtained a slight advantage. Another conflict occurred shortly afterwards, in which success was upon the side of their adversaries; but ample revenge was by-and-by secured by De Ruyter, who, taking advantage of the extreme indifference of the English government, sailed up the Thames and the Medway, captured Sheerness, approached London, and, after administering the grossest insults to the British shores and the British flag, with comparative impunity, withdrew. The Dutch, however, satisfied with these triumphs, and fearing the evil consequences of French success in Flanders, Brabant and Franche Comté ap-

peared desirous of terminating these costly and destructive naval operations; and, in July 1667, hostilities were terminated by the Peace of Breda.

The ambition of Louis the Fourteenth—which aimed at the dismemberment of the Spanish dominions and the annexation of the Low Countries to France—had, indeed, become a matter of continental consequence; and, even at this early stage, a mighty alliance of the nations—dictated by considerations of self-preservation—was in contemplation. The first advance in this direction was the conclusion of the Triple Alliance between Holland, England, and Sweden, which took place at the Hague early in 1668. The intrigues and the gold of the wily monarch soon succeeded in breaking up this federation, and the Dutch were not only deserted by their allies, but shortly had to number them in the ranks of their enemies. The declaration of war between Holland and England was, as usual, heralded by hostilities between the fleets. There was, however, no Cromwell now at the head of British interests, and no Blake to do his bidding; but the Dutch had in De Ruyter a naval commander of extraordinary talent. They managed, therefore, to hold their own upon the ocean against the combined English and French navies, and this was in itself tantamount to a triumph.

Even the fortune which this successful defence suggests was denied them, however, upon the land. The armies of France were at this time commanded by some of the most accomplished generals of the age, and its policy directed by some of its most consummate statesmen. On the other hand, the United Provinces were, perhaps, never more badly prepared for resistance: no army, no generals, no stores. The burden of blame fell upon John De Witt—to whose negligence, if not more inexcusable conduct, the nation attributed its miserable situation. This neglect, and the consequent unpopularity of the pensionary, proved, however, a blessing in disguise—inasmuch as it made way for a man endued with the genius necessary to combat the acts and aims of such an

enemy as the Grand Monarque—namely, the grandson of the renowned Dutch patriot and father of her liberties, William, Prince of Orange.

While yet, however, the country was in a defenceless condition, the armies of Louis entered it unopposed—overrunning province after province as if in a grand triumphal march. Fortress after fortress opened its gates to his advancing legions—Amsterdam alone making any show of resistance. The same desperate remedy was employed as in the case of Leyden a century before. The sluices were opened, and the sea was permitted for a while to occupy its ancient bed. The northern country was spared the humiliation of conquest by this device, but the land was altogether in so unhappy a condition that peace was eagerly desired and supplicated by the States-general. The terms imposed by the haughty French monarch were indeed hard and his pusillanimous pensioner and cousin of England was equally exacting and more high-handed. The extravagance of the allies' demands, however, proved the salvation of Holland. The Dutch, perceiving that national existence or national extinction was in the balance, determined to fight to the death. The Prince of Orange was proclaimed stadtholder; and this gave him command of the entire national resources, and, what was of more value still, the entire national confidence—the De Witts falling a prey, meanwhile, to the fury of the mob.

One of his earliest measures was to reject the terms of the over-reaching monarchs with the scorn they merited, and to bid them defiance. This was taking high ground, but the stadtholder's proceeding was only a reflex of the national mind, which had determined on resistance to the bitter end. Supported by the emperor, the Elector of Brandenburg, and—strange mutation of fate—the King of Spain, William took the field (1672). The prince, with his natural shrewdness, perceived at once the advantage of his adversary's situation. With Fabian prudence, therefore, he chose rather to perplex his enemy by a series of masterly manœuvres than to meet him in pitched battle.

His earliest opponent upon the field of battle was the great Condé, with whom, at Seneff, he divided the honours of the day (1674). The campaign dragged a slow length through the next four years, when negotiations were set on foot in the direction of peace. The Dutch, perceiving how little they had to expect from a continuance of the war, how their commerce was passing over to the now neutral England, and how great a drain was being made upon the resources of the nation, were willing to close with any conditions which did not involve dishonour. William, however, still cherished the hope that another campaign would be productive of better fortune. He, however, hoped in vain. The campaign of 1678 was less favourable to Dutch arms than any that had preceded it. With all William's talent, he was a less skilful soldier than the men whom Louis—with his keen knowledge of things—had placed in charge of his military concerns. All his efforts failed to preserve the great fortresses of the Netherlands, and he was finally worsted in fair fight at Cassel by the Duke of Orleans and Marshal Luxembourg (1678).

This victory of the French at Cassel had the effect of generating the war-fever in England; and it was a mere distrust of the king that kept the nation from casting in its lot with the enemies of Louis. England, however, was kept back, and Charles was fain to appear in the character of mediator. He had, indeed, begun to fear the ambition of his neighbour of France, and motives of policy suggested a close union with the Dutch. The Prince of Orange was, therefore, suddenly invited to England, and his marriage with the Princess Mary, eldest daughter of James, Duke of York, the heir presumptive to the English throne, was immediately solemnised (1677).

Such a union could not but be distasteful to the French monarch—inasmuch as the family alliance suggested a political union between two powerful nations. The conduct of Charles, however, served to convince the allies that an open understanding with an enemy was

better than the possession of a double-dealing and treacherous ally ; and, hard though they were, they were brought to entertain the terms of the French monarch. All faith in England was gone, and the allies, one by one, yielded to the French demands. The result was the peace of Nimeguen (July 1678), which, from the nature of its clauses, was a virtual victory for the French. The great gain of Louis consisted in the cession to him of the important province of Franche Comte—a fief of the empire, and, down to this period, a province of the Netherlands. The war had, indeed, left France the arbiter of Europe. The terms of the treaty shabbily left Spain out of the question, and she was consequently compelled, within a few weeks, to make the best terms she could with her triumphant and exacting adversary. These, it need hardly be remarked, were entirely in favour of the French monarch. In fact, the interests of Spain had been ruthlessly sacrificed to those of her allies.

CHAPTER XXII.

STRUGGLE WITH LOUIS THE FOURTEENTH.

Effects of the Treaty of Nimeguen—William of Orange and the League of Augsburg—Patience of the Prince—His succession to the English Throne—The Grand Alliance—Its Failures—Defeat of the Dutch and English Squadrons—Peace of Ryswick—The Partition Treaties—Death of William—Heinsius—War of the Succession—Marlborough's Successes—Treaty of Utrecht—the Barrier Treaty.

THE effect of the Treaty of Nimeguen, as has been remarked, was to leave France dominant over Europe in such degree as neither she nor any other country had been before. The Dutch, however, had profited by the struggle which it closed, inasmuch as not an inch of her soil was to be found among those fair acres which went to reward an ambitious sovereign for having so long disturbed the peace of Europe. Spain, on the other hand, had been subject to wholesale spoliation; and the potentates of Europe, overawed by the daring and success of Louis against a most formidable combination, hesitated to interfere. The establishment of peace was, however, ineffectual in curbing the restless spirit of him whose aim was, evidently, universal empire; and everything tended to show that he had consented to a pacific arrangement merely because it would best help forward his grand designs.

Upon his treatment of Lorraine, his outrage upon Genoa, his persecution of the pope, his spoliation of the emperor, his ever memorable revocation of the Edict of Nantes and the horrors that followed it, it were needless here to dwell, for they do not properly belong to the annals of the nation with whose concerns we are chiefly

dealing; but it may be remarked that his movements were narrowly watched by his great adversary at the Hague; that these, and many other acts of extravagance and presumption, did but assist that astute politician to build up a grand confederation of all the nations of Europe against the enemy of the general peace. To thwart the schemes of the Grand Monarque was the one purpose of the great stadtholder; and in due time his immense influence and consummate sagacity succeeded in forming the celebrated confederacy known as the League of Augsburg.

From this confederacy the King of England (James the Second) at present held aloof, although he had given William to hope that he would, by-and-by, join it. Between these two rulers, however, there could be nothing in common; and, so long as he lived, William received no assistance from his father-in-law of England. The Prince of Orange, however, was looking forward to the time when he should obtain the aid of that influential nation free of the misgivings which so often accompany a mere alliance; and in this contemplation he was content patiently to bide his time. None saw better than he that the infatuated monarch was careering headlong to ruin, and what his fall would bring. That fall by-and-by came, and society was brought to regard William as the saviour, as he had been heretofore the hope, of struggling humanity, in the land of ancient freedom.

The stadtholder of Holland had become King of England under the title of William the Third (1689), and in thus obtaining possession of the English throne, he had knit together the two great Protestant powers, and the two foremost maritime nations of Europe. With the resources of two such kingdoms at his command, and the advantages which the Grand Alliance—the result of his diplomacy—gave him, the realization of his plans seemed a foregone conclusion; for Louis was, to all appearance, comparatively hemmed in, as it were, by a cordon of enemies. The diplomacy of William had left his rival without a single ally, and even the neutrality of the Scandinavian kingdom was in the balance against

him. But never did the genius of man shine forth more brilliantly than did that of the French monarch in this hour of isolation and apparent ruin. His enemies were defeated in almost every engagement, and town after town of the Netherlands fell into the hands of his all-conquering soldiery. In Flanders the Duke of Luxemburg won the battle of Fleurus, while in Italy defeat attended the efforts of the Duke of Savoy. Thus the strongest fortresses of the land capitulated. Even upon the ocean the same good fortune attended him, for his admiral, De Tourville, beat off the English and Dutch squadrons under Admiral Herbert, rode triumphant up and down the Channel, and insulted with impunity the English coast (1692).

The outlook for the Grand Alliance was gloomy indeed, but its leading spirit never appeared to greater advantage than in the hour of trial and adversity. He worked on. His defeats at Steinkirk and Neerwinden, the loss of Namur and the bombardment of Brussels, failed to shake his purpose or to make him quail. He succeeded eventually in winning back the fortress of Namur, but he never attained the distinction of a conqueror, for to baffle an enemy and to hold his own against him was one thing, to attack and defeat him in the field, and afterwards despoil him, was quite another. In fact, victory was a luxury which he, notwithstanding all his skill, never experienced. "Like his great ancestor, William the Silent," it has been remarked,* "he was a luckless commander, and no general had to bear more frequent defeats. But he profited by defeats as other men profit by victory."

