

Life and Death of John of Barneveld, Advocate of Holland : with a view of the primary causes and movements of the Thirty Years' War, 1610c-12 eBook

Life and Death of John of Barneveld, Advocate of Holland : with a view of the primary causes and movements of the Thirty Years' War, 1610c-12 by John Lothrop Motley

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THE LIFE AND DEATH of JOHN OF BARNEVELD, ADVOCATE OF HOLLAND

WITH A VIEW OF THE PRIMARY CAUSES AND MOVEMENTS OF THE THIRTY
YEARS' WAR

By John Lothrop Motley, D.C.L., LL.D.

MOTLEY'S HISTORY OF THE NETHERLANDS, Project Gutenberg Edition, Volume 89

Life and Death of John of Barneveld, v4, 1610-12

CHAPTER V.

Interviews between the Dutch Commissioners and King James—Prince Maurice takes command of the Troops—Surrender of Julich—Matthias crowned King of Bohemia—Death of Rudolph—James's Dream of a Spanish Marriage—Appointment of Vorstius in place of Arminius at Leyden—Interview between Maurice and Winwood—Increased Bitterness between Barneveld and Maurice—Projects of Spanish Marriages in France.

It is refreshing to escape from the atmosphere of self-seeking faction, feverish intrigue, and murderous stratagem in which unhappy France was stifling into the colder and calmer regions of Netherland policy.

No sooner had the tidings of Henry's murder reached the States than they felt that an immense responsibility had fallen on their shoulders. It is to the eternal honour of the Republic, of Barneveld, who directed her councils, and of Prince Maurice, who wielded her sword, that she was equal to the task imposed upon her.

There were open bets on the Exchange in Antwerp, after the death of Henry, that Maurice would likewise be killed within the month. Nothing seemed more probable, and the States implored the Stadholder to take special heed to himself. But this was a kind of caution which the Prince was not wont to regard. Nor was there faltering, distraction, cowardice, or parsimony in Republican councils.

We have heard the strong words of encouragement and sympathy addressed by the Advocate's instructions to the Queen-Regent and the leading statesmen of France. We have seen their effects in that lingering sentiment of shame which prevented the Spanish stipendiaries who governed the kingdom from throwing down the mask as cynically as they were at first inclined to do.

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Not less manful and statesmanlike was the language held to the King of Great Britain and his ministers by the Advocate's directions. The news of the assassination reached the special ambassadors in London at three o'clock of Monday, the 17th May. James returned to Whitehall from a hunting expedition on the 21st, and immediately signified his intention of celebrating the occasion by inviting the high commissioners of the States to a banquet and festival at the palace.

Meantime they were instructed by Barneveld to communicate the results of the special embassy of the States to the late king according to the report just delivered to the Assembly. Thus James was to be informed of the common resolution and engagement then taken to support the cause of the princes. He was now seriously and explicitly to be summoned to assist the princes not only with the stipulated 4000 men, but with a much greater force, proportionate to the demands for the security and welfare of Christendom, endangered by this extraordinary event. He was assured that the States would exert themselves to the full measure of their ability to fortify and maintain the high interests of France, of the possessory princes, and of Christendom, so that the hopes of the perpetrators of the foul deed would be confounded.

"They hold this to be the occasion," said the envoys, "to show to all the world that it is within your power to rescue the affairs of France, Germany, and of the United Provinces from the claws of those who imagine for themselves universal monarchy."

They concluded by requesting the King to come to "a resolution on this affair royally, liberally, and promptly, in order to take advantage of the time, and not to allow the adversary to fortify himself in his position"; and they pledged the States-General to stand by and second him with all their power.

The commissioners, having read this letter to Lord Salisbury before communicating it to the King, did not find the Lord Treasurer very prompt or sympathetic in his reply. There had evidently been much jealousy at the English court of the confidential and intimate relations recently established with Henry, to which allusions were made in the documents read at the present conference. Cecil, while expressing satisfaction in formal terms at the friendly language of the States, and confidence in the sincerity of their friendship for his sovereign, intimated very plainly that more had passed between the late king and the authorities of the Republic than had been revealed by either party to the King of Great Britain, or than could be understood from the letters and papers now communicated. He desired further information from the commissioners, especially in regard to those articles of their instructions which referred to a general rupture. They professed inability to give more explanations than were contained in the documents themselves. If suspicion was felt, they said, that the French King had been proposing

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anything in regard to a general rupture, either on account of the retreat of Conde, the affair of Savoy, or anything else, they would reply that the ambassadors in France had been instructed to decline committing the States until after full communication and advice and ripe deliberation with his British Majesty and council, as well as the Assembly of the States-General; and it had been the intention of the late king to have conferred once more and very confidentially with Prince Maurice and Count Lewis William before coming to a decisive resolution.

It was very obvious however to the commissioners that their statement gave no thorough satisfaction, and that grave suspicions remained of something important kept back by them. Cecil's manner was constrained and cold, and certainly there were no evidences of profound sorrow at the English court for the death of Henry.

"The King of France," said the High Treasurer, "meant to make a master-stroke—a coup de maistre—but he who would have all may easily lose all. Such projects as these should not have been formed or taken in hand without previous communication with his Majesty of Great Britain."

All arguments on the part of the ambassadors to induce the Lord Treasurer or other members of the government to enlarge the succour intended for the Cleve affair were fruitless. The English troops regularly employed in the States' service might be made use of with the forces sent by the Republic itself. More assistance than this it was idle to expect, unless after a satisfactory arrangement with the present regency of France. The proposition, too, of the States for a close and general alliance was coldly repulsed. "No resolution can be taken as to that," said Cecil; "the death of the French king has very much altered such matters."

At a little later hour on the same day the commissioners, according to previous invitation, dined with the King.

No one sat at the table but his Majesty and themselves, and they all kept their hats on their heads. The King was hospitable, gracious, discursive, loquacious, very theological.

He expressed regret for the death of the King of France, and said that the pernicious doctrine out of which such vile crimes grew must be uprooted. He asked many questions in regard to the United Netherlands, enquiring especially as to the late commotions at Utrecht, and the conduct of Prince Maurice on that occasion. He praised the resolute conduct of the States-General in suppressing those tumults with force, adding, however, that they should have proceeded with greater rigour against the ringleaders of the riot. He warmly recommended the Union of the Provinces.

He then led the conversation to the religious controversies in the Netherlands, and in reply to his enquiries was informed that the points in dispute related to predestination and its consequences.

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"I have studied that subject," said James, "as well as anybody, and have come to the conclusion that nothing certain can be laid down in regard to it. I have myself not always been of one mind about it, but I will bet that my opinion is the best of any, although I would not hang my salvation upon it. My Lords the States would do well to order their doctors and teachers to be silent on this topic. I have hardly ventured, moreover, to touch upon the matter of justification in my own writings, because that also seemed to hang upon predestination."

Thus having spoken with the air of a man who had left nothing further to be said on predestination or justification, the King rose, took off his hat, and drank a bumper to the health of the States-General and his Excellency Prince Maurice, and success to the affair of Cleve.

After dinner there was a parting interview in the gallery. The King, attended by many privy councillors and high functionaries of state, bade the commissioners a cordial farewell, and, in order to show his consideration for their government, performed the ceremony of knighthood upon them, as was his custom in regard to the ambassadors of Venice. The sword being presented to him by the Lord Chamberlain, James touched each of the envoys on the shoulder as he dismissed him. "Out of respect to My Lords the States," said they in their report, "we felt compelled to allow ourselves to be burthened with this honour."

Thus it became obvious to the States-General that there was but little to hope for from Great Britain or France. France, governed by Concini and by Spain, was sure to do her best to traverse the designs of the Republic, and, while perfunctorily and grudgingly complying with the letter of the Hall treaty, was secretly neutralizing by intrigue the slender military aid which de la Chatre was to bring to Prince Maurice. The close alliance of France and Protestantism had melted into air. On the other hand the new Catholic League sprang into full luxuriance out of the grave of Henry, and both Spain and the Pope gave their hearty adhesion to the combinations of Maximilian of Bavaria, now that the mighty designs of the French king were buried with him. The Duke of Savoy, caught in the trap of his own devising, was fain to send his son to sue to Spain for pardon for the family upon his knees, and expiated by draining a deep cup of humiliation his ambitious designs upon the Milanese and the matrimonial alliance with France. Venice recoiled in horror from the position she found herself in as soon as the glamour of Henry's seductive policy was dispelled, while James of Great Britain, rubbing his hands with great delight at the disappearance from the world of the man he so admired, bewailed, and hated, had no comfort to impart to the States-General thus left in virtual isolation. The barren burthen of knighthood and a sermon on predestination were all he could bestow upon the high commissioners in place of the alliance which he eluded, and the military assistance which he point-blank refused. The possessory princes, in whose cause the sword was drawn, were too quarrelsome and too fainthearted to serve for much else than an incumbrance either in the cabinet or the field.

