

Rise of the Dutch Republic, the — Volume 28: 1578, part II eBook

Rise of the Dutch Republic, the — Volume 28: 1578, part II by John Lothrop Motley

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Title: The Rise of the Dutch Republic, 1578

Author: John Lothrop Motley

Release Date: January, 2004 [EBook #4830] [Yes, we are more than one year ahead of schedule] [This file was first posted on March 26, 2002]

Edition: 10

Language: English

Character set encoding: ASCII

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MOTLEY'S HISTORY OF THE NETHERLANDS, Project Gutenberg Edition, Vol. 30

THE RISE OF THE DUTCH REPUBLIC, 1578

By John Lothrop Motley

1855

CHAPTER V.

Towns taken by Don John—Wrath excited against the aristocratic party by the recent defeat—Attempts upon Amsterdam—"Satisfaction" of Amsterdam and its effects—De Selles sent with royal letters from Spain—Terms offered by Philip—Proclamation of Don John—Correspondence between de Selles and the States-General—Between the King and the Governor-General—New forces raised by the States—St. Aldegonde at the Diet—Municipal revolution in Amsterdam—The Prince's letter on the subject of the Anabaptists of Middelburg—The two armies inactive—De la Noye—Action at Rijnemants—John Casimir—Perverse politics of Queen Elizabeth—Alencon in the Netherlands—Portrait of the Duke—Orange's position in regard to him—Avowed and supposed policy of the French court—Anger of Elizabeth—Terms arranged between Alencon and the Estates—Renewed negotiations with Don John—Severe terms offered



him—Interview of the English envoys with the Governor—Despondency of Don John—Orange's attempts to enforce a religious peace—His isolation in sentiment—The malcontent party—Count John Governor of Gelderland —Proposed form of religious peace—Proclamation to that effect by Orange, in Antwerp—A petition in favor of the Roman Church presented by Champagny and other Catholic nobles to the States—General—Consequent commotion in Brussels—Champagny and others imprisoned—Indolence and poverty of the two armies—Illness and melancholy of Don John—His letters to Doria, to Mendoza, and to the King—Death of Don John—Suspensions of poison—Pompous burial— Removal of his body to Spain—Concluding remarks upon his character.

Don John having thus vindicated his own military fame and the amazing superiority of the Spanish arms, followed up his victory by the rapid reduction of many towns of second-rate importance Louvain, Judoigne, Tirlemont, Aerschot, Bauvignes, Sichein, Nivelles, Roeux, Soignies,

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Binch, Beaumont, Walcourt, Tviaubeuge, and Chimay, either submitted to their conqueror, or were taken after short sieges. The usual atrocities were inflicted upon the unfortunate inhabitants of towns where resistance was attempted. The commandant of Sichem was hanged out of his own window, along with several chief burghers and officers, while the garrison was put to the sword, and the bodies cast into the Denver. The only crime committed by these unfortunates was to have ventured a blow or two in behalf of the firesides which they were employed to protect.

In Brussels, on the other hand, there was less consternation excited by these events than boundless rage against the aristocratic party, for the defeat of Gemblours was attributed, with justice, to the intrigues and the incapacity of the Catholic magnates. It was with difficulty that Orange, going about by night from house to house, from street to street, succeeded in calming the indignation of the people, and in preventing them from sweeping in a mass to the residence of the leading nobles, in order to inflict summary vengeance on the traitors. All looked to the Prince as their only saviour, not a thought nor a word being wasted upon Matthias. Not a voice was raised in the assembly to vindicate the secret proceedings of the Catholic party, nor to oppose the measures which the Prince might suggest. The terrible disaster had taught the necessity of union. All parties heartily joined in the necessary steps to place the capital in a state of complete defence, and to assemble forthwith new troops to take the place of the army just annihilated. The victor gained nothing by his victory, in comparison with the profit acquired by the states through their common misfortune. Nor were all the towns which had recently fallen into the hands of Don John at all comparable in importance to the city of Amsterdam, which now, by a most timely arrangement, furnished a rich compensation to the national party for the disaster of Gemblours.