Louis, however, notwithstanding his success, had grown heartily sick of the contest, for France, in the words of Fenelon, had become a vast hospital, and it had long been apparent that he was fighting merely for the sake of getting as favourable terms as possible in a prospective settlement. That settlement was at hand. The

* *A Short History of the English People*, by J. R. Green, M.A. Macmillan.

only obstacle to its earlier accomplishment had been the views of the emperor and the Spanish king, but these were eventually settled by means of a private understanding between the principals; and in the year 1697 the Peace of Ryswick—a grand triumph for William, a humiliation to his enemy—was concluded between the contending nations.

The sword of Europe, however, was merely sheathed, and not laid aside. A certain question had been long forcing itself into the arena of European politics, and it would no longer brook neglect—to wit, the disposition of the dominions of the imbecile Charles the Second of Spain.

The Partition Treaties by which the dominions of Spain were apportioned to various members of Charles's family, found little favour with the powers of the Continent, inasmuch as the arrangements promised to give the great bugbear of Europe such a hold upon the peninsula, that henceforth, as foreshadowed in his own remark, the barrier interposed by the Pyrenees would be abolished. Under the auspices of William a new grand alliance was formed; and then began (1701) the memorable conflict known as the war of the Spanish Succession. William, however, did not survive to take any part in it, as he died before hostilities commenced (1702.) His death threatened to dissolve the alliance, for it was feared the powerful aid of England might now be withdrawn by reason of the change in the succession. But his successor, influenced by the Duke of Marlborough, the future hero of a hundred fights, stood firm by the cause. The spirit of the Hollanders was as staunch as when directed by the astute prince himself, and the republic vigorously prepared for war.

William left no heir, and the stadtholdership was thus, for the present, in abeyance. The fortunes of the nation were confided to the States-general, with the grand pensionary Heinsius as its head. This arrangement might, under other circumstances, have led to dire results, but the wisdom begotten of experience had taught the

Hollanders better than to indulge the delights of factious opposition whilst so great a danger threatened them ; and all parties entered into the contest with an earnestness which served to indicate that the spirit of the great departed still animated the minds and directed the counsels of his countrymen.

The War of the Succession, the incidents of which are familiar enough to the readers of English history, is one of the most remarkable of the struggles of the century, mainly on account of the brilliant series of victories gained over the armies of France by the allies. Pre-eminent among those who figure in this memorable contest are John Churchill, Duke of Marlborough, Prince Eugene of Savoy, and the grand pensionary, Heinsius. This triumvirate formed, indeed, the moving spirit of the undertaking. Marlborough, the greatest general that England, or the world, perhaps, had produced since the days of Crecy and Agincourt—a general of whom it has been said. “He never besieged a fortress he did not take, nor fought a battle he did not win,” and whose dreaded name, “Malbrook,” was long after employed by French mothers to terrify their wilful offspring, Eugene, a commander in many respects his equal ; and Heinsius, a statesman possessed of a capacity little inferior to the great Prince of Orange himself, actuated with as earnest a patriotism, and endued with a full share of his virtues.

With so much talent pressed into the cause, there was little wonder that the concerns of the allies were brought to a successful issue. Ramilies and Malplaquet, Oudenarde and Blenheim, saw the supposed invincible soldiery of Rocroi swept from the field by Teutonic gallantry, led on by the great master of the military art. Fortress after fortress fell at his advance. Holland was early saved from the possibility of invasion by his masterly movements upon the Rhine and Moselle. Germany was cleared of French troops, and the utter humiliation of the French monarch was in time compassed. The confidence of the proud king was sorely shaken when, in 1704, the great master-stroke of Blenheim had robbed

him of the flower of his veteran army, and sent its shattered remnants in full haste back into Alsace. When his lines between Antwerp and Namur were forced by his spirited opponent; when, after a scarcely less important victory at Ramilies, Oudenarde, Ghent, Antwerp, and other places, fell into Marlborough's hands, and when an attempt to retake the former place was foiled, and his army had to submit to another defeat beneath its walls, he, for the first time perhaps, wished himself well out of the struggle. In 1709, therefore, with such evidences of a losing game at his very threshold, as it were, and a knowledge of his own ill-fortune and that of his allies in Spain, in Italy, and upon the ocean, he began to solicit peace, and to offer, as the price of it, terms such as must have been extremely hurtful to his proud nature.

Flushed with triumph, the allies, with the advice of Marlborough, haughtily spurned his overtures, and three years or more passed ere he could secure to his country the peace he had long been so anxious to establish. To party intrigue at the English Court alone he owed this boon, and the same strange circumstance he had likewise to thank for conditions more favourable than he or any one else could have dreamt of. In the Treaty of Utrecht, signed in April 1713, the original aim of the contest was silently disregarded, excepting in so far as its clauses stipulated that France and Spain should never be united. Philip was to retain the crown of Spain and the Indies, the Belgian provinces were made over to the new emperor, and thus they became a portion of the dominions of the house of Austria. England gained somewhat, inasmuch as her rights to Gibraltar, Minorca, and other conquests were acknowledged. She acquired, too, the questionable privilege comprised in the *Asiento* contract, which gave her the right of supplying Spanish America with negro slaves. For these paltry advantages only had the blood of England been freely shed, and the genius of the great Marlborough employed.

Holland, in the demolition of the piratical harbour of Dunkirk, and a subsequent settlement of her frontiers,

supplemented by whatever advantage the reduced condition of her great neighbour might be supposed to furnish, was a considerable gainer, but not to the extent which the magnitude of the allied commanders' success warranted. The Treaty of Utrecht was followed by what is termed the Barrier Treaty. The establishment of a well-defined frontier-line between the Republic and France had become so necessary that, so early as the year 1707, the question had received the attention of statesmen both in Holland and England. The terms of the more general Treaty of Utrecht having been arranged, conferences were held at Antwerp, in 1714, upon the subject; and, in the following year, the Barrier Treaty, with its twenty-six clauses, was concluded.

CHAPTER XXIII.

EUROPEAN POLITICS.

The Quadruple Alliance—Progress of the Nation during the War of the Grand Alliance—Assistance to Maria Theresa—Dettingen—Fontenoy—William of Nassau—Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle—War with England—Peace of Paris—Navigation of the Scheldt—State of Parties—William V.—Treatment of the Prince of Orange—His Re-establishment—Discontent in the Netherlands—The United Belgian States—Leopold—Frederick II.

THE Treaty of Utrecht was the work of Marlborough's political enemies, the Whigs, and they were consequently bound to respect its clauses and its spirit. Perhaps not without reason, the Spaniards were anything but satisfied with the arrangements, and it was fully evident that its king, Philip of Anjou, egged on by the ambitious and intriguing Cardinal Alberoni, would lose no opportunity to regain, by fair means or foul, whatever territory he had under pressure been called upon to surrender. This intention was now the one great obstacle which precluded the hope of a lasting peace; and it was with a view to prevent a breach of it on the part of Spain that the Quadruple Alliance of Holland, France, England, and the emperor, was formed in 1718. This step, however, failed to secure the object intended, as war shortly afterwards broke out.

The Dutch, however, took no part in the hostilities which the proceedings of Spain forced other European powers to engage in. Holland was safe within the boundaries of her own dominions; and could, therefore, with comparative composure, watch the strife raging beyond her confines, labouring meanwhile to utilise the blessed boon of rest and peace, to recruit the exhausted energies of the

nation, and prepare for future exigencies. Strong in the knowledge of a close union—and a sure one, because it was the outcome of an identity of interest—with the great powers, she could afford to be generous to her neighbour Belgium; and, in the year of the Quadruple Alliance, she consented to modify in her favour some of the most irritating of the clauses in the Barrier Treaty. Beyond this, her history for the next quarter of a century is one of national consolidation and progress. Her struggles during this period were carried on exclusively against her ancient enemy, the ocean, whose onsets could only be met by constant vigilance and untiring labour. At one time they were on the point of experiencing a sad reverse when the dykes, which had been erected and preserved by means of centuries of patient labour and an enormous outlay, undermined by the destructive attacks of certain reptiles, gave signs of yielding to the pressure of the waters; but they were happily spared from so calamitous a visitation.

Once, indeed, a contest of the old kind was imminent, when, in 1722, the commercial jealousy so characteristic of this people was awakened at the establishment at Ostend, by the Netherlanders, of a trading company to the East Indies, but hostilities were happily averted; and Holland crossed swords with no mortal foe until, in 1743, she was prevailed upon to embark with England in the chivalrous enterprise of defending the interesting archduchess, Maria Theresa, against the spoliation of her powerful and covetous neighbours, among whom, strange to say, was one of the members of the Quadruple Alliance, Louis the Fifteenth of France. Twenty thousand of their troops shared with the allies the glory of the victory at Dettingen, and the burden likewise of whatever humiliation attended the defeat of Fontenoy (1745); for, while England had now no Marlborough, and Holland no Maurice, their enemy boasted a brilliant commander in the person of Marshal Saxe.

The reverse experienced by the allies at Fontenoy had exposed the United Provinces to the gravest danger, and

the nation once more looked for deliverance at the hands of the illustrious house of Orange, in the person of William of Nassau, whom William of Orange had constituted his heir, but whose claims the States, with the exception of Zealand, had thought fit to overlook. Him they raised to the dignity of stadtholder and captain-general, and constituted the succession hereditary in his family, even to the female and collateral branches. He did not long, however, survive his elevation to these dignities, dying in 1751. He left his honours to his infant son, and the young prince himself to the care of his mother, Anne of England. But the danger, which had caused the re-establishment of the stadtholdership had been removed by the Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, three years before William's death. For a time the Dutch were shut out from the stirring politics of Europe—even the important incidents of the Seven Years' War, which broke out in 1756, and closed in 1763 by the Treaty of Fontainebleau, had no concern for them—beyond this, perhaps, that their commerce was enhanced by reason of the increased demand for warlike stores.