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And the States-General were equal to the immense responsibility. Steadily, promptly, and sagaciously they confronted the wrath, the policy, and the power of the Empire, of Spain, and of the Pope. Had the Republic not existed, nothing could have prevented that debateable and most important territory from becoming provinces of Spain, whose power thus dilated to gigantic proportions in the very face of England would have been more menacing than in the days of the Armada. Had the Republic faltered, she would have soon ceased to exist. But the Republic did not falter.

On the 13th July, Prince Maurice took command of the States' forces, 13,000 foot and 3000 horse, with thirty pieces of cannon, assembled at Schenkenschans. The July English and French regiments in the regular service of the United Provinces were included in these armies, but there were no additions to them: "The States did seven times as much," Barneveld justly averred, "as they had stipulated to do." Maurice, moving with the precision and promptness which always marked his military operations, marched straight upon Julich, and laid siege to that important fortress. The Archdukes at Brussels, determined to keep out of the fray as long as possible, offered no opposition to the passage of his supplies up the Rhine, which might have been seriously impeded by them at Rheinberg. The details of the siege, as of all the Prince's sieges, possess no more interest to the general reader than the working out of a geometrical problem. He was incapable of a flaw in his calculations, but it was impossible for him quite to complete the demonstration before the arrival of de la Chatre. Maurice received with courtesy the Marshal, who arrived on the 18th August, at the head of his contingent of 8000 foot and a few squadrons of cavalry, and there was great show of harmony between them. For any practical purposes, de la Chatre might as well have remained in France. For political ends his absence would have been preferable to his presence.

Maurice would have rejoiced, had the Marshal blundered longer along the road to the debateable land than he had done. He had almost brought Julich to reduction. A fortnight later the place surrendered. The terms granted by the conqueror were equitable. No change was to be made in the liberty of Roman Catholic worship, nor in the city magistracy. The citadel and its contents were to be handed over to the Princes of Brandenburg and Neuburg. Archduke Leopold and his adherents departed to Prague, to carry out as he best could his farther designs upon the crown of Bohemia, this first portion of them having so lamentably failed, and Sergeant-Major Frederick Pithan, of the regiment of Count Ernest Casimir of Nassau, was appointed governor of Julich in the interest of the possessory princes.

Thus without the loss of a single life, the Republic, guided by her consummate statesman and unrivalled general, had gained an immense victory, had installed the Protestant princes in the full possession of those splendid and important provinces, and had dictated her decrees on German soil to the Emperor of Germany, and had towed, as it were, Great Britain and France along in her wake, instead of humbly following those powers, and had accomplished all that she had ever proposed to do, even in alliance with them both.

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The King of England considered that quite enough had been done, and was in great haste to patch up a reconciliation. He thought his ambassador would soon "have as good occasion to employ his tongue and his pen as General Cecil and his soldiers have done their swords and their mattocks."

He had no sympathy with the cause of Protestantism, and steadily refused to comprehend the meaning of the great movements in the duchies. "I only wish that I may handsomely wind myself out of this quarrel, where the principal parties do so little for themselves," he said.

De la Chatre returned with his troops to France within a fortnight after his arrival on the scene. A mild proposition made by the French government through the Marshal, that the provinces should be held in sequestration by France until a decision as to the true sovereignty could be reached, was promptly declined. Maurice of Nassau had hardly gained so signal a triumph for the Republic and for the Protestant cause only to hand it over to Concini and Villeroy for the benefit of Spain. Julich was thought safer in the keeping of Sergeant Pithan.

By the end of September the States' troops had returned to their own country.

Thus the Republic, with eminent success, had accomplished a brief and brilliant campaign, but no statesman could suppose that the result was more than a temporary one. These coveted provinces, most valuable in themselves and from their important position, would probably not be suffered peacefully to remain very long under the protection of the heretic States-General and in the 'Condominium' of two Protestant princes. There was fear among the Imperialists, Catholics, and Spaniards, lest the baleful constellation of the Seven Provinces might be increased by an eighth star. And this was a project not to be tolerated. It was much already that the upstart confederacy had defied Pope, Emperor, and King, as it were, on their own domains, had dictated arrangements in Germany directly in the teeth of its emperor, using France as her subordinate, and compelling the British king to acquiesce in what he most hated.

But it was not merely to surprise Julich, and to get a foothold in the duchies, that Leopold had gone forth on his adventure. His campaign, as already intimated, was part of a wide scheme in which he had persuaded his emperor-cousin to acquiesce. Poor Rudolph had been at last goaded into a feeble attempt at revolt against his three brothers and his cousin Ferdinand. Peace-loving, inert, fond of his dinner, fonder of his magnificent collections of gems and intagli, liking to look out of window at his splendid collection of horses, he was willing to pass a quiet life, afar from the din of battles and the turmoil of affairs. As he happened to be emperor of half Europe, these harmless tastes could not well be indulged. Moon-faced and fat, silent and slow, he was not imperial of aspect on canvas or coin, even when his brows were decorated with the conventional laurel wreath. He had been stripped of his authority and all but discrowned by his more bustling brothers Matthias and Max, while the sombre figure of

Styrian Ferdinand, pupil of the Jesuits, and passionate admirer of Philip II., stood ever in the background, casting a prophetic shadow over the throne and over Germany.

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The brothers were endeavouring to persuade Rudolph that he would find more comfort in Innsbruck than in Prague; that he required repose after the strenuous labours of government. They told him, too, that it would be wise to confer the royal crown of Bohemia upon Matthias, lest, being elective and also an electorate, the crown and vote of that country might pass out of the family, and so both Bohemia and the Empire be lost to the Habsburgs. The kingdom being thus secured to Matthias and his heirs, the next step, of course, was to proclaim him King of the Romans. Otherwise there would be great danger and detriment to Hungary, and other hereditary states of that conglomerate and anonymous monarchy which owned the sway of the great Habsburg family.

The unhappy emperor was much piqued. He had been deprived by his brother of Hungary, Moravia, and Austria, while Matthias was now at Prague with an army, ostensibly to obtain ratification of the peace with Turkey, but in reality to force the solemn transfer of those realms and extort the promise of Bohemia. Could there be a better illustration of the absurdities of such a system of Imperialism?

And now poor Rudolph was to be turned out of the Hradschin, and sent packing with or without his collections to the Tyrol.

The bellicose bishop of Strassburg and Passau, brother of Ferdinand, had little difficulty in persuading the downtrodden man to rise to vengeance. It had been secretly agreed between the two that Leopold, at the head of a considerable army of mercenaries which he had contrived to levy, should dart into Julich as the Emperor's representative, seize the debateable duchies, and hold them in sequestration until the Emperor should decide to whom they belonged, and, then, rushing back to Bohemia, should annihilate Matthias, seize Prague, and deliver Rudolph from bondage. It was further agreed that Leopold, in requital of these services, should receive the crown of Bohemia, be elected King of the Romans, and declared heir to the Emperor, so far as Rudolph could make him his heir.

The first point in the program he had only in part accomplished. He had taken Julich, proclaimed the intentions of the Emperor, and then been driven out of his strong position by the wise policy of the States under the guidance of Barneveld and by the consummate strategy of Maurice. It will be seen therefore that the Republic was playing a world's game at this moment, and doing it with skill and courage. On the issue of the conflict which had been begun and was to be long protracted in the duchies, and to spread over nearly all Christendom besides, would depend the existence of the United Netherlands and the fate of Protestantism.

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The discomfited Leopold swept back at the head of his mercenaries, 9000 foot and 3000 horse, through Alsace and along the Danube to Linz and so to Prague, marauding, harrying, and black-mailing the country as he went. He entered the city on the 15th of February 1611, fighting his way through crowds of exasperated burghers. Sitting in full harness on horseback in the great square before the cathedral, the warlike bishop compelled the population to make oath to him as the Emperor's commissary. The street fighting went on however day by day, poor Rudolph meantime cowering in the Hradschin. On the third day, Leopold, driven out of the town, took up a position on the heights, from which he commanded it with his artillery. Then came a feeble voice from the Hradschin, telling all men that these Passau marauders and their episcopal chief were there by the Emperor's orders. The triune city—the old, the new, and the Jew—was bidden to send deputies to the palace and accept the Imperial decrees. No deputies came at the bidding. The Bohemians, especially the Praguers, being in great majority Protestants knew very well that Leopold was fighting the cause of the Papacy and Spain in Bohemia as well as in the duchies.