Since the conclusion of the Ghent Pacification, it had been the most earnest wish of the Prince, and of Holland and Zealand, to recover possession of this most important city. The wish was naturally shared by every true patriot in the states-general. It had, however, been extremely difficult to arrange the terms of the "Satisfaction." Every fresh attempt at an amicable compromise was wrecked upon the obstinate bigotry of the leading civic authorities. They would make no agreement to accept the authority of Orange, except, as Saint Aldegonde expressed himself; upon terms which would enable them "to govern their governor." The influence of the monks, who were resident in large numbers within the city, and of the magistrates, who were all stanch Catholics, had been hitherto sufficient to outweigh the efforts made by the large masses of the Reformed religionists composing the bulk of the population. It was, however, impossible to allow

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Amsterdam to remain in this isolated and hostile attitude to the rest of Holland. The Prince, having promised to use no coercion, and loyally adhering to his pledge, had only with extreme difficulty restrained the violence of the Hollanders and Zealanders, who were determined, by fair means or foul, to restore the capital city to its natural place within his stadholderate. He had been obliged, on various occasions, particularly on the 21st of October of the preceding year, to address a most decided and peremptory letter to the estates of Holland and Zeeland, forbidding the employment of hostile measures against Amsterdam. His commands had been reluctantly, partially, and only temporarily obeyed. The states desisted from their scheme of reducing the city by famine, but they did not the less encourage the secret and unofficial expeditions which were daily set on foot to accomplish the annexation by a sudden enterprise.

Late in November, a desperate attempt had been made by Colonel Helling, in conjunction with Governor Sonoy, to carry the city by surprise. The force which the adventurer collected for the purpose was inadequate, and his plans were unskilfully arranged. He was himself slain in the streets, at the very commencement of the action; whereupon, in the quaint language of the contemporary chronicler, "the hearts of his soldiers sank in their shoes," and they evacuated the city with much greater rapidity than they had entered it. The Prince was indignant at these violent measures, which retarded rather than advanced the desired consummation. At the same time it was an evil of immense magnitude—this anomalous condition of his capital. Ceaseless schemes were concerted by the municipal and clerical conspirators within its walls, and various attempts were known, at different times, to have been contemplated by Don John, to inflict a home-thrust upon the provinces of Holland and Zeeland at the most vulnerable and vital point. The "Satisfaction" accepted by Utrecht, in the autumn of 1577, had, however, paved the way for the recovery of Amsterdam; so that upon February the 8th, 1578, certain deputies from Utrecht succeeded at last in arranging terms, which were accepted by the sister city. The basis of the treaty was, as usual, the nominal supremacy of the Catholic religion, with toleration for the Reformed worship. The necessary effect would be, as in Harlem, Utrecht, and other places, to establish the new religion upon an entire equality with the old. It was arranged that no congregations were to be disturbed in their religious exercises in the places respectively assigned to them. Those of the Reformed faith were to celebrate their worship without the walls. They were, however, to enjoy the right of burying their dead within these precincts, and it is singular how much importance was attached at that day to a custom, at which the common sentiment and the common sense of modern times revolt. "To bury our dead

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within our own cities is a right hardly to be denied to a dog,” said the Prince of Orange; and accordingly this right was amply secured by the new Satisfaction of Amsterdam. It was, however, stipulated that the funerals should be modest, and attended by no more than twenty-four persons at once. The treaty was hailed with boundless joy in Holland and Zeeland, while countless benedictions were invoked upon the “blessed peace-makers,” as the Utrecht deputies walked through the streets of Amsterdam. There is no doubt that the triumph thus achieved by the national party far counterbalanced the Governor-General’s victory at Gemblours.

Meantime, the Seigneur de Selles, brother of the deceased Noircarmes, had arrived from Spain. He was the special bearer of a letter from the King to the states-general, written in reply to their communications of the 24th of August and 8th of September of the previous year. The tone of the royal despatch was very affectionate, the substance such as entirely to justify the whole policy of Orange. It was obvious that the penetrating and steadfast statesman had been correct in refusing to be moved to the right or the left by the specious language of Philip’s former letters, or by the apparent frankness of Don John. No doubt the Governor had been sincere in his desire for peace, but the Prince knew very well his incapacity to confer that blessing. The Prince knew—what no man else appeared fully to comprehend at that epoch—that the mortal combat between the Inquisition and the Reformation was already fully engaged. The great battle between divine reason and right divine, on which the interests of unborn generations were hanging, was to be fought out, before the eyes of all Christendom, on the plain of the Netherlands.