This very commercial activity, however, proved the means by which they eventually drifted into a war with England. The latter part of the eighteenth century saw the national mind of England in a state of supreme irritability. Her North American colonies had renounced her jurisdiction; and, assisted by certain European nations, were in a fair way of slipping from her hands. To this condition of things the Dutch were found to have contributed in no small degree by reason of the assistance rendered to the revolted colonies through the medium of their settlement at St. Eustatius, and also by the cargoes carried in their vessels. The right of search was, in this difficulty, demanded and exercised by the British. Dutch pride revolted against subjection to such a humiliating ordeal; and, while the northern nations contented themselves with forming an armed neutrality, the Dutch preferred the arbitrament of war.

It was a false move for the nation. The naval might

of Britain had at this time well-nigh culminated. The days of Blake and Van Tromp had revived for England, but not for her adversary. Her merchantmen fell an easy prey to the seamanship of Rodney: St. Eustatius, Demerara, Essequibo, and other places, were quickly cancelled from the list of those territories, which the children of the republic had striven so hardly and patiently to acquire. One by one, indeed, the whole of her vast colonial empire was transferred to the possession of her antagonist, whilst her commercial intercourse with the Baltic was seriously impaired by the movements of a British squadron under Sir Hyde Parker, who, after a long and obstinate fight, compelled the Dutch admiral, Zoutman, to retreat to the shelter of the Texel. This conflict was terminated in 1784 by the peace of Paris. The character of its terms served to show that the strife had been an unfortunate one for the Dutch. But the wholesale surrender of their transmarine possessions which its clauses provided for, was not the only piece of bad fortune which followed this one-sided conflict. Her commerce was so greatly crippled, that henceforth the Hanse towns and other commercial centres were enabled to enter the lists against her, and thus her prosperity was thereby seriously impaired.

In this period of her prostration her neighbours, the Netherlanders, began to assert themselves, and succeeded (1784) in regaining the privilege of navigating the Scheldt—of which they had been deprived by the Treaty of Munster in 1648. This was so important a matter with the Dutch that they sternly resisted it, and a war between the empire and the republic seemed inevitable. Already, indeed, an imperial army was assembled, while the Dutch, on their part, had, as usual, called to their aid their ally, the ocean, by opening the sluices and laying a considerable portion of the country under water. The good offices of the French and Prussian Courts, however, happily averted the catastrophe—the Netherlanders acquiring the freedom of navigation by the payment of a large sum of money.

Amicable relations had scarcely been established by these means between the two neighbours, when the soil of both became the scene of deadly civil strife. Towards such a condition of things both had long been steadily though surely drifting. In Holland, the house of Orange—respected as it generally was—had many and influential enemies. There had been an animus against the family—chiefly in its capacity of stadtholder—ever since the demise of Prince Maurice, a century and a half since; and this sentiment had rather gained strength by time than otherwise. The hereditary character of the office rendered it so analogous to that of a sovereign, that there was little wonder the republican mind should be impatient under it. Hence a *pro* and *anti* stadtholder party were now developed in the state. The example of the North American states, which had lately gained for themselves an independence, and had established a form of government in which the hereditary principle was entirely repudiated, had not been without its effect upon the party who championed a similar system of government here. The connection of the present stadtholder—William the Fifth—with foreign courts (in 1767 he had married the Princess Frederica of Prussia), begat in him an undue partiality for foreigners, and he was thus tempted to take many aliens into the service of the state, to the exclusion of natives. This considerably widened the breach between him and his subjects; while the disastrous termination of the war with England furnished the malcontents with an incentive for a movement in the direction of a more truly republican form of government.

The anti-stadtholder party received secret aid from the French Court, while the Courts of London and Berlin steadfastly stood by the Prince of Orange. The earlier efforts of the malcontents were directed towards curtailing the power of the stadtholder. They began by depriving him of the command of the garrison of the Hague. The contest once initiated, party spirit was developed with a marvellous rapidity, and measures of extreme violence followed. The prince and princess and their family, who

were at this time at the Hague, were considered to be in danger, and they were therefore advised to retire. They took up their quarters at Nimeguen; but the heroic princess—doubting afterwards the wisdom of the step—returned alone to the seat of government, in order to test the loyalty of the citizens. The experiment, however, never came to the test—inasmuch as, upon arriving at the frontier of the province of Holland, she was summarily seized by the magnates of a neighbouring town (1787), and forbidden to advance.

Information of this outrage was given to her brother, Frederick William the Second of Prussia, who, in vindication of the family honour, entered the arena. The obdurate states refused to make reparation, or to concede anything, and the Prussian king consequently despatched the Duke of Brunswick with a powerful army into the province of Guelderland, determined to reinstate his brother-in-law in his former position. The movements of the duke might be characterised as a military promenade. The republican party were seized with a panic. Town after town—even the strongly-fortified cities of Utrecht and Amsterdam—fell before his rapid advance. The defeated republicans had no alternative but to submit, and the prince was once more placed in possession of all the rights and privileges of the stadtholdership.

Meanwhile popular discontent had been gaining ground in the neighbouring country. The agitation—which had become general—had its origin in a similar aversion to sovereign sway, though the movements tended towards different issues. In the northern states it was a fear lest constitutional and religious freedom might be imperilled by the establishment of the monarchical form of government; whilst in the southern provinces—strange as it may seem—it was discontent at the development of constitutional reform at the hands of the monarch. The mind of Belgium was evidently not yet ripe for such reforms as the liberal views of their sovereign had led him to make; and, as a consequence, the beneficial changes which the Emperor Joseph the Second had

- recently introduced into his Netherlandish dominions had excited the alarm of the clerical body, together with the bigoted, the superstitious, and timid conservatives of the country. "Miscalculating his own power, and undervaluing that of the priests, the emperor issued decrees and edicts with a sweeping violence that shocked every prejudice, and roused every passion perilous to the country. Toleration to the Protestants, emancipation of the clergy from the papal yoke, reformation in the system of theological instruction were among the wholesale measures of the emperor's enthusiasm so imprudently attempted, and so violently opposed."*



UTRECHT.

These reforms of the emperor, however, had exercised a twofold effect; for, whilst it had given offence to one portion of the population, it had inspired the other with hope. The agitation by-and-by became so wide-spread

* *Cabinet Cyclopædia.*

and uncontrollable, that the archduchess and her husband were recalled. Remonstrance had been followed up by rebellion against duly-constituted authority; and no settlement appeared possible without an appeal to the sword. The usual skirmishing heralded the general onset. The refusal of the States to vote supplies, arrests and wholesale flights; a dissolution of the government; fines and imprisonment, crinations and reprisals; extravagances of all kinds, perpetrated by both sides, followed. Blood was shed in several of the larger cities, and the movement developed into a regular civil war. The imperial forces were under the command of Count Trautmansdorff and General D'Alten, those of the insurgents under one Vander Mersch, a man of considerable talent, who had raised himself from an obscure walk of life to high service at the Court of the Prince of Orange.

The genius of Vander Mersch as a commander soon made itself evident. Knowing the character of his forces, with Fabian caution he avoided a pitched battle with the imperial troops, until he should be able to deal a blow from some coign of vantage. With consummate skill, on one occasion, he drew the enemy in pursuit of him into the streets of Turnhout, where he fell upon them and defeated them with severe loss. When the time had come for aggressive movements on his part, he marched into Flanders, took Ghent, Bruges, Ypres, and Ostend, and forced the governor-general, Count Murray, to retire upon Brussels. The provinces of Flanders and Brabant were now in the hands of the insurgents, and, Vander Noot, their recognised leader, who had vainly endeavoured to interest Britain, Holland, and the powers in their behalf, entered the city, and there established a government. In due time was formed a confederation of the seven revolted provinces, which took the name of the United Belgian States.

The existence of this newly-formed power was, however, destined to be evanescent. As is so frequently the case, the newly-launched vessel foundered upon the rock of faction. This spirit of discord first revealed itself in

the doings of the Vonckists, or followers of Vonck, an advocate of the principles of civil and religious freedom. When the restraint imposed by the imperial hand was removed, the antagonistic forces comprising the new government—the followers of Vander Noot, and the disciples of Vonck—were left to the free exercise of their combative propensities, greatly to the delight of the royal house, whose sway they had so ruthlessly abrogated. In the heat of the conflict, Vander Mersch, whose sympathies lay with the Vonckists, was seized and thrown into prison, where he lingered until the now triumphant faction came in for their turn of adverse fortune.

Between the advocates of such widely diverse principles—bigotry and intolerance on the one side, and free thought and free institutions on the other—there could be no possible compromise. Little wonder, then, that the cause of imperialism was so greatly strengthened that the house of Austria was once more enabled to regain its lost dominion here. The reforming emperor, Joseph, had sunk beneath the burden of his many cares into the grave. His mantle had fallen upon his brother Leopold—a prince of no less sagacity and moderation than he. Into this potentate's hands the ancient imperial sway now fell. He unfortunately survived the recovery of the provinces but a very short time—dying suddenly in 1792. He was succeeded by his son Frederick the Second, who lived to witness the final severance of the provinces from the possession of his house.

CHAPTER XXIV.

STRUGGLE WITH NAPOLEON.

Struggle in Belgium—Dumouriez—Jemappes—Annexation of the Belgian Provinces—Battle of Nerwinde—Triumph of the French—Treaty of Campo Formio—Pichegru—Abdication of the Prince of Orange—The Batavian Republic—Reverses at Sea—Condition of the New Republic—Louis Buonaparte.

THE Austrian house was not permitted long to enjoy the advantage accruing from their enemies' blunder. Events were transpiring in the neighbourhood of the Netherlands destined to work mighty changes upon the map of Europe, and in this process of transformation, the Netherlands were destined largely to share. Belgium was about to become a battle-ground for the continent—the arena within which the republican French, and the crowned heads that interposed their forces to check the spread of their hateful doctrines, and to defend their interests against their encroaching ambition, were to meet in the shock of uncompromising conflict.

The origin of the war, which terminated in the transfer of the Belgian provinces from the house of Austria to the French government, and finally to complete independence, need not be too minutely considered. The mainspring was, as usual, ambition. The French had bidden defiance to Europe; and Austria, in conjunction with other powers, had, for private as well as public reasons, taken up the gauntlet, and entered the lists against them. The distracted condition of the Low Countries at this time presented a fair field for the labours of those who had chosen to constitute themselves the champions of all who chafed beneath the burden of an uncongenial government, of whatever kind it might

be. The French, on their part, thought that if they could once get possession of the Netherlands, Austria, their most uncompromising foe, would be within easy reach through them.