And now Matthias appeared upon the scene. The Estates had already been in communication with him, better hopes, for the time at least, being entertained from him than from the flaccid Rudolph. Moreover a kind of compromise had been made in the autumn between Matthias and the Emperor after the defeat of Leopold in the duchies. The real king had fallen at the feet of the nominal one by proxy of his brother Maximilian. Seven thousand men of the army of Matthias now came before Prague under command of Colonitz. The Passauers, receiving three months pay from the Emperor, marched quietly off. Leopold disappeared for the time. His chancellor and counsellor in the duchies, Francis Teynagel, a Geldrian noble, taken prisoner and put to the torture, revealed the little plot of the Emperor in favour of the Bishop, and it was believed that the Pope, the King of Spain, and Maximilian of Bavaria were friendly to the scheme. This was probable, for Leopold at last made no mystery of his resolve to fight Protestantism to the death, and to hold the duchies, if he could, for the cause of Rome and Austria.

Both Rudolph and Matthias had committed themselves to the toleration of the Reformed religion. The famous "Majesty-Letter," freshly granted by the Emperor (1609), and the Compromise between the Catholic and Protestant Estates had become the law of the land. Those of the Bohemian confession, a creed commingled of Hussism, Lutheranism, and Calvinism, had obtained toleration. In a country where nine-tenths of the population were Protestants it was permitted to Protestants to build churches and to worship God in them unmolested. But these privileges had been extorted by force, and there was a sullen, dogged determination which might be easily guessed at to revoke them should it ever become possible. The House of Austria, reigning in Spain, Italy, and Germany, was bound by the very law of their being to the Roman religion. Toleration of other worship signified in their eyes both a defeat and a crime.

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Thus the great conflict, to be afterwards known as the Thirty Years' War, had in reality begun already, and the Netherlands, in spite of the truce, were half unconsciously taking a leading part in it. The odds at that moment in Germany seemed desperately against the House of Austria, so deep and wide was the abyss between throne and subjects which religious difference had created. But the reserved power in Spain, Italy, and Southern Germany was sure enough to make itself felt sooner or later on the Catholic side.

Meantime the Estates of Bohemia knew well enough that the Imperial house was bent on destroying the elective principle of the Empire, and on keeping the crown of Bohemia in perpetuity. They had also discovered that Bishop-Archduke Leopold had been selected by Rudolph as chief of the reactionary movement against Protestantism. They could not know at that moment whether his plans were likely to prove fantastic or dangerous.

So Matthias came to Prague at the invitation of the Estates, entering the city with all the airs of a conqueror. Rudolph received his brother with enforced politeness, and invited him to reside in the Hradschin. This proposal was declined by Matthias, who sent a colonel however, with six pieces of artillery, to guard and occupy that palace. The Passau prisoners were pardoned and released, and there was a general reconciliation. A month later, Matthias went in pomp to the chapel of the holy Wenceslaus, that beautiful and barbarous piece of mediaeval, Sclavonic architecture, with its sombre arches, and its walls encrusted with huge precious stones. The Estates of Bohemia, arrayed in splendid Zchech costume, and kneeling on the pavement, were asked whether they accepted Matthias, King of Hungary, as their lawful king. Thrice they answered Aye. Cardinal Dietrichstein then put the historic crown of St. Wenceslaus on the King's head, and Matthias swore to maintain the laws and privileges of Bohemia, including the recent charters granting liberty of religion to Protestants. Thus there was temporary, if hollow, truce between the religious parties, and a sham reconciliation between the Emperor and his brethren. The forlorn Rudolph moped away the few months of life left to him in the Hradschin, and died 1612 soon after the new year. The House of Austria had not been divided, Matthias succeeded his brother, Leopold's visions melted into air, and it was for the future to reveal whether the Majesty-Letter and the Compromise had been written on very durable material.

And while such was the condition of affairs in Germany immediately following the Cleve and Julich campaign, the relations of the Republic both to England and France were become rapidly more dangerous than they ever had been. It was a severe task for Barneveld, and enough to overtax the energies of any statesman, to maintain his hold on two such slippery governments as both had become since the death of their great monarchs.

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It had been an easier task for William the Silent to steer his course, notwithstanding all the perversities, short-comings, brow-beatings, and inconsistencies that he had been obliged to endure from Elizabeth and Henry. Genius, however capricious and erratic at times, has at least vision, and it needed no elaborate arguments to prove to both those sovereigns that the severance of their policy from that of the Netherlands was impossible without ruin to the Republic and incalculable danger themselves.

But now France and England were both tending towards Spain through a stupidity on the part of their rulers such as the gods are said to contend against in vain. Barneveld was not a god nor a hero, but a courageous and wide-seeing statesman, and he did his best. Obligated by his position to affect admiration, or at least respect, where no emotion but contempt was possible, his daily bread was bitter enough. It was absolutely necessary to humour those whom he knew to be traversing his policy and desiring his ruin, for there was no other way to serve his country and save it from impending danger. So long as he was faithfully served by his subordinates, and not betrayed by those to whom he gave his heart, he could confront external enemies and mould the policy of wavering allies.

Few things in history are more pitiable than the position of James in regard to Spain. For seven long years he was as one entranced, the slave to one idea, a Spanish marriage for his son. It was in vain that his counsellors argued, Parliament protested, allies implored. Parliament was told that a royal family matter regarded himself alone, and that interference on their part was an impertinence. Parliament's duty was a simple one, to give him advice if he asked it, and money when he required it, without asking for reasons. It was already a great concession that he should ask for it in person. They had nothing to do with his affairs nor with general politics. The mystery of government was a science beyond their reach, and with which they were not to meddle. "Ne sutor ultra crepidam," said the pedant.

Upon that one point his policy was made to turn. Spain held him in the hollow of her hand. The Infanta, with two million crowns in dowry, was promised, withheld, brought forward again like a puppet to please or irritate a froward child. Gondemar, the Spanish ambassador, held him spellbound. Did he falter in his opposition to the States—did he cease to goad them for their policy in the duchies—did he express sympathy with Bohemian Protestantism, or, as time went on, did he dare to lift a finger or touch his pocket in behalf of his daughter and the unlucky Elector-Palatine; did he, in short, move a step in the road which England had ever trod and was bound to tread—the road of determined resistance to Spanish ambition—instantaneously the Infanta withheld, and James was on his knees again. A few years later, when the great Raleigh returned from his trans-Atlantic expedition, Gondemar fiercely denounced him to the King as the worst enemy of Spain. The usual threat was made, the wand was waved, and the noblest

head in England fell upon the block, in pursuance of an obsolete sentence fourteen years old.

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It is necessary to hold fast this single clue to the crooked and amazing entanglements of the policy of James. The insolence, the meanness, and the prevarications of this royal toad-eater are only thus explained.

Yet Philip III. declared on his death-bed that he had never had a serious intention of bestowing his daughter on the Prince.

The vanity and the hatreds of theology furnished the chief additional material in the policy of James towards the Provinces. The diplomacy of his reign so far as the Republic was concerned is often a mere mass of controversial divinity, and gloomy enough of its kind. Exactly at this moment Conrad Vorstius had been called by the University of Leyden to the professorship vacant by the death of Arminius, and the wrath of Peter Plancius and the whole orthodox party knew no bounds. Born in Cologne, Vorstius had been a lecturer in Geneva, and beloved by Beza. He had written a book against the Jesuit Belarmino, which he had dedicated to the States-General. But he was now accused of Arminianism, Socinianism, Pelagianism, Atheism—one knew not what. He defended himself in writing against these various charges, and declared himself a believer in the Trinity, in the Divinity of Christ, in the Atonement. But he had written a book on the Nature of God, and the wrath of Gomarus and Plancius and Bogerman was as nothing to the ire of James when that treatise was one day handed to him on returning from hunting. He had scarcely looked into it before he was horror-struck, and instantly wrote to Sir Ralph Winwood, his ambassador at the Hague, ordering him to insist that this blasphemous monster should at once be removed from the country. Who but James knew anything of the Nature of God, for had he not written a work in Latin explaining it all, so that humbler beings might read and be instructed.