Orange was willing to lay down his arms if he could receive security for the Reformed worship. He had no desire to exterminate the ancient religion, but he meant also to protect the new against extermination. Such security, he felt, would never be granted, and he had therefore resolutely refused to hearken to Don John, for he was sure that peace with him was impossible. The letters now produced by De Selles confirmed his positions completely. The King said not a word concerning the appointment of a new governor-general, but boldly insisted upon the necessity of maintaining the two cardinal points—his royal supremacy, and the Catholic religion upon the basis adopted by his father, the Emperor Charles the Fifth.

This was the whole substance of his communication: the supremacy of royalty and of papacy as in the time of Charles the Fifth. These cabalistic words were repeated twice in the brief letter to the estates. They were repeated five times in the instructions furnished by his Majesty to De Selles. The letter and the instructions indeed contained nothing else. Two simples were offered for the cure of the body politic, racked by the fever and convulsion of ten

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horrible years—two simples which the patient could hardly be so unreasonable as to reject—unlimited despotism and religious persecution. The whole matter lay in a nut-shell, but it was a nut-shell which enclosed the flaming edicts of Charles the Fifth, with their scaffolds, gibbets, racks, and funeral piles. The Prince and the states-general spurned such pacific overtures, and preferred rather to gird themselves for the combat.

That there might be no mistake about the matter, Don John, immediately after receiving the letter, issued a proclamation to enforce the King's command. He mentioned it as an acknowledged fact that the states-general had long ago sworn the maintenance of the two points of royal and Catholic supremacy, according to the practice under the Emperor Charles. The states instantly published an indignant rejoinder, affirming the indisputable truth, that they had sworn to the maintenance of the Ghent Pacification, and proclaiming the assertion of Don John an infamous falsehood. It was an outrage upon common sense, they said, that the Ghent treaty could be tortured into sanctioning the placards and the Inquisition, evils which that sacred instrument had been expressly intended to crush.

A letter was then formally addressed to his Majesty, in the name of the Archduke Matthias—and of the estates, demanding the recal of Don John and the, maintenance of the Ghent Pacification. De Seller, in reply, sent a brief, deprecatory paper, enclosing a note from Don John, which the envoy acknowledged might seem somewhat harsh in its expressions. The letter contained, indeed, a sufficiently fierce and peremptory summons to the states to obey the King's commands with regard to the system of Charles the Fifth, according to their previous agreement, together with a violent declaration of the Governor's displeasure that they had dared to solicit the aid of foreign princes. On the 18th of February came a proposition from De Seller that the Prince, of Orange should place himself in the hands of Don John, while the Prince of Parma, alone and without arms, would come before the assembly, to negotiate with them upon these matters. The reply returned by the states-general to this absurd suggestion expressed their regret that the son of the Duchess Margaret should have taken part with the enemy of the Netherlanders, complained of the bull by which the Pope had invited war against them as if they had been Saracens, repeated their most unanswerable argument—that the Ghent Pacification had established a system directly the reverse of that which existed under Charles the Fifth—and affirmed their resolution never more to submit to Spanish armies, executioners, edicts, or inquisitions, and never more to return to the principles of the Emperor and of Alva. To this diplomatic correspondence succeeded a war of words and of pamphlets, some of them very inflammatory and very eloquent. Meantime, the preparations for active hostilities were proceeding

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daily. The Prince of Orange, through his envoys in England, had arranged for subsidies in the coming campaign, and for troops which were to be led to the Netherlands, under Duke Casimir of the palatinate. He sent commissioners through the provinces to raise the respective contributions agreed upon, besides an extraordinary quota of four hundred thousand guilders monthly. He also negotiated a loan of a hundred and twenty thousand guilders from the citizens of Antwerp. Many new taxes were imposed by his direction, both upon income and upon consumption. By his advice, however, and with the consent of the states-general, the provinces of Holland and Zealand held no community of burthens with the other provinces, but of their own free will contributed more than the sums for which they would have been assessed. Mr. Leyton, who was about to return from his unsuccessful mission