Francis the Second, therefore, had scarcely ascended the throne when his Netherlandish dominions were invaded by the republican armies of France under Dumouriez and the Duc de Chartres—afterwards Louis Philippe, king of the French. These generals defeated the Austrians at Jemappes (1792), and drove them completely from Belgian territory. The road to Brussels was opened by this success to the French. Dumouriez forthwith took possession of it; and the chief of the provinces—Hainault, Brabant, Flanders, and others were at once subjugated, and became republican territory. This act of spoliation was made by the conquerors to wear a semblance of justice by means of a deputation to the National Assembly at Paris, who, in the name of their countrymen, solicited deliverance from the yoke of Austria, and permission to share the fortunes of the new Republic. This grand farce over, the question was hurriedly submitted to the inhabitants of the larger towns, and the favourable verdict given by them was considered to represent the wishes of the entire country. The incorporation of the Belgian provinces with the French Republic was at once formally published.

The triumph of the French, however, was but short-lived. The Austrians, it soon appeared, were merely beaten off, and not conquered. Means were immediately adopted for redeeming the loss, and the reputation of Dumouriez, and the acquisition of the republic, were alike forfeited upon the field of Nerwinde. The Duke of Saxe Coburg immediately reclaimed possession of the lost provinces in the name of the emperor. The French, however, were not, by this defeat, driven from the Netherlands; and the troops of the emperor, the Prince of Orange, and King George of England, vainly strove, in combination, to compel them to relax the hold they had obtained of them. After two years of severe fighting,

the allies—notwithstanding all the bravery and military talent which they brought into the field, were overthrown at Fleurus (1794). This victory decided the question. By the convention of October 1795, the Austrian Netherlands—divided into departments—once more became an integral portion of the French Republic. This arrangement was confirmed in 1797 by the treaty of Campo Formio.

The conquest of Belgium by the indomitable soldiers of the republic was shortly followed by that of Holland. During the winter of the year 1794, the French commander, Pichegru, poured an overwhelming force into Flanders. The Prince of Orange—assisted by an English army under the Duke of York—in vain attempted to check his advance. The severity of the season was upon the side of the invaders, for the hard frost deprived the Dutch of their chief means of defence, and the enemy shortly became masters of the entire country. The anti-stadtholder party—now the majority—hailed the French as deliverers, and the Prince of Orange, seeing that further opposition would only entail a useless waste of human life, placed his resignation in the hands of the States-general, and withdrew with his family to England, never to return. The ancient Netherland provinces were now merged in the territory which took the name of the Batavian Republic. This change was effected in the May of 1795.

The Dutch discovered, when too late, that this liberating process had cost them far more than it was worth; for, independently of the enormous payment in money, in land, and commercial privileges, which the so-called liberators demanded as the price of their benevolent interference, the alliance which it necessitated well-nigh accomplished their ruin. Their navies were shattered by the all-conquering fleets of England at Camperdown and elsewhere; their commerce was necessarily reduced to a mere coasting-trade, and their fairest possessions—Ceylon, the Cape, Malacca, and the Spice Islands—were wrested from them by the great enemy of their ally—the British.

They, at the same time, found by bitter experience that, in addition to these disadvantages, they had not secured those inestimable blessings of good government which they had been taught to expect, and which, had those expectations been realised, might have been expected to furnish some kind of solatium for the loss of national independence, wealth, and dignity. On the contrary, the internal situation of the unfortunate republic, it has been remarked,* “was deplorable. Under the weight of an enormous and daily increasing debt, all the resources of trade and industry were paralysed. Universal misery took the place of opulence, and not even the consolation of a free constitution remained to the people. They vainly sought that blessing from each new government of the country whose destinies they followed, but whose advantages they did not share.”

Indeed, the arrogance of their French allies and protectors increased in direct proportion to the brilliancy of their successes. The Netherlands had become a republic only in name—in reality they were ground down and oppressed as they certainly never had been under the stadtholders, and perhaps not more so even during the sway of the Spaniards. Their form of government was changed as often as the interest or the caprice of Parisian statesmen dictated; and the country—treated by the pettiest functionaries as a conquered land—was never, in its darkest days, in a more abject and pitiable condition; and they who had rejected the benign rule of a countryman, and a representative of the great house with which its very existence as a nation was so closely identified, were eventually forced to submit—without privilege of appeal—to a king in the person of Louis Buonaparte, brother of the great Napoleon (1806).

It was but poor consolation to them to know that their new master was an amiable and virtuous man, bent on gaining their good-will, and upon reviving the departed prosperity of the nation; the shame of conquest lurked in the very appointment, and this was sufficient to render

* *Cabinet Cyclopædia.*

it distasteful to all parties. Louis, indeed, soon found himself upon the horns of a dilemma—that the measures which he took for the purpose of benefiting his nation were distasteful to his imperial brother. The main cause of disagreement between Louis Buonaparte and Napoleon was the difference in the views which each entertained concerning the arrangement which excluded British manufactures from the Continent. Louis encouraged his subjects to evade the unreasonable edict of the conqueror, and a breach between the emperor and the king was the ultimate consequence. For some years this misunderstanding was maintained; when at length, by reason of the failure of the English Walcheren expedition, 1809, he found himself at the mercy, so to speak, of his all-conquering brother, he had no alternative left him but to abdicate, which he did in 1810. Having taken this step, he retired into the seclusion of private life in Austria. The change was not unaccompanied by a certain amount of regret on the part of his subjects; but his inordinate extravagance had so embarrassed the finances of the nation, that this regret was mingled with a sense of decided relief.

WAS SAVED BY BAHADUR

CHAPTER XXV.

STRUGGLE WITH NAPOLEON—*Continued.*

Holland Annexed to the French Empire—Condition of Holland and Belgium under the French yoke—Reverses of Napoleon—Expectations of Assistance—General Revolt—Arrival of the Prince of Orange at the Hague—William I.—Treaty of London—Discontent of the Belgians—Napoleon's Escape, and Invasion of Belgium—Waterloo.

THE abdication of King Louis was quickly followed by the formal annexation of Holland to the French empire. The continental system, as established by the Berlin and Milan decrees, had brought ruin upon this once flourishing commercial state, and its people were now sorely oppressed; the conscription was introduced in a most oppressive form, and the general military service exacted was found to be of the most galling nature. The male population were ruthlessly torn from their homes to fight in a cause they detested, and to serve a foreign tyrant who possessed none of the rights which the ancient Spanish monarch could claim; whilst the patrician families were forced to serve in the imperial guard—no exemption being, under any circumstances, permitted. The nation was deprived of its principal sources of revenue and laden with oppressive taxes; the great commercial houses were doomed to forced idleness; and the peasantry, unemployed, were only kept from starvation by charitable aid. The land truly was scarcely in a more deplorable condition even in the worst times of Spanish tyranny. Both Belgium and Holland shared this undesirable experience, inasmuch as they groaned under the same heavy yoke. The Belgian situation, however, was the more tolerable of the two, because,

being a manufacturing country, it gained somewhat by the system of proscription adopted towards British manufacturing produce; whilst Holland, almost purely agricultural, suffered in an incalculable degree.

Deliverance, however, was not so distant as the desponding had been led to imagine. All Europe was arrayed against the dictator of the Continent, and his schemes, like those of Philip of Spain in days gone by, were about to be frustrated by reason of the very vastness of their character. The Russian campaign of 1812 was his first great blow, the successes of Wellington in Spain and Portugal supplemented it, while the murmurs of his own countrymen, who had grown tired of sending their fathers, sons, and brothers to slaughter, for the mere gratification of one man's ambition, had become a perplexity with him, and although the victories of Bautzen and Lutzen served for a while to inspire Napoleon with fresh hope, his defeat at Leipzig quickly dissipated it, and transferred the advantage to his enemies.

Meanwhile the hopes of the Hollanders had been long centred in the reputation of the great family who had so often delivered them from trouble. The Prince of Orange, who had been compelled to quit the country, had died in England so early as 1806, but his son was living, and to him, and the powerful nation that had given him and his sire asylum, the expectations of the people longingly turned. The forces of Europe were set in motion against Napoleon. A combined Russian and Prussian army, under Marshal Bulow, approached the Netherlands. The British, victorious in the Peninsula, were making slow but certain advance into French territory from the south, whilst a body of English troops were dispatched to the Netherlands, under General Graham, to co-operate with the allies there.

The Dutch themselves, too, had not been inactive. They had had long experience in the arts of war, and were, therefore, not likely to sit down and bewail their fate without taking steps in this war of emancipation. A movement was set on foot by a few resolute men, who

perceived that the country was ripe for revolt. The perplexities of their oppressor had considerably reduced the number of troops in the garrisons, which now numbered not more than 10,000 men; and of this weak condition of Napoleon's forces the leaders took prompt advantage. They commenced their operations with a miserably inadequate army; but, buoyed up by the presence of the allied armies upon the frontiers, and the hopes and promises of further aid from England, they never lost heart, and eventually succeeded, by their indomitable perseverance, in inspiring their countrymen with hopes of ultimate success. This spirit ere long rendered them masters of the position. Long and wearily they awaited the advent of a British squadron, for the wind was against the arrival of vessels eastward.

The nation generally as yet appeared hostile to the movement—considering it, no doubt, chimerical. The patriots, however, possessed an ally in an unfounded terror which had seized the French garrison at the Hague, who were subsequently induced to abandon the city and retire to Gorcum. From this time forward, greater efforts were made towards providing men and arms. The French garrisons, bewildered or hoodwinked, continued to take no action. Meanwhile, reinforcements came gradually in. Two national armies were established—inadequate, it is true, as regards mere numbers, to the work on hand, but imbued with a spirit of resolution which more than compensated it. They were named respectively the armies of Utrecht and Gorcum. Their ranks, however, were shortly increased by volunteers from Rotterdam, Leyden, and other towns. Still, however, the numbers were insignificant, while the great reinforcements expected from beyond the sea were provokingly kept back by the continuance of easterly winds; and the army of deliverance, whose presence upon the frontier had so long served to animate the weary spirits of the people, was alike held aloof by reason of the unfavourable condition of the weather.