Sir Ralph accordingly delivered a long sermon to the States on the brief supplied by his Majesty, told them that to have Vorstius as successor to Arminius was to fall out of the frying-pan into the fire, and handed them a “catalogue” prepared by the King of the blasphemies, heresies, and atheisms of the Professor. “Notwithstanding that the man in full assembly of the States of Holland,” said the Ambassador with headlong and confused rhetoric, “had found the means to palliate and plaster the dung of his heresies, and thus to dazzle the eyes of good people,” yet it was necessary to protest most vigorously against such an appointment, and to advise that “his works should be publicly burned in the open places of all the cities.”

The Professor never was admitted to perform his functions of theology, but he remained at Leyden, so Winwood complained, “honoured, recognized as a singularity and ornament to the Academy in place of the late Joseph Scaliger.”—“The friendship of the King and the heresy of Vorstius are quite incompatible,” said the Envoy.

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Meantime the Advocate, much distressed at the animosity of England bursting forth so violently on occasion of the appointment of a divinity professor at Leyden, and at the very instant too when all the acuteness of his intellect was taxed to keep on good or even safe terms with France, did his best to stem these opposing currents. His private letters to his old and confidential friend, Noel de Caron, States' ambassador in London, reveal the perplexities of his soul and the upright patriotism by which he was guided in these gathering storms. And this correspondence, as well as that maintained by him at a little later period with the successor of Aerssens at Paris, will be seen subsequently to have had a direct and most important bearing upon the policy of the Republic and upon his own fate. It is necessary therefore that the reader, interested in these complicated affairs which were soon to bring on a sanguinary war on a scale even vaster than the one which had been temporarily suspended, should give close attention to papers never before exhumed from the musty sepulchre of national archives, although constantly alluded to in the records of important state trials. It is strange enough to observe the apparent triviality of the circumstances out of which gravest events seem to follow. But the circumstances were in reality threads of iron which led down to the very foundations of the earth.

"I wish to know," wrote the Advocate to Caron, "from whom the Archbishop of Canterbury received the advices concerning Vorstius in order to find out what is meant by all this."

It will be remembered that Whitgift was of opinion that James was directly inspired by the Holy Ghost, and that as he affected to deem him the anointed High-priest of England, it was natural that he should encourage the King in his claims to be 'Pontifex maximus' for the Netherlands likewise.

"We are busy here," continued Barneveld, "in examining all things for the best interests of the country and the churches. I find the nobles and cities here well resolved in this regard, although there be some disagreements 'in modo.' Vorstius, having been for many years professor and minister of theology at Steinfurt, having manifested his learning in many books written against the Jesuits, and proved himself pure and moderate in doctrine, has been called to the vacant professorship at Leyden. This appointment is now countermined by various means. We are doing our best to arrange everything for the highest good of the Provinces and the churches. Believe this and believe nothing else. Pay heed to no other information. Remember what took place in Flanders, events so well known to you. It is not for me to pass judgment in these matters. Do you, too, suspend your judgment."

The Advocate's allusion was to the memorable course of affairs in Flanders at an epoch when many of the most inflammatory preachers and politicians of the Reformed religion, men who refused to employ a footman or a housemaid not certified to be thoroughly orthodox, subsequently after much sedition and disturbance went over to Spain and the Catholic religion.

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A few weeks later Barneveld sent copies to Caron of the latest harangues of Winwood in the Assembly and the reply of My Lords on the Vorstian business; that is to say, the freshest dialogue on predestination between the King and the Advocate. For as James always dictated word for word the orations of his envoy, so had their Mightinesses at this period no head and no mouthpiece save Barneveld alone. Nothing could be drearier than these controversies, and the reader shall be spared as much, as possible the infliction of reading them. It will be necessary, however, for the proper understanding of subsequent events that he should be familiar with portions of the Advocate's confidential letters.

"Sound well the gentleman you wot of," said Barneveld, "and other personages as to the conclusive opinions over there. The course of the propositions does not harmonize with what I have myself heard out of the King's mouth at other times, nor with the reports of former ambassadors. I cannot well understand that the King should, with such preciseness, condemn all other opinions save those of Calvin and Beza. It is important to the service of this country that one should know the final intention of his Majesty."

And this was the misery of the position. For it was soon to appear that the King's definite and final intentions, varied from day to day. It was almost humorous to find him at that moment condemning all opinions but those of Calvin and Beza in Holland, while his course to the strictest confessors of that creed in England was so ferocious.

But Vorstius was a rival author to his Majesty on subjects treated of by both, so that literary spite of the most venomous kind, stirred into theological hatred, was making a dangerous mixture. Had a man with the soul and sense of the Advocate sat on the throne which James was regarding at that moment as a professor's chair, the world's history would have been changed.

"I fear," continued Barneveld, "that some of our own precisians have been spinning this coil for us over there, and if the civil authority can be thus countermined, things will go as in Flanders in your time. Pray continue to be observant, discreet, and moderate."

The Advocate continued to use his best efforts to smooth the rising waves. He humoured and even flattered the King, although perpetually denounced by Winwood in his letters to his sovereign as tyrannical, over-bearing, malignant, and treacherous. He did his best to counsel moderation and mutual toleration, for he felt that these needless theological disputes about an abstract and insoluble problem of casuistry were digging an abyss in which the Republic might be swallowed up for ever. If ever man worked steadily with the best lights of experience and inborn sagacity for the good of his country and in defence of a constitutional government, horribly defective certainly, but the only legal one, and on the whole a more liberal polity than

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any then existing, it was Barneveld. Courageously, steadily, but most patiently, he stood upon that position so vital and daily so madly assailed; the defence of the civil authority against the priesthood. He felt instinctively and keenly that where any portion of the subjects or citizens of a country can escape from the control of government and obey other head than the lawful sovereignty, whether monarchical or republican, social disorder and anarchy must be ever impending.

"We are still tortured by ecclesiastical disputes," he wrote a few weeks later to Caron. "Besides many libels which have appeared in print, the letters of his Majesty and the harangues of Winwood have been published; to what end you who know these things by experience can judge. The truth of the matter of Vorstius is that he was legally called in July 1610, that he was heard last May before My Lords the States with six preachers to oppose him, and in the same month duly accepted and placed in office. He has given no public lectures as yet. You will cause this to be known on fitting opportunity. Believe and cause to be believed that his Majesty's letters and Sir R. Winwood's propositions have been and shall be well considered, and that I am working with all my strength to that end. You know the constitution of our country, and can explain everything for the best. Many pious and intelligent people in this State hold themselves assured that his Majesty according to his royal exceeding great wisdom, foresight, and affection for the welfare of this land will not approve that his letters and Winwood's propositions should be scattered by the press among the common people. Believe and cause to be believed, to your best ability, that My Lords the States of Holland desire to maintain the true Christian, Reformed religion as well in the University of Leyden as in all their cities and villages. The only dispute is on the high points of predestination and its adjuncts, concerning which moderation and a more temperate teaching is furthered by some amongst us. Many think that such is the edifying practice in England. Pray have the kindness to send me the English Confession of the year 1572, with the corrections and alterations up to this year."

But the fires were growing hotter, fanned especially by Flemish ministers, a brotherhood of whom Barneveld had an especial distrust, and who certainly felt great animosity to him. His moderate counsels were but oil to the flames. He was already depicted by zealots and calumniators as false to the Reformed creed.

"Be assured and assure others," he wrote again to Caron, "that in the matter of religion I am, and by God's grace shall remain, what I ever have been. Make the same assurances as to my son-in-law and brother. We are not a little amazed that a few extraordinary Puritans, mostly Flemings and Frisians, who but a short time ago had neither property nor kindred in the country, and have now

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very little of either, and who have given but slender proofs of constancy or service to the fatherland, could through pretended zeal gain credit over there against men well proved in all respects. We wonder the more because they are endeavouring, in ecclesiastical matters at least, to usurp an extraordinary authority, against which his Majesty, with very weighty reasons, has so many times declared his opinion founded upon God's Word and upon all laws and principles of justice."

It was Barneveld's practice on this as on subsequent occasions very courteously to confute the King out of his own writings and speeches, and by so doing to be unconsciously accumulating an undying hatred against himself in the royal breast. Certainly nothing could be easier than to show that James, while encouraging in so reckless a manner the emancipation of the ministers of an advanced sect in the Reformed Church from control of government, and their usurpation of supreme authority which had been destroyed in England, was outdoing himself in dogmatism and inconsistency. A king-highpriest, who dictated his supreme will to bishops and ministers as well as to courts and parliaments, was ludicrously employed in a foreign country in enforcing the superiority of the Church to the State.