But neither the disappointment which the elements

had occasioned, nor certain reverses to which the little band of struggling patriots had recently been subjected, nor the steady advance of the French troops, could shake the courage of the men who had, under such unfavourable conditions, undertaken the deliverance of their country from foreign bondage. On the contrary, their energies seemed to gain force by adverse circumstances. The mere display of this energy helped to disconcert their enemy; and the plans of the French were still further frustrated by their suspicions of the presence of adversaries who did not exist. The endeavours of the patriots were, in due time, rewarded by the arrival of an envoy from England announcing the coming of the Prince of Orange.

Towards the end of November, 1813, accompanied by an escort of English marines, he arrived at the Hague, and was there welcomed with the most extravagant tokens of affection and joy. The great towns had long since declared for him; and his arrival was consequently the signal for a general movement. The people had made up their minds everywhere to receive him—not as stadtholder, but as king, and to make the sovereignty hereditary in his family. From the Hague, therefore, he made his way to the capital, where he received the insignia of his exalted office. Early in December, he published an address, in which he accepted the responsibilities of his new position, and promised to govern as a constitutional monarch. “My ancestors,” he said, in conclusion to an address to the assembled people, “sowed the seeds of your independence, the preservation of that independence shall be the constant object of myself and those around me.”

The elevation of William of Orange to the throne, under the title of William the First, was followed by the production of a policy which was submitted to the approval of six hundred deputies chosen by the householders, and passed with a very small minority of dissentients. An army of 25,000 men was soon equipped for the national service; but the newly established monarchy

found its best defence in the overthrow and consequent abdication of the Emperor Napoleon, and the anxiety of his enemies to maintain their country as a free and independent kingdom. In furtherance of this object, the allied armies who had previously made their entry into Paris from different quarters—restoring the Bourbon dynasty, and with it public confidence—had meantime taken possession of the Netherlands, which as yet formed a portion of the French dominions, and placed the provisional government in the hands of the Austrian general, Baron Vincent, with a view to future arrangements. Those arrangements, it was shortly found, were based upon a mistrust of France. The object of the powers who had combined to curb the ambition of the Corsican soon became apparent, and this was to form a powerful, independent state upon the northern frontier of France, which should offer an effectual check to future French aggression.

This object they hoped to achieve by a reunion of the old provinces of the Netherlands, under one government, with the king of Holland as sovereign. Accordingly, without reference to the principals—the Dutch and the Belgians themselves—an article was introduced into the treaty of Paris which was executed in the May of 1814, to the effect that Holland should receive an increase of territory, and the treaty of London, which followed, defined the nature of it. It was therein provided that Holland and Belgium should form one united state, governed in conformity with the fundamental law of Holland, which could be modified by common assent. Regarded in its physical aspect, such an arrangement appeared perfect, whilst the advantages offered by the terms of the alliance were considerable, and the distribution of privileges fair. Religious liberty, and the equal right of all citizens to the emoluments of the state; equal representation, the holding of the sessions alternately at Amsterdam and Brussels; the equable adjustment of the commercial privileges, the colonies, the public debt, and the finances generally, were established. Un-

happily, time was destined to reveal the weakness of the arrangement.

Meanwhile, the King of Holland, under the title of the Governor-general of the Netherlands, repaired to Brussels. His reception here could scarcely have been assuring. He was soon given to understand that the Belgian people regarded the alliance with great displeasure; and he was constrained to be a mute witness of numerous petitions of re-annexation to the empire of Austria in preference. The Belgians, however, unequal to the task of defying united Europe, were forced to submit to its decrees, which they accordingly did—though with a bad grace. The alliance was effected, and the necessary modifications in the constitution made by a joint commission, were presented for the acceptance of king and people (1815).

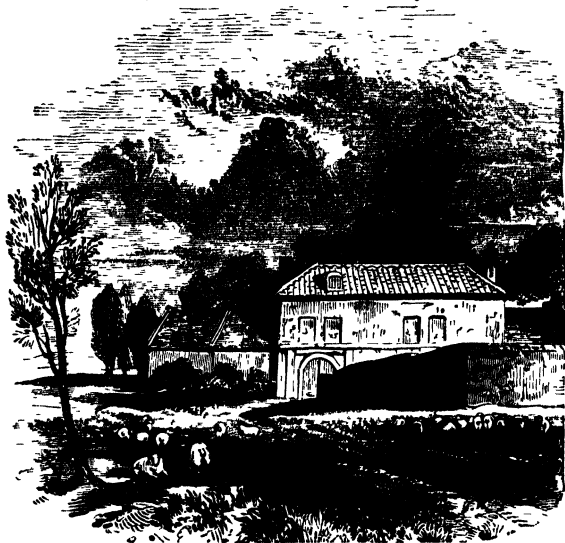
Scarcely, however, was this union of the two nations brought about, than the entire fabric—representing the labours of the European plenipotentiaries and the Netherland commissioners—was threatened with demolition from a most unexpected event. This was no other than the escape of Buonaparte from his prison at Elba, and his sudden re-appearance upon the soil of France. The lately restored Bourbon, Louis the Eighteenth, alarmed at his approach, fled from Paris and took refuge in Ghent; and the sense of a common danger served in reality to unite—for a time at least—two jealous and impatient neighbours, held in the loose bonds of a forced alliance. The circumstance had likewise the effect of sealing the friendship of the European powers, then in serious danger of shipwreck upon the question of the annexation of Saxony and Poland. A joint declaration was at once adopted by them against him whom they considered in no other light than the disturber of European peace. The national forces of the united Netherlands took the field under the Prince of Orange and his brother, Prince Frederick. An English army, under Wellington, occupied Brussels and its neighbourhood, while a Prussian force, under Marshal Blücher, was advancing upon

the Lower Rhine for the purpose of co-operating with the allies, in the event of an invasion of the newly established kingdom.

That invasion shortly took place. By the middle of the year, as if by magic, Napoleon had been able to concentrate 120,000 men upon the Sambre at Charleroi. He passed that stream upon the 15th June, and, driving the Prussians before him, forced them to accept battle upon the plain of Ligny, and finally to retreat upon Wavre, pursued by Marshal Grouchy. Upon the day of this fight at Ligny, the united British and Netherlandish armies were attacked by an overwhelming force, under Marshal Ney and Count d'Erlon, at Quatre Bras. The advantage was upon the side of the allies, but Blucher's defeat having left their flank uncovered, the British commander thought good to retreat and take up a new position near Waterloo. Napoleon having despatched Grouchy with a force of 30,000 men to keep Blucher in check, advanced towards Lord Wellington's position with 80,000 men.

The incidents of the combat which took place upon this memorable spot are well known the preliminary cavalry skirmishes, the fierce attack upon the chateau of Hougumont, and the desperate fight around the farmhouse of La Haye Sainte; the unwearying and yet ever unsuccessful attacks of D'Erlon's cuirassiers upon the British squares, the exploits of the Scots Greys, the charge of the Imperial Guard under Ney; and the still more terrible onset of the English Life-guards; the timely arrival of the Prussians upon Napoleon's right; the heroic stand of the old French Guard; and the headlong flight of Napoleon to Paris, followed by the triumphant allies, are worn-out themes, and therefore need no detail here: but, in justice to the sons of the nation with whose concerns we have been specially dealing, we cannot refrain from the quotation of an effective apology for the conduct of the Belgian troops who took part in the proceedings of this memorable day. We refer to the flight of some Belgian cavalry from the field to scare the citizens of Brussels with accounts of the defeat of the

allies, and the advance of the French upon the capital. "Isolated instances," says the writer,* "were possibly found among a mass of several thousands, of that nervous weakness which neither the noblest incitements nor the finest examples can conquer. Old associations and feelings not effaced might have slackened the efforts of a few, directed against former comrades or personal friends,



CHATEAU OF HOUGUMONT.

whom the stern necessity of politics had placed in opposing ranks. Raw troops might here and there have shrunk from attacks, the most desperate on record, but that the great principle of public duty, on grounds purely national, pervaded the army, is to be found in the official reports of its loss: 2058 men killed, and 1936 wounded, prove indelibly that the troops of the Netherlands had their full share in the honour of the day."

* Grattan—*Cabinet Cyclopædia*.

CHAPTER XXVI

THE BELGIAN REVOLT.

Difficulties of the New Arrangement—Free-Trade and Protection—Public Appointments—The Representation—Language—Religion—Conciliatory Tendencies of the King—Sedition—The French Revolution—Outbreak at Brussels—Conference between Prince Frederick and the Insurgents.

THE arrangement lately made with regard to Holland and Belgium was not calculated to work well. The political union of two nations, speaking different languages, having a different faith, with widely different notions, aims, and interests, was, upon the face of it, an incongruity. The difficulties of the situation were soon made obvious in the senate-house; in a general way by the members delivering their speeches, some in French, some in Dutch, according to nationality in a more particular manner when the subject of free-trade in iron was introduced. These were the days of high prices, and the Belgian provinces benefited by the circumstance, whilst the Dutch states—a non-manufacturing district—naturally suffered. The question was ultimately settled in favour of free-trading; but this arrangement had the effect of originating two irreconcilable factions in the senate-house, whose evenly-balanced numbers added to the perplexities of the situation.

Another difficulty was experienced in the matter of the public offices—civil and military—most of them being, of necessity, in the hands of the northerners. This seemingly unfair distribution of national favours has been explained by the fact that the king was, under the peculiar circumstances, bound to employ such materials as were at his hand. In the matter of the civil service,

the Dutch had been, as it were, trained in the art of national government, and in the performance of national duties generally, whereas the Belgians had never yet—excepting for one brief interval—enjoyed the privilege of an independent national existence, and were consequently strangers to the art. It would therefore appear a matter of necessity that such appointments should be made—training and experience being naturally preferred to inexperience. Such an arrangement therefore as should make an equal distribution of national favours must perforce be a work of time. With regard to the military appointments, it is contended that they were—as they should have been—awarded to the most eligible by reason of talent and experience—the majority of the military commanders (among them Tindal, Jansens, Daendels, Dumonceau, and Chassé) having gained great distinction in the service of the French emperor. The Belgians, who served in the French army, formed a part of it; and few of them left the service, choosing rather to share the fortunes of France—to which country, doubtless, the majority were attached—to a return as children of the new union.

The equality of numbers in the representatives of the two divisions was another cause of misunderstanding. The southern provinces were by far the most populous; and it was therefore contended that the greater share of representative power should be given to them in consequence. The distribution, however, had not been made to depend on population, but had been regulated by another consideration—namely, that of revenue. The tribute paid into the exchequer by Holland was equal to that paid by more populous Belgium; and it was contended that under these circumstances, the legislative privileges of the two divisions should be equal. Whether the arrangement was based upon true or false principles, is a matter open to dispute, nevertheless, the Belgian mind could not be convinced of its soundness; and the subject consequently remained a disturbing element in the national equilibrium of no inconsiderable magnitude.

To these, and other causes of discontent, was added one, not unusual in such cases—namely, an attempt to fix the language in the various districts. It was an operation teeming with difficulties, owing to the varieties of speech to be met with throughout the land. By way of settlement, it was officially decreed that the Dutch language should be maintained in Holland; that the French—which had been largely introduced, and indeed forced upon the country during French occupation—should be employed in the Walloon provinces—namely, Hainault, Namur, and Liege, the Flemish language, in its several idioms, in the Flemish provinces; and the German, in the German portion of the grand duchy of Luxembourg. This arrangement drew a hard and fast line which could not fail to produce a confusion as great as that it was expected to banish. This method, therefore, did not satisfactorily deal with the case. Moreover, it incited the pamphleteers to a paper warfare, unseemly in its character, and tending to widen the breach which already existed between north and south.

A yet more essential point of difference existed in the matter of religion. We have already had the opportunity of observing the difficulties which, in what might be considered more favourable times, stood in the way of harmony here; and the union under one sovereign of a Protestant nation, whose intolerance had been duly exhibited, and of a Catholic people, whose ideas of religious duties were equally narrow, was an anomaly. Dissatisfaction in this direction at first manifested itself in the exchange of doubtful compliments between the two great parties concerned. Then followed an uncompromising warfare between the king and the priests—the former desiring an elevation of the character of the Catholic clergy, their proper education, and better enlightenment; the latter being opposed to it. The efforts of the sovereign in this direction were indeed met by the here unheard-of and extravagant claim of the church to a power independent of, and, in fact, governing the state. They would not countenance toleration—they tardily permitted

the royal family even the free exercise of their own form of worship.

The king's prudence operated in keeping the question within certain limits, but the long pent-up ire of the priesthood burst forth by-and-by upon the question of clerical education. The king's decrees were openly defied, and language of a violent, if not seditious kind, was frequently and openly indulged in. Prosecution, imprisonment, and banishment of the contumacious and riotous followed. The truth is, that rightly or wrongly the Catholics had come to see in the innovations, decrees, and interdicts of the sovereign an intention to proselytise. It was made a cry by them, and an effective one it proved, inasmuch as the great majority of the southern states were strict Catholics, and staunch upholders of the pretensions of the priesthood. The more intolerant of the Protestants, on the other hand, encouraged the measures of the king, affecting to see in their aims and doings the hand of the Jesuits. Thus this ever-burning question was thrust into the scale of difficulties, which forbade the satisfactory working of the newly-adjusted machinery.

The king, perplexed though he necessarily was by his position as the go-between, as it were, of two such irreconcilable parties, behaved with the utmost prudence; and, though now and then a butt for the vituperations of the more violent adherents on both sides, upon the whole maintained a certain popularity with all. His aim throughout was unquestionably the good of his people, and, however he may have erred in some of his measures, the credit of good intentions was never seemingly questioned. In this spirit of conciliation, he, in 1827, entered into a concordat with the Pope, by which the important question concerning the appointment of the bishops was settled. This virtual compromise, hailed with satisfaction by the more moderate of the community, was rejected by the extravagant as one-sided. The clergy considered that too little had been accorded them; the liberals, in whose ranks were included the enemies of

the house of Orange, generally beholding in the measure an advancement of the clerical influence.

Strange as it may appear, these two incongruous elements by-and-by coalesced ; for, antagonistic though their ideas were in many respects, they had one aim in common—namely, impatience of kingly control. They found allies in the promiscuous population of the Belgian capital, whither the expatriated and the restless spirits of Europe had fled for asylum or had been attracted by the allurements of mischief. Society was in time shaken to its foundation by the extravagances of the united malcontents, till at length a danger was found to exist to which the king and his ministers could no longer close their eyes. The vituperative language and extravagant sentiments characteristic of the productions of the pamphleteers, were carried by the dissentients into the legislative chamber itself, where the views of the united liberal and clerical parties were strenuously advocated. Measures were in time adopted for the purpose of putting an end to the growing sedition. The plan of opposing counter-essayists to the pamphleteers had been tried, and found wanting. A vigorous prosecution of the leading writers was now tried with as little effect. Louis de Potter and M. François Tielemann, two prominent editors of the libellous journals, were, with others, sentenced to banishment for eight years.

The step was an injudicious one. At home the judge was execrated without mercy, and even threatened with retribution ; whilst the victims of judicial severity found their way to Paris—then in the throes of revolution—and were welcomed as a decided acquisition by the propagandist party there. Whilst the country was in this state of agitation, the accomplishment of the French Revolution was effected ; and bands of republicans, elated at the triumph of democracy, then entered Brussels to render the perplexity greater by the wholesale dissemination of their principles. A portion of the Belgian population desired re-annexation to France, and delegates were despatched to Paris to sound the new government

as to its views with regard to the question. Its votaries were a miserable minority, it is true, but it helped to increase the perplexities with which the government was surrounded. Bands of young Frenchmen perambulated the city wearing the tri-coloured cockade, singing the *Marseillaise*, and making many other demonstrations of a republican character.

The earliest outrage in connection with this growing movement occurred in August 1830, when a mob of pleasure-seekers, worked to a pitch of excitement by the points of a suggestive piece which they had just witnessed,—namely, the opera of *Massaniello*—with a wild shout made for the office of the government organ—*The National*, which they at once proceeded to demolish. The house of the minister, Van Maanen, who, as judge, had passed sentence upon the banished editors, next received their attentions, while the police-office, the hotel of the provincial governor, factories, and private dwellings were destroyed in their fury. The national guard were completely bewildered by the suddenness of the event; and, being finally overpowered, piled arms in front of the king's palace. In a couple of days, the mob had the city completely at their command. News of the outbreak, and of the success of the revolvers, in due time reached the provinces, and at many of the larger towns similar outrages were committed.

The king and his ministers were as undecided concerning the measures to be adopted as the civic guard had been. This indecision precipitated the revolution which was soon to end in a severance of the northern and southern states. The Prince of Orange was despatched to Brussels, and the army, under command of Prince Frederick, his brother, hastened southward at the same time to support him in his endeavours to pacify the dissidents. The powers wherewith he was armed, it soon appeared, were not sufficient to meet the exigencies of the occasion. With great difficulty, and no little danger, he entered the city, occupied by a hastily improvised burgher guard and an impatient and overbearing

mob. He reached the palace, and a conference began. It was immediately seen that nothing short of a complete severance of the governments would satisfy the southern states, who however expressed themselves willing to acknowledge a member of the house of Orange as their sovereign. This suggestion elicited a severe and telling rebuke from the prince; but the result of the conference had had the effect of teaching him that all further efforts to preserve the union would be utterly useless. In return, however, for a promise given by the prince, to the effect that he would employ his influence with the king, and advise him to acknowledge their independence, they engaged on their part to respect the rights of the Orange dynasty, and to make no overtures to the French nor entertain any from them.

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE BELGIAN REVOLT—*Continued*

The States-general convened by the King of Holland—Prince Frederick takes Possession of Brussels—His indecisive Policy—Withdrawal of the Troops—Spread of the Rebellion—The Provisional Government—Determination of the Belgians—The Assembly of Deputies—Candidates for the Throne of Belgium—Election of Leopold of Saxe Coburg—Action of the Dutch—Interference of the Powers—Settlement of the Question—Retirement of William I. of Holland—Accession of His Son—His Death—Death of King Leopold I—Leopold II.

MEANWHILE the revolutionary movement progressed, and the mobs in the provinces had, by the time the assembly was dismissed, gained considerable ground. Uncertain what to do by reason of the perplexities which surrounded him, the king convened a meeting of the States-general at the Hague. The meeting of Dutch and Belgian representatives, never very cordial, was upon this occasion positively painful; and the arrival of the Belgian deputies was made an opportunity for an inimical demonstration. This unseemly exhibition did not tend to soothe the spirit of rebellion in the southern provinces; and in view of possible coercion, preparations were made there for a stubborn resistance. There were plenty of troops at command, and their employment might have put a period to the rebellion, but timid counsels vitiated the advantage their presence gave, for when, at length, orders were received by the commander, Prince Frederick, to advance and take possession of the capital, the policy was carried out in so dilatory and irresolute a manner that whatever advantage the authorities possessed was thrown away. The troops, drawn up in the open square, were exposed to a murderous fire from the houses in

which the rioters were concealed; and instead of retaliating, which he could easily have done, and with effect, the prince allowed himself to be amused with negotiations.

The troops were at length ignominiously withdrawn, after having sustained serious loss in the manner stated. The news spread like wild-fire to the provinces—of course with exaggerated statements, so that Ghent, Ostend, and Bruges, soon became scenes of riot and confusion. For the sake of peace many of the most influential of the southern community formed themselves into a provisional government, and the restoration of order seemed possible. Unfortunately, divided counsels prevailed in this improvised assembly. De Potter, who had returned from exile, was for a republic; another favoured the idea of a union with France, Van der Weyer advocated a monarchy, with the Prince of Orange as king. This was at once the most feasible and the least extravagant; and, moreover, it had the advantage of being in harmony with the sentiments of the courts of Europe, some of whom sent delegates to support him in his endeavours. Indeed, it soon became apparent that the present temper of the Belgians rendered a monarchy the only form of government possible. The Belgians were, however, by this time agreed upon this, that there should be no sort of connection between the two countries, and that no member of the house of Orange-Nassau should exercise regal sway over them.