"You will give good assurances," said the Advocate, "upon my word, that the conservation of the true Reformed religion is as warmly cherished here, especially by me, as at any time during the war."

He next alluded to the charges then considered very grave against certain writings of Vorstius, and with equal fairness to his accusers as he had been to the Professor gave a pledge that the subject should be examined.

"If the man in question," he said, "be the author, as perhaps falsely imputed, of the work 'De Filiatione Christi' or things of that sort, you may be sure that he shall have no furtherance here." He complained, however, that before proof the cause was much prejudiced by the circulation through the press of letters on the subject from important personages in England. His own efforts to do justice in the matter were traversed by such machinations. If the Professor proved to be guilty of publications fairly to be deemed atheistical and blasphemous, he should be debarred from his functions, but the outcry from England was doing more harm than good.

"The published extract from the letter of the Archbishop," he wrote, "to the effect that the King will declare My Lords the States to be his enemies if they are not willing to send the man away is doing much harm."

Truly, if it had come to this—that a King of England was to go to war with a neighbouring and friendly republic because an obnoxious professor of theology was not instantly hurled from a university of which his Majesty was not one of the overseers—it was time

to look a little closely into the functions of governments and the nature of public and international law. Not that the sword of James was in reality very likely to be unsheathed, but his shriekings and his scribbings, pacific as he was himself, were likely to arouse passions which torrents of blood alone could satiate.

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"The publishing and spreading among the community," continued Barneveld, "of M. Winwood's protestations and of many indecent libels are also doing much mischief, for the nature of this people does not tolerate such things. I hope, however, to obtain the removal according to his Majesty's desire. Keep me well informed, and send me word what is thought in England by the four divines of the book of Vorstius, 'De Deo,' and of his declarations on the points sent here by his Majesty. Let me know, too, if there has been any later confession published in England than that of the year 1562, and whether the nine points pressed in the year 1595 were accepted and published in 1603. If so, pray send them, as they maybe made use of in settling our differences here."

Thus it will be seen that the spirit of conciliation, of a calm but earnest desire to obtain a firm grasp of the most reasonable relations between Church and State through patient study of the phenomena exhibited in other countries, were the leading motives of the man. Yet he was perpetually denounced in private as an unbeliever, an atheist, a tyrant, because he resisted dictation from the clergy within the Provinces and from kings outside them.

"It was always held here to be one of the chief infractions of the laws and privileges of this country," he said, "that former princes had placed themselves in matter of religion in the tutelage of the Pope and the Spanish Inquisition, and that they therefore on complaint of their good subjects could take no orders on that subject. Therefore it cannot be considered strange that we are not willing here to fall into the same obloquy. That one should now choose to turn the magistrates, who were once so seriously summoned on their conscience and their office to adopt the Reformation and to take the matter of religion to heart, into ignorants, to deprive them of knowledge, and to cause them to see with other eyes than their own, cannot by many be considered right and reasonable. 'Intelligenti pauca.'"

[The interesting letter from which I have given these copious extracts was ordered by its writer to be burned. "Lecta vulcano" was noted at the end of it, as was not unfrequently the case with the Advocate. It never was burned; but, innocent and reasonable as it seems, was made use of by Barneveld's enemies with deadly effect. J.L.M.]

Meantime M. de Refuge, as before stated, was on his way to the Hague, to communicate the news of the double marriage. He had fallen sick at Rotterdam, and the nature of his instructions and of the message he brought remained unknown, save from the previous despatches of Aerssens. But reports were rife that he was about to propose new terms of alliance to the States, founded on large concessions to the Roman Catholic religion. Of course intense jealousy was excited at the English court, and calumny plumed her wings for a fresh attack upon the Advocate. Of course

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he was sold to Spain, the Reformed religion was to be trampled out in the Provinces, and the Papacy and Holy Inquisition established on its ruins. Nothing could be more diametrically the reverse of the fact than such hysterical suspicions as to the instructions of the ambassador extraordinary from France, and this has already appeared. The Vorstian affair too was still in the same phase, the Advocate professing a willingness that justice should be done in the matter, while courteously but firmly resisting the arrogant pretensions of James to take the matter out of the jurisdiction of the States.

“I stand amazed,” he said, “at the partisanship and the calumnious representations which you tell me of, and cannot imagine what is thought nor what is proposed. Should M. de Refuge make any such propositions as are feared, believe, and cause his Majesty and his counsellors to believe, that they would be of no effect. Make assurances upon my word, notwithstanding all advices to the contrary, that such things would be flatly refused. If anything is published or proven to the discredit of Vorstius, send it to me. Believe that we shall not defend heretics nor schismatics against the pure Evangelical doctrine, but one cannot conceive here that the knowledge and judicature of the matter belongs anywhere else than to My Lords the States of Holland, in whose service he has legally been during four months before his Majesty made the least difficulty about it. Called hither legally a year before, with the knowledge and by the order of his Excellency and the councillors of state of Holland, he has been countermined by five or six Flemings and Frisians, who, without recognizing the lawful authority of the magistrates, have sought assistance in foreign countries—in Germany and afterwards in England. Yes, they have been so presumptuous as to designate one of their own men for the place. If such a proceeding should be attempted in England, I leave it to those whose business it would be to deal with it to say what would be done. I hope therefore that one will leave the examination and judgment of this matter freely to us, without attempting to make us—against the principles of the Reformation and the liberties and laws of the land—executors of the decrees of others, as the man here wishes to obtrude it upon us.”

He alluded to the difficulty in raising the ways and means; saying that the quota of Holland, as usual, which was more than half the whole, was ready, while other provinces were in arrears. Yet they were protected, while Holland was attacked.

“Methinks I am living in a strange world,” he said, “when those who have received great honour from Holland, and who in their conscience know that they alone have conserved the Commonwealth, are now traduced with such great calumnies. But God the Lord Almighty is just, and will in His own time do chastisement.”

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The affair of Vorstius dragged its slow length along, and few things are more astounding at this epoch than to see such a matter, interesting enough certainly to theologians, to the University, and to the rising generation of students, made the topic of unceasing and embittered diplomatic controversy between two great nations, who had most pressing and momentous business on their hands. But it was necessary to humour the King, while going to the verge of imprudence in protecting the Professor. In March he was heard, three or four hours long, before the Assembly of Holland, in answer to various charges made against him, being warned that “he stood before the Lord God and before the sovereign authority of the States.” Although thought by many to have made a powerful defence, he was ordered to set it forth in writing, both in Latin and in the vernacular. Furthermore it was ordained that he should make a complete refutation of all the charges already made or that might be made during the ensuing three months against him in speech, book, or letter in England, Germany, the Netherlands, or anywhere else. He was allowed one year and a half to accomplish this work, and meantime was to reside not in Leyden, nor the Hague, but in some other town of Holland, not delivering lectures or practising his profession in any way. It might be supposed that sufficient work had been thus laid out for the unfortunate doctor of divinity without lecturing or preaching. The question of jurisdiction was saved. The independence of the civil authority over the extreme pretensions of the clergy had been vindicated by the firmness of the Advocate. James had been treated with overflowing demonstrations of respect, but his claim to expel a Dutch professor from his chair and country by a royal fiat had been signally rebuked. Certainly if the Provinces were dependent upon the British king in regard to such a matter, it was the merest imbecility for them to affect independence. Barneveld had carried his point and served his country strenuously and well in this apparently small matter which human folly had dilated into a great one. But deep was the wrath treasured against him in consequence in clerical and royal minds.

Returning from Wesel after the negotiations, Sir Ralph Winwood had an important interview at Arnheim with Prince Maurice, in which they confidentially exchanged their opinions in regard to the Advocate, and mutually confirmed their suspicions and their jealousies in regard to that statesman.

The Ambassador earnestly thanked the Prince in the King’s name for his “careful and industrious endeavours for the maintenance of the truth of religion, lively expressed in prosecuting the cause against Vorstius and his adherents.”

He then said:

“I am expressly commanded that his Majesty conferring the present condition of affairs of this quarter of the world with those advertisements he daily receives from his ministers abroad, together with the nature and disposition of those men who have in their hands the managing of all business in these foreign parts, can make no other judgment than this.

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"There is a general ligue and confederation plotted for the subversion and ruin of religion upon the subsistence whereof his Majesty doth judge the main welfare of your realms and of these Provinces solely to consist.

"Therefore his Majesty has given me charge out of the knowledge he has of your great worth and sufficiency," continued Winwood," and the confidence he reposes in your faith and affection, freely to treat with you on these points, and withal to pray you to deliver your opinion what way would be the most compendious and the most assured to contravene these complots, and to frustrate the malice of these mischievous designs."

The Prince replied by acknowledging the honour the King had vouchsafed to do him in holding so gracious an opinion of him, wherein his Majesty should never be deceived.

"I concur in judgment with his Majesty," continued the Prince, "that the main scope at which these plots and practices do aim, for instance, the alliance between France and Spain, is this, to root out religion, and by consequence to bring under their yoke all those countries in which religion is professed.

"The first attempt," continued the Prince, "is doubtless intended against these Provinces. The means to countermine and defeat these projected designs I take to be these: the continuance of his Majesty's constant resolution for the protection of religion, and then that the King would be pleased to procure a general confederation between the kings, princes, and commonwealths professing religion, namely, Denmark, Sweden, the German princes, the Protestant cantons of Switzerland, and our United Provinces.

"Of this confederation, his Majesty must be not only the director, but the head and protector.

"Lastly, the Protestants of France should be, if not supported, at least relieved from that oppression which the alliance of Spain doth threaten upon them. This, I insist," repeated Maurice with great fervour, "is the only coupegorge of all plots whatever between France and Spain."

He enlarged at great length on these points, which he considered so vital.

"And what appearance can there be," asked Winwood insidiously and maliciously, "of this general confederation now that these Provinces, which heretofore have been accounted a principal member of the Reformed Church, begin to falter in the truth of religion?

"He who solely governs the metropolitan province of Holland," continued the Ambassador, with a direct stab in the back at Barneveld, "is reputed generally, as your Excellency best knows, to be the only patron of Vorstius, and the protector of the schisms of Arminius. And likewise, what possibility is there that the Protestants of

France can expect favour from these Provinces when the same man is known to depend at the devotion of France?"

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The international, theological, and personal jealousy of the King against Holland's Advocate having been thus plainly developed, the Ambassador proceeded to pour into the Prince's ear the venom of suspicion, and to inflame his jealousy against his great rival. The secret conversation showed how deeply laid was the foundation of the political hatred, both of James and of Maurice, against the Advocate, and certainly nothing could be more preposterous than to imagine the King as the director and head of the great Protestant League. We have but lately seen him confidentially assuring his minister that his only aim was "to wind himself handsomely out of the whole business." Maurice must have found it difficult to preserve his gravity when assigning such a part to "Master Jacques."

"Although Monsieur Barneveld has cast off all care of religion," said Maurice, "and although some towns in Holland, wherein his power doth reign, are infected with the like neglect, yet so long as so many good towns in Holland stand sound, and all the other provinces of this confederacy, the proposition would at the first motion be cheerfully accepted."

"I confess I find difficulty in satisfying your second question," continued the Prince, "for I acknowledge that Barneveld is wholly devoted to the service of France. During the truce negotiations, when some difference arose between him and myself, President Jeannin came to me, requiring me in the French king's name to treat Monsieur Barneveld well, whom the King had received into his protection. The letters which the States' ambassador in France wrote to Barneveld (and to him all ambassadors address their despatches of importance), the very autographs themselves, he sent back into the hands of Villeroy."

Here the Prince did not scruple to accuse the Advocate of doing the base and treacherous trick against Aerssens which he had expressly denied doing, and which had been done during his illness, as he solemnly avowed, by a subordinate probably for the sake of making mischief.

Maurice then discoursed largely and vehemently of the suspicious proceedings of Barneveld, and denounced him as dangerous to the State. "When one man who has the conduct of all affairs in his sole power," he said, "shall hold underhand intelligence with the ministers of Spain and the Archduke, and that without warrant, thereby he may have the means so to carry the course of affairs that, do what they will, these Provinces must fall or stand at the mercy and discretion of Spain. Therefore some good resolutions must be taken in time to hold up this State from a sudden downfall, but in this much moderation and discretion must be used."

The Prince added that he had invited his cousin Lewis William to appear at the Hague at May day, in order to consult as to the proper means to preserve the Provinces from confusion under his Majesty's safeguard, and with the aid of the Englishmen in the States' service whom Maurice pronounced to be "the strength and flower of his army."

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Thus the Prince developed his ideas at great length, and accused the Advocate behind his back, and without the faintest shadow of proof, of base treachery to his friends and of high-treason. Surely Barneveld was in danger, and was walking among pitfalls. Most powerful and deadly enemies were silently banding themselves together against him. Could he long maintain his hold on the slippery heights of power, where he was so consciously serving his country, but where he became day by day a mere shining mark for calumny and hatred?

The Ambassador then signified to the Prince that he had been instructed to carry to him the King's purpose to confer on him the Order of the Garter.

"If his Majesty holds me worthy of so great honour," said the Prince, "I and my family shall ever remain bound to his service and that of his royal posterity.

"That the States should be offended I see no cause, but holding the charge I do in their service, I could not accept the honour without first acquainting them and receiving their approbation."

Winwood replied that, as the King knew the terms on which the Prince lived with the States, he doubted not his Majesty would first notify them and say that he honoured the mutual amity between his realms and these Provinces by honouring the virtues of their general, whose services, as they had been most faithful and affectionate, so had they been accompanied with the blessings of happiness and prosperous success.

Thus said Winwood to the King: "Your Majesty may plaster two walls with one trowel ('una fidelia duos dealbare parietes'), reverse the designs of them who to facilitate their own practices do endeavour to alienate your affections from the good of these Provinces, and oblige to your service the well-affected people, who know that there is no surety for themselves, their wives and children, but under the protection of your Majesty's favour. Perhaps, however, the favourers of Vorstius and Arminius will buzz into the ears of their associates that your Majesty would make a party in these Provinces by maintaining the truth of religion and also by gaining unto you the affections of their chief commander. But your Majesty will be pleased to pass forth whose worthy ends will take their place, which is to honour virtue where you find it, and the suspicious surmises of malice and envy in one instant will vanish into smoke."

Winwood made no scruple in directly stating to the English government that Barneveld's purpose was to "cause a divorce between the King's realms and the Provinces, the more easily to precipitate them into the arms of Spain." He added that the negotiation with Count Maurice then on foot was to be followed, but with much secrecy, on account of the place he held in the State.

Soon after the Ambassador's secret conversation with Maurice he had an interview with Barneveld. He assured the Advocate that no contentment could be given to his Majesty

but by the banishment of Vorstius. "If the town of Leyden should understand so much," replied Barneveld, "I fear the magistrates would retain him still in their town."

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"If the town of Leyden should retain Vorstius," answered Winwood, "to brave or despight his Majesty, the King has the means, if it pleases him to use them, and that without drawing sword, to range them to reason, and to make the magistrates on their knees demand his pardon, and I say as much of Rotterdam."

Such insolence on the part of an ambassador to the first minister of a great republic was hard to bear. Barneveld was not the man to brook it. He replied with great indignation. "I was born in liberty," he said with rising choler, "I cannot digest this kind of language. The King of Spain himself never dared to speak in so high a style."

"I well understand that logic," returned the Ambassador with continued insolence. "You hold your argument to be drawn 'a majori ad minus;' but I pray you to believe that the King of Great Britain is peer and companion to the King of Spain, and that his motto is, 'Nemo me impune lacessit.'"

And so they parted in a mutual rage; Winwood adding on going out of the room, "Whatsoever I propose to you in his Majesty's name can find with you neither goust nor grace."

He then informed Lord Rochester that "the man was extremely distempered and extremely distasted with his Majesty.

"Some say," he added, "that on being in England when his Majesty first came to the throne he conceived some offence, which ever since hath rankled in his heart, and now doth burst forth with more violent malice."

Nor was the matter so small as it superficially appeared. Dependence of one nation upon the dictation of another can never be considered otherwise than grave. The subjection of all citizens, clerical or lay, to the laws of the land, the supremacy of the State over the Church, were equally grave subjects. And the question of sovereignty now raised for the first time, not academically merely, but practically, was the gravest one of all. It was soon to be mooted vigorously and passionately whether the United Provinces were a confederacy or a union; a league of sovereign and independent states bound together by treaty for certain specified purposes or an incorporated whole. The Advocate and all the principal lawyers in the country had scarcely a doubt on the subject. Whether it were a reasonable system or an absurd one, a vigorous or an imbecile form of government, they were confident that the Union of Utrecht, made about a generation of mankind before, and the only tie by which the Provinces were bound together at all, was a compact between sovereigns.