The Dutch made an appeal to the signatories of the Treaty of Vienna, desiring them to fulfil the obligations they had by their action incurred; but the views of one and all had but one tendency, namely, the establishment of peace, and their aims one end, to wit, that of erecting a barrier against the encroachments of the French. Their councils so far prevailed that hostilities, which had recently been conducted in a most violent spirit, were suspended. An assembly, consisting of 200 deputies chosen by universal suffrage, was got together at Brussels, in order to discuss the question of internal government. Three important propositions were submitted to

this congress, which, being carried, virtually if not actually, settled the question at issue. The first declared the nation independent; the second fixed upon a constitutional hereditary monarchy; whilst the third excluded the Orange-Nassau family from the Belgian throne for ever. This exclusion of the Dutch reigning family proved a source of great perplexity. Had none but the Belgians themselves been interested in the matter, the appointment might have been left entirely in their hands; but the European powers—France and England more especially—were deeply concerned in the choice, the former would not tolerate the appointment of a Buonaparte, whilst the latter was equally determined not to suffer the honour to fall into the hands of a member of the French reigning family.

The critical condition of the situation in Belgium, however, necessitated a speedy settlement. The names of a whole host of candidates—exalted and otherwise—were submitted to the consideration of the assembly; and from these three were selected, namely, the Duke of Leuchtenberg, the Duke of Nemours—a son of Louis Philippe—and Prince Charles of Austria. The ballot was employed, and the result was found to be in favour of the Duke of Nemours. The decision, however, was rendered nugatory by the refusal of the French monarch to sanction his son's accepting the honour. The failure of this attempt at a settlement was productive of great confusion, and was, moreover, fraught with considerable danger for the Belgian nation, inasmuch as the propriety of its dismemberment was seriously discussed. In this dilemma a deputation was despatched to Leopold, Prince of Saxe-Coburg, who was then at Claremont in England. The prince immediately signified his willingness to accept the proffered honour. The ballot gave him an immense majority, and, on the 21st June 1831, he made his public entry into Brussels as first king of the Belgians.

The Dutch had, meanwhile, been watching the progress of events in Belgium, and the stormy scenes which at

this time disgraced the deliberations of the new assembly, encouraged them to hope that they could interfere with sufficient success to restore the old order of things. Taking advantage of an equivocal clause in the truce, they collected an army of 40,000 men, and, in August, advanced to invade the country. The Belgians were entirely unprepared, and, consequently, all their efforts to check their enemy's progress were in vain. So far as they themselves were concerned, the country was at William's mercy, and must have been again brought under the Orange yoke, but for the interference of France and England, who forthwith ordered the withdrawal of the Dutch troops from Belgian territory.



PALACE OF REPRESENTATIVES, BRUSSELS.

The conference sitting in London now addressed itself vigorously to the task of bringing about a settlement of the important questions of boundary, debt, etc. These were difficult problems, for both nations were obdurate. The Belgians having got together an army of 100,000 men, declared themselves anxious to commence hostilities with their neighbours, in order to compel them to agree to their terms, inasmuch as they considered them absolutely necessary not only to their commercial prosperity,

but even their very national safety. The powers would not permit a return to this old argument of the sword; but they proceeded to enforce their views by blockading the Dutch ports and laying siege to Antwerp—the principal bone of contention between the two countries. This strong fortress was, after a gallant defence, reduced towards the close of the year. It was not, however, until the end of the year 1838 that Holland could be induced to accept the treaty which, by its twenty-four articles, established Belgian independence, settled her constitution, and apportioned her share of the common debt.

The infirmities of age induced King William the First of Holland, in 1840, to retire from the cares of government. He accordingly abdicated in favour of his son, the hereditary Prince of Orange, who was proclaimed king towards the end of the same year. The affairs of both countries were now in able and estimable hands—William the Second of Holland, and Leopold, King of the Belgians, vying with each other in their solicitude for the welfare of their respective kingdoms, and to ensure the good government of their subjects. William the Second died in 1849, and was succeeded by his son William the Third—the present monarch. Leopold, King of the Belgians—the Nestor of politics—who, on account of his keen political judgment and universally acknowledged sense of justice, was, during his sway, called upon to solve many a perplexing political problem, died in December, 1865, and was succeeded by his son, Leopold II, the present monarch (1878).

Nothing of importance marks the last few decades of the history of these countries—if we except, perhaps, a tedious struggle between the Dutch and the Acheenese, a warlike people occupying the north-western extremity of the island of Sumatra. The governments of both countries continue to devote themselves to the concerns of peace, and to sustain that steady national progress which might be expected from the character of both peoples.

INDEX.

- Acheenese, The, 207
 Adolphus, Gustavus, 151.
 Adolphus of Orange, 91
 Aduatuca, The, 14
 Agincourt, Battle of, 33
 Aix La-Chapelle, Peace of, 170
 Alava, Duke d', 85
 Albemarle, Duke of (*see* Monk)
 Albert of Saxony, 47
 Albert, Archduke, The, 119, 120, 121,
 121, 124
 Albigenese The, 53
 Alençon, Duke of, 106
 Alteu, General d', 181
 Alva, Duke of, 67, 87, 88, 89, 90
 Amboise, Cardinal d', 48
 Andrew, Cardinal, 122
 Anjou, Duke of, 104, 105, 106, 108
 Anjou, Philip of, 174
 Anne of England, 176
 Anthony of Brabant, 33
 Antwerp, Assembly at, 106
 Antwerp, Sieges of, 111, 207.
 Antwerp, Treaty of 134, 137
 Apology, The, of William of Orange,
 107
 Archdukes, The, 121
 Armada, The Spanish, 113, 114, 115,
 116
 Arminius, Jacob, 138, 139.
 Arras, Treaty of, 35
 Arschot, Duke of, 90, 102, 103
 Asiento Treaty, The, 172
 Augsburg, League of, 168
 Aven, Battle of, 151
 Avenues of Hainault, The, 33.
 Avila, Sanchez d', 98

 Baille, Siege of, 140
 Bajazet, 32
 Baldwin Brassefer, 25
 Barneveldt, 112, 129, 131, 137, 138, 142,
 145, 147, 148
 Barrier Treaty, The, 173
 Batavian Republic, Establishment of
 the, 185
 Batavi, The, 9, 10, 14.
 Bautzen, Battle of, 189.
 Beige, The, 9, 10, 11, 14
 Berghen, Marquis of, 81, 90.
 Berlamont, Count of, 70, 77, 99.
 Berlin Decree, The, 186
 Benren, Count, 120
 Bikker, Cornelius, 155, 156
 Blake, Admiral, 158, 159
 Blood, Council of, 89
 Blucher, Marshal, 193
 Boisot, Louis de, 97
 Boniface, 20
 Borsu, Count, 96
 Brabant, Count of, 35
 Brandenburg, Elector of, 161
 Bray, Guy de, 80
 Breda, Conference at, 98
 Breda, Peace of, 161
 Breda, Siege of, 151
 Breda, Union of, 101
 Brederode, Henry de, 70, 77, 80, 86, 93
 Brittany, Duke of, 40
 Brizuela, Fia Ingo, 133
 Brunswick, Duke of, 179
 Buckingham, Duke of, 149
 Buonaparte, Louis, 186, 187, 189
 Buonaparte, Napoleon, 186, 187, 189,
 190, 192, 194
 Caesar, Julius, 10, 11, 14
 Calvin, 138
 Camperdown, Battle of, 185
 Campo Formio, Treaty of, 185.
 Carausius, 19
 Carlos, Don, 69
 Carlovignians, The, 24
 Cassel, Battle of, 165
 Câteau Cambresis, Peace of, 67.
 Cerda, La, 94
 Charlemagne, 21, 23, 24, 25.
 Charles the Bald, 24
 Charles the Bold, or Rash, 37, 39, 40,
 44, 50
 Charles the Fat, 25
 Charles the Simple, 23, 24
 Charles Martel, 20
 Charles the Fifth, 48, 49, 50, 52, 55, 56,
 57, 58, 59, 62, 63, 65
 Charles the Sixth of France 32
 Charles the Second of England, 160,
 161, 165, 170
 Charles, Prince of Austria 205
 Chartres, Duc de (Louis Philippe), 184.
 Chasse, General, 197
 Christian, Prince of Brunswick, 145.

Cimbri, The, 11
 Civilius, Claudius, 16, 17
 Clotaire, 20
 Clovis, 20
 Condé, Prince of, 165
 Counter Reonstrants The, 137
 Courtrai Battle of, 130
 Cromwell, 157, 159, 160

Daendels, General, 197.
 Dagobert, 20
 Dean, Admiral, 159
 D'Erlon, Count, 194.
 Dettingen, Battle of, 175.
 Dirk, Count, 24, 25
 Dort, Synod of, 141, 143
 Downs, Battle of the, 162
 Drake, Admiral 115
 Dumoucau, 197
 Dumouriez, 184
 Dunkirk, Battle of, 151, 153
 Duthenus, Peter, 80

East Indian Company, the Dutch, 124
 Eburones, The, 11
 Edict, Perpetual, The, 101
 Edward IV of England, 39, 40
 Egmont, Count, 47, 48, 63, 71, 72, 74,
 76, 77, 78, 79, 81, 85, 87
 Elector Palatine, The, 145
 Elizabeth of England, 94, 104, 111, 112,
 114, 129, 129.
 Enghien, Duke d', 152
 Ernost, Archduke, The, 103, 118, 119
 Eugene, Prince of Savoy, 171

Ferdinand III, 42
 Ferdinand, Prince Cardinal, 152
 Fleurus, Battle of, 169, 185
 Fontainebleau, Treaty of, 170
 Fontenoy, Battle of, 175.
 Fossa Drusiana, 15.
 Francis I. of France, 56, 59
 Frederica of Prussia, 178
 Frederick Henry, 149, 150, 151, 153, 154
 Frederick William of Orange, 193, 201
 Frederick William II, 179, 182, 184
 Freiburg, Battle of, 103.
 Frielt, The, 11, 15, 18, 19, 20, 21, 25, 26.
 Frobisher, 115
 Fuentes, Count of, 117, 119

Gabriel, Peter, 80.
 Gembloux, Battle of, 104.
 Genlis, De, 95
 George of England, 184
 Gerard, Balhazar, 109
 Ghent, Proclamation of, 101
 Ghent, Pacification of, 109
 Glimes, De, 97.
 Gloucester, Duke of, 94
 Godfrey the Saxon, 25.
 Goignee, De, 104.