Barneveld styled himself always the servant and officer of the States of Holland. To them was his allegiance, for them he spoke, wrought, and thought, by them his meagre salary was paid. At the congress of the States-General, the scene of his most important

functions, he was the ambassador of Holland, acting nominally according to their instructions, and exercising the powers of minister of foreign affairs and, as it were,

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prime minister for the other confederates by their common consent. The system would have been intolerable, the great affairs of war and peace could never have been carried on so triumphantly, had not the preponderance of the one province Holland, richer, more powerful, more important in every way than the other six provinces combined, given to the confederacy illegally, but virtually, many of the attributes of union. Rather by usucaption than usurpation Holland had in many regards come to consider herself and be considered as the Republic itself. And Barneveld, acting always in the name of Holland and with the most modest of titles and appointments, was for a long time in all civil matters the chief of the whole country. This had been convenient during the war, still more convenient during negotiations for peace, but it was inevitable that there should be murmurs now that the cessation from military operations on a large scale had given men time to look more deeply into the nature of a constitution partly inherited and partly improvised, and having many of the defects usually incident to both sources of government.

The military interest, the ecclesiastical power, and the influence of foreign nations exerted through diplomatic intrigue, were rapidly arraying themselves in determined hostility to Barneveld and to what was deemed his tyrannous usurpation. A little later the national spirit, as opposed to provincial and municipal patriotism, was to be aroused against him, and was likely to prove the most formidable of all the elements of antagonism.

It is not necessary to anticipate here what must be developed on a subsequent page. This much, however, it is well to indicate for the correct understanding of passing events. Barneveld did not consider himself the officer or servant of their High Mightinesses the States-General, while in reality often acting as their master, but the vassal and obedient functionary of their Great Mightinesses the States of Holland, whom he almost absolutely controlled.

His present most pressing business was to resist the encroachments of the sacerdotal power and to defend the magistracy. The casuistical questions which were fast maddening the public mind seemed of importance to him only as enclosing within them a more vital and practical question of civil government.

But the anger of his opponents, secret and open, was rapidly increasing. Envy, jealousy, political and clerical hate, above all, that deadliest and basest of malignant spirits which in partisan warfare is bred out of subserviency to rising and rival power, were swarming about him and stinging him at every step. No parasite of Maurice could more effectively pay his court and more confidently hope for promotion or reward than by vilipending Barneveld. It would be difficult to comprehend the infinite extent and power of slander without a study of the career of the Advocate of Holland.

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"I thank you for your advices," he wrote to Carom' "and I wish from my heart that his Majesty, according to his royal wisdom and clemency towards the condition of this country, would listen only to My Lords the States or their ministers, and not to his own or other passionate persons who, through misunderstanding or malice, furnish him with information and so frequently flatter him. I have tried these twenty years to deserve his Majesty's confidence, and have many letters from him reaching through twelve or fifteen years, in which he does me honour and promises his royal favour. I am the more chagrined that through false and passionate reports and information—because I am resolved to remain good and true to My Lords the States, to the fatherland, and to the true Christian religion—I and mine should now be so traduced. I hope that God Almighty will second my upright conscience, and cause his Majesty soon to see the injustice done to me and mine. To defend the resolutions of My Lords the States of Holland is my office, duty, and oath, and I assure you that those resolutions are taken with wider vision and scope than his Majesty can believe. Let this serve for My Lords' defence and my own against indecent calumny, for my duty allows me to pursue no other course."

He again alluded to the dreary affair of Vorstius, and told the Envoy that the venation caused by it was incredible. "That men unjustly defame our cities and their regents is nothing new," he said; "but I assure you that it is far more damaging to the common weal than the defamers imagine."

Some of the private admirers of Arminius who were deeply grieved at so often hearing him "publicly decried as the enemy of God" had been defending the great heretic to James, and by so doing had excited the royal wrath not only against the deceased doctor and themselves, but against the States of Holland who had given them no commission.

On the other hand the advanced orthodox party, most bitter haters of Barneveld, and whom in his correspondence with England he uniformly and perhaps designedly called the Puritans, knowing that the very word was a scarlet rag to James, were growing louder and louder in their demands. "Some thirty of these Puritans," said he, "of whom at least twenty are Flemings or other foreigners equally violent, proclaim that they and the like of them mean alone to govern the Church. Let his Majesty compare this proposal with his Royal Present, with his salutary declaration at London in the year 1603 to Doctor Reynolds and his associates, and with his admonition delivered to the Emperor, kings, sovereigns, and republics, and he will best understand the mischievous principles of these people, who are now gaining credit with him to the detriment of the freedom and laws of these Provinces."

A less enlightened statesman than Barneveld would have found it easy enough to demonstrate the inconsistency of the King in thus preaching subserviency of government to church and favouring the rule of Puritans over both. It needed but slender logic to reduce such a policy on his part to absurdity, but neither kings nor

governments are apt to value themselves on their logic. So long as James could play the pedagogue to emperors, kings, and republics, it mattered little to him that the doctrines which he preached in one place he had pronounced flat blasphemy in another.

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That he would cheerfully hang in England the man whom he would elevate to power in Holland might be inconsistency in lesser mortals; but what was the use of his infallibility if he was expected to be consistent?

But one thing was certain. The Advocate saw through him as if he had been made of glass, and James knew that he did. This fatal fact outweighed all the decorous and respectful phraseology under which Barneveld veiled his remorseless refutations. It was a dangerous thing to incur the wrath of this despot-theologian.

Prince Maurice, who had originally joined in the invitation given by the overseers of Leyden to Vorstius, and had directed one of the deputies and his own "court trumpeter," Uytenbogaert, to press him earnestly to grant his services to the University, now finding the coldness of Barneveld to the fiery remonstrances of the King, withdrew his protection of the Professor.

"The Count Maurice, who is a wise and understanding prince," said Winwood, "and withal most affectionate to his Majesty's service, doth foresee the miseries into which these countries are likely to fall, and with grief doth pine away."

It is probable that the great stadholder had never been more robust, or indeed inclining to obesity, than precisely at this epoch; but Sir Ralph was of an imaginative turn. He had discovered, too, that the Advocate's design was "of no other nature than so to stem the course of the State that insensibly the Provinces shall fall by relapse into the hands of Spain."

A more despicable idea never entered a human brain. Every action, word, and thought, of Barneveld's life was a refutation of it. But he was unwilling, at the bidding of a king, to treat a professor with contumely who had just been solemnly and unanimously invited by the great university, by the States of Holland, and by the Stadholder to an important chair; and that was enough for the diplomatist and courtier. "He, and only he," said Winwood passionately, "hath opposed his Majesty's purposes with might and main." Formerly the Ambassador had been full of complaints of "the craving humour of Count Maurice," and had censured him bitterly in his correspondence for having almost by his inordinate pretensions for money and other property brought the Treaty of Truce to a standstill. And in these charges he was as unjust and as reckless as he was now in regard to Barneveld.

The course of James and his agents seemed cunningly devised to sow discord in the Provinces, to inflame the growing animosity of the Stadholder to the Advocate, and to paralyse the action of the Republic in the duchies. If the King had received direct instructions from the Spanish cabinet how to play the Spanish game, he could hardly have done it with more docility. But was not Gondemar ever at his elbow, and the Infanta always in the perspective?

And it is strange enough that, at the same moment, Spanish marriages were in France as well as England the turning-point of policy.

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Henry had been willing enough that the Dauphin should espouse a Spanish infanta, and that one of the Spanish princes should be affianced to one of his daughters. But the proposition from Spain had been coupled with a condition that the friendship between France and the Netherlands should be at once broken off, and the rebellious heretics left to their fate. And this condition had been placed before him with such arrogance that he had rejected the whole scheme. Henry was not the man to do anything dishonourable at the dictation of another sovereign. He was also not the man to be ignorant that the friendship of the Provinces was necessary to him, that cordial friendship between France and Spain was impossible, and that to allow Spain to reoccupy that splendid possession between his own realms and Germany, from which she had been driven by the Hollanders in close alliance with himself, would be unworthy of the veriest schoolboy in politics. But Henry was dead, and a Medici reigned in his place, whose whole thought was to make herself agreeable to Spain.

Aerssens, adroit, prying, experienced, unscrupulous, knew very well that these double Spanish marriages were resolved upon, and that the inevitable condition refused by the King would be imposed upon his widow. He so informed the States-General, and it was known to the French government that he had informed them. His position soon became almost untenable, not because he had given this information, but because the information and the inference made from it were correct.