Gomar, Francis (Gomarus), 133.
 Graham, General, 189
 Grand Alliance, The, 169
 Grand Monarque, The, 164, 163.
 Grange, Peregrine de la, 80
 Granzen, Battle of, 57, 41
 Granville, 89, 70, 72, 73
 Gravelines, Battle of, 152.
 Great Privilege, The, 44
 Grotius 142.
 Gueux, The, 77, 78, 86, 93
 Guise, Duke of, 60

Haarlem, Siege of 95, 96.
 Hamstede, Van, 97
 Hansonic League, The, 64
 Hautain, Admiral, 190
 Hawkins, Admiral, 115
 Haye Sainte, La, 194
 Heine, Peter, 150
 Heinsius, 170, 171
 Hembise, 103
 Henry of Orange, 98
 Henry II of France 60, 67
 Henry III of France 104, 111
 Henry IV of France, 116, 117, 120, 171
 Henry V of England, 34
 Henry VIII of England, 43.
 Herbert, Admiral, 169
 Hoemskirk, Admiral, 130.
 Hoogerbeets, 142
 Hoogstraten, Count, 83
 Hookerheyde, Battle of, 99
 Holle, Count, 76
 Hooks, The, 33, 34
 Horn, Count, 70, 72, 76, 78, 79, 85,
 88, 90
 Hougomont 194, 195
 Howard of Effingham, 115.
 Huggins, Admiral, 152.
 Hugonet, 44
 Huguenots, The, 95,
 Huss, John, 53

Imbercourt, 44
 Inquisition, The, 69, 74, 77, 84
 Isabella, Infanta, and Archduke, 119,
 121, 123, 146
 Jacqueline 33, 34, 35.
 James I of England, 129, 131, 139, 140.
 Jansens, General, 197
 Jauraguay, 107
 Jemappes, Battle of, 194
 Jenningham, Battle of, 91.
 Jerome of Pragus, 53
 Johanna of Spain, 47
 John the Fearless, 32.
 John, Duke of Brabant, 33, 34.
 John of Bruges, 64
 John, Don, of Austria, 101, 102, 105.
 Joseph, Emperor, 179, 182.
 Judith, 24.

- Jumirs, *France*, 80
 Justin of Nassau, 115.
 Kabbeljaws, *The*, 33, 34, 45
 La Hogue, *Cape*, Battle of, 159
 Lambert of Louvain, 28
 Lamory, Count of, 86
 Leaguers, *The*, 116, 118
 Ledenberg, 142.
 Leicester, Earl of, 112
 Leipzig, Battle of, 189
 Leopold I., King of Belgians, 207
 Leopold II., King of Belgians, 207
 Leopold of Austria, 182
 Leuchtenberg, Duke of, 205.
 Leyden, Siege of, 98.
 Ligny, Battle of, 184
 Lille, Battle of, 86
 Lippe, Count de la, 122.
 Lollards, *The*, 53
 Loof, Admiral, 152.
 Lothaire, 28, 41
 Lotheringun, 23, 24, 28
 Louis XI. of France, 39
 Louis XII., 48
 Louis XIII., 153
 Louis XIV., 163, 166, 166, 167, 169.
 Louis XV., 175
 Louis XVIII., 193
 Louis of Orange, 76, 86, 91.
 Luther, 53
 Lutzen, Battle of, 189
 Luxemburg, Duke of, 169
 Luxemburg, Marshal, 165
 Malplaquet, Battle of, 171
 Mansfield, Count, 81, 83, 99, 117, 148.
 Marck, William de la, 94
 Margaret of Castile, 47, 48.
 Maria Theresa, 175.
 Marlborough, 170, 171, 172.
 Marnier, 80
 Marnix, John de, 86
 Martel, Charles, 20
 Mary, *The Lady*, 42, 44, 45
 Mary I. of England, 67
 Mary II. of England, 165
 Maurice, Prince, 110, 145
 Maximilian of Germany, 45, 46, 47, 48, 54.
 Maximilian of Germany, 91, 98
 Medina, Celi, 94, 96
 Medina, Sidonia, Duke of, 114, 118
 Mello, Francisco de, 152
 Menapu, *The*, 11, 14.
 Mendoza, Francisco de, 22, 25
 Merovingians, *The*, 20.
 Milan Decree, *The*, 188.
 Mondragon, 119
 Monk, 159, 162
 Moulhéri, Battle of, 39.
 Montigny, 78, 90.
 Morabais, 80
 Morat, Battle of, 37, 41
 Morini, *The*, 11, 14
 Munster, Treaty of, 154, 177
 Murray, Count, 18
 Nancy, Battle of, 41
 Nantes, Revocation of, 167
 Nassau, Count Louis of, 98
 Nassau, Count Ernest of, 124
 Navarre, Henry of, 102, 117
 Navigation Act (*Whitelock's*), 159
 Nemours, Duke de, 205
 Nevin, John de, 131
 Nervii, *The*, 11, 13, 14
 Nerwinde, Battle of, 169.
 Neerwinden, Battle of, 184
 Ney, Marshal, 194
 Nimeguen, Peace of, 166
 Noircarmes, General, 56
 Nordlingen, Battle of, 151
 Normans, *The*, 26, 28
 North Foreland, Battle of, 158
 Olden, Johann Van, 112
 Olivarez, 146
 Opdam, Admiral, 160, 162
 Oquendo D', Admiral, 152
 Orange, William, Prince of, 68, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 84, 85, 90, 91, 94, 95, 97, 101, 102, 105, 108, 180, 201, 208
 Orleans, Duke of, 165
 Ostende, Siege of, 126
 Oudenarde, Battle of, 171.
 Pacification of Ghent, 100
 Palatine, Prince, 98, 101, 105
 Parker, Sir Hyde, 177
 Parma, Margaret, Duchess of, 63, 71, 74, 77, 81, 82, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89
 Parma, Alexander, Duke of, 76, 104, 106, 107, 110, 111, 112, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 126, 133
 Paul V., Pope, 67
 Pauw, 158
 Pavia, Battle of, 57
 Pennington, Admiral, 152
 Pepin, d'Heristal, 20
 Peronne, Meeting at, 39
 Perpetual Edict, *The*, 101
 Philip the Bold, 31, 32
 Philip the Fair, 30, 40, 47
 Philip the Good, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 54
 Philip II., 61, 66, 67, 69, 71, 83, 85, 89, 93, 94, 102, 106, 113, 119, 122
 Philip III., 129, 131, 146
 Philip IV., 146
 Philip of Anjou, 174
 Philippe, Louis, 184
 Pichegru, 185
 Poppe, 20
 Potter, Louis de, 20, 20, 40

Quadruple Alliance, The, 174, 175.
 Quatre Bras, Battle of, 194.
 Quentin, St., Battle of, 67.

Radiol, 20.
 Ramillies, Battle of, 172
 Reginald of Hainaut, 28.
 Remonstrants, The, 139
 René of Lorraine, 41.
 Renti, Battle of, 60
 Requesens, Louis Z., 96, 97, 98.
 Rhemi, The, 13
 Richelieu, 150, 153
 Rocroi, Battle of, 163
 Rodney, Admiral, 177
 Roermond, Battle of, 130.
 Rupert, Prince, 162.
 Ruyter, De, 163
 Ryhove, 103
 Ryswick, Peace of, 170

Salian Franks, The, 19, 20
 Sandwich, Earl of, 162
 Saxe Coburg, Duke of, 184
 Saxe, Marshal, 175
 Scheldt, Navigation of, 177
 Scheveling, Battle of, 159
 Schwartzburg, Count, 70
 Senef, Battle of, 165
 Seven Years' War, The, 176
 Sorens, John de, 86
 Spanish Succession, War of the, 170,
 171
 Spinola, Ambrose, 126
 Spinola, Frederick, 226,
 Spura, Battle of the, 48
 St Trond, Meeting at, 80, 81, 83
 St Vincent, Battle of Cape, 180
 Stuyoker, Hermann, 79
 Suffolk, Battle off coast of, 162.
 Sully, Duke of, 129, 130.

Tanchelvn, 53
 Teutones, The, 10
 Thielemann, François, 200
 Tindal, 197
 Toledo, Archbishop of, 151.
 Torre, Count de la, 152
 Tournay, Battle of, 86
 Tourville, Admiral De, 169.
 Trautmandorff, Count, 151.
 Treaty, Barrier, 173, 175
 Trent, Council of, 73, 88.

Triple Alliance, The, 36
 Troubles, Council of, 189.
 Turnhout, Battle of, 120, 181.

United Provinces, The, 119
 Utrecht, Treaty of, 172, 174.
 Utrecht, Union of, 106

Vander Merck, 181, 192
 Vander Noot, 181, 183
 Vander Weyer, 204
 Van Maaneu, 201
 Van Tromp (the Elder), 152, 158, 159
 Van Tromp (the Younger), 62.
 Varrus, Count of, 120
 Vespasian, 17
 Vienna, Treaty of, 204.
 Viglius, 73, 74, 83
 Vincent, Baron, 192
 Vincent, St., Battle of, 130
 Vonck, 182

Walchern Expedition, The, 167
 Waldenses, The, 53
 Waldo, 53
 War, Thirty Years', 144
 War, Spanish Succession, 170, 171.
 Waterloo, Battle of, 194
 Wellington, Duke of, 189, 194.
 Wilfrid, 20
 Wille, Ambrose, 80
 William the Silent, 72
 William I (*see* Orange, Prince of)
 William II (Stadtholder) 154, 156, 157.
 William III of England, 165, 168, 170
 William IV of Nassau, 176
 William V., 178
 William I., King, 189, 191, 195, 199,
 207
 William II., 207.
 William, Count of Nassau, 156
 Willbrod, 20
 Witkind, 21
 Witt, Admiral De (the Elder), 155, 159
 Witt, Admiral De (the Younger), 160
 Witt, John De, 160, 163.
 Wolfert Hermanasoon, 130
 Wycliffe, 53

York, James, Duke of, 161, 165.

Ziska, 54
 Zoutman, Admiral, 177
 Zuylen, Battle of, 112.