It will be observed that the policy of the Advocate was to preserve friendly relations between France and England, and between both and the United Provinces. It was for this reason that he submitted to the exhortations and denunciations of the English ambassadors. It was for this that he kept steadily in view the necessity of dealing with and supporting corporate France, the French government, when there were many reasons for feeling sympathy with the internal rebellion against that government. Maurice felt differently. He was connected by blood or alliance with more than one of the princes now perpetually in revolt. Bouillon was his brother-in-law, the sister of Conde was his brother's wife. Another cousin, the Elector-Palatine, was already encouraging distant and extravagant hopes of the Imperial crown. It was not unnatural that he should feel promptings of ambition and sympathy difficult to avow even to himself, and that he should feel resentment against the man by whom this secret policy was traversed in the well-considered interest of the Republican government.

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Aerssens, who, with the keen instinct of self-advancement was already attaching himself to Maurice as to the wheels of the chariot going steadily up the hill, was not indisposed to loosen his hold upon the man through whose friendship he had first risen, and whose power was now perhaps on the decline. Moreover, events had now caused him to hate the French government with much fervour. With Henry IV. he had been all-powerful. His position had been altogether exceptional, and he had wielded an influence at Paris more than that exerted by any foreign ambassador. The change naturally did not please him, although he well knew the reasons. It was impossible for the Dutch ambassador to be popular at a court where Spain ruled supreme. Had he been willing to eat humiliation as with a spoon, it would not have sufficed. They knew him, they feared him, and they could not doubt that his sympathies would ever be with the malcontent princes. At the same time he did not like to lose his hold upon the place, nor to have it known, as yet, to the world that his power was diminished.

"The Queen commands me to tell you," said the French ambassador de Russy to the States-General, "that the language of the Sieur Aerssens has not only astonished her, but scandalized her to that degree that she could not refrain from demanding if it came from My Lords the States or from himself. He having, however, affirmed to her Majesty that he had express charge to justify it by reasons so remote from the hope and the belief that she had conceived of your gratitude to the Most Christian King and herself, she is constrained to complain of it, and with great frankness."

Some months later than this Aerssens communicated to the States-General the project of the Spanish marriage, "which," said he, "they have declared to me with so many oaths to be false." He informed them that M. de Refuge was to go on special mission to the Hague, "having been designated to that duty before Aerssens' discovery of the marriage project." He was to persuade their Mightinesses that the marriages were by no means concluded, and that, even if they were, their Mightinesses were not interested therein, their Majesties intending to remain by the old maxims and alliances of the late king. Marriages, he would be instructed to say, were mere personal conventions, which remained of no consideration when the interests of the crown were touched.

"Nevertheless, I know very well," said Aerssens, "that in England these negotiations are otherwise understood, and that the King has uttered great complaints about them, saying that such a negotiation as this ought not to have been concealed from him. He is pressing more than ever for reimbursement of the debt to him, and especially for the moneys pretended to have been furnished to your Mightinesses in his Majesty's name."

Thus it will be seen how closely the Spanish marriages were connected with the immediate financial arrangements of France, England, and the States, without reference to the wider political consequences anticipated.

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“The princes and most gentlemen,” here continued the Ambassador, “believe that these reciprocal and double marriages will bring about great changes in Christendom if they take the course which the authors of them intend, however much they may affect to believe that no novelties are impending. The marriages were proposed to the late king, and approved by him, during the negotiations for the truce, and had Don Pedro do Toledo been able to govern himself, as Jeannin has just been telling me, the United Provinces would have drawn from it their assured security. What he means by that, I certainly cannot conceive, for Don Pedro proposed the marriage of the Dauphin (now Louis XIII.) with the Infanta on the condition that Henry should renounce all friendship with your Mightinesses, and neither openly nor secretly give you any assistance. You were to be entirely abandoned, as an example for all who throw off the authority of their lawful prince. But his Majesty answered very generously that he would take no conditions; that he considered your Mightinesses as his best friends, whom he could not and would not forsake. Upon this Don Pedro broke off the negotiation. What should now induce the King of Spain to resume the marriage negotiations but to give up the conditions, I am sure I don’t know, unless, through the truce, his designs and his ambition have grown flaccid. This I don’t dare to hope, but fear, on the contrary, that he will so manage the irresolution, weakness, and faintheartedness of this kingdom as through the aid of his pensioned friends here to arrive at all his former aims.”

Certainly the Ambassador painted the condition of France in striking and veracious colours, and he was quite right in sending the information which he was first to discover, and which it was so important for the States to know. It was none the less certain in Barneveld’s mind that the best, not the worst, must be made of the state of affairs, and that France should not be assisted in throwing herself irrecoverably into the arms of Spain.

“Refuge will tell you,” said Aerssens, a little later, “that these marriages will not interfere with the friendship of France for you nor with her subsidies, and that no advantage will be given to Spain in the treaty to your detriment or that of her other allies. But whatever fine declarations they may make, it is sure to be detrimental. And all the princes, gentlemen, and officers here have the same conviction. Those of the Reformed religion believe that the transaction is directed solely against the religion which your Mightinesses profess, and that the next step will be to effect a total separation between the two religions and the two countries.”

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Refuge arrived soon afterwards, and made the communication to the States-General of the approaching nuptials between the King of France and the Infanta of Spain; and of the Prince of Spain with Madame, eldest daughter of France, exactly as Aerssens had predicted four months before. There was a great flourish of compliments, much friendly phrase-making, and their Mightinesses were informed that the communication of the marriages was made to them before any other power had been notified, in proof of the extraordinary affection entertained for them by France. "You are so much interested in the happiness of France," said Refuge, "that this treaty by which it is secured will be for your happiness also. He did not indicate, however, the precise nature of the bliss beyond the indulgence of a sentimental sympathy, not very refreshing in the circumstances, which was to result to the Confederacy from this close alliance between their firmest friend and their ancient and deadly enemy. He would have found it difficult to do so.

"Don Rodrigo de Calderon, secretary of state, is daily expected from Spain," wrote, Aerssens once more. "He brings probably the articles of the marriages, which have hitherto been kept secret, so they say. 'Tis a shrewd negotiator; and in this alliance the King's chief design is to injure your Mightinesses, as M. de Villeroy now confesses, although he says that this will not be consented to on this side. It behoves your Mightinesses to use all your ears and eyes. It is certain these are much more than private conventions. Yes, there is nothing private about them, save the conjunction of the persons whom they concern. In short, all the conditions regard directly the state, and directly likewise, or by necessary consequence, the state of your Mightinesses' Provinces. I reserve explanations until it shall please your Mightinesses to hear me by word of mouth."

For it was now taken into consideration by the States' government whether Aerssens was to remain at his post or to return. Whether it was his wish to be relieved of his embassy or not was a question. But there was no question that the States at this juncture, and in spite of the dangers impending from the Spanish marriages, must have an ambassador ready to do his best to keep France from prematurely sliding into positive hostility to them. Aerssens was enigmatical in his language, and Barneveld was somewhat puzzled.

"I have according to your reiterated requests," wrote the Advocate to the Ambassador, "sounded the assembly of My Lords the States as to your recall; but I find among some gentlemen the opinion that if earnestly pressed to continue you would be willing to listen to the proposal. This I cannot make out from your letters. Please to advise me frankly as to your wishes, and assure yourself in everything of my friendship."

Nothing could be more straightforward than this language, but the Envoy was less frank than Barneveld, as will subsequently appear. The subject was a most important one, not only in its relation to the great affairs of state, but to momentous events touching the fate of illustrious personages.

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Meantime a resolution was passed by the States of Holland “in regard to the question whether Ambassador Aerssens should retain his office, yes or no?” And it was decided by a majority of votes “to leave it to his candid opinion if in his free conscience he thinks he can serve the public cause there any longer. If yes, he may keep his office one year more. If no, he may take leave and come home. In no case is his salary to be increased.”

Surely the States, under the guidance of the Advocate, had thus acted with consummate courtesy towards a diplomatist whose position from no apparent fault of his own but by the force of circumstances—and rather to his credit than otherwise—was gravely compromised.

ETEXT EDITOR'S BOOKMARKS:

Advanced orthodox party-Puritans
Atheist, a tyrant, because he resisted dictation from the clergy
Give him advice if he asked it, and money when he required
He was not imperial of aspect on canvas or coin
He who would have all may easily lose all
King's definite and final intentions, varied from day to day
Neither kings nor governments are apt to value logic
Outdoing himself in dogmatism and inconsistency
Small matter which human folly had dilated into a great one
The defence of the civil authority against the priesthood

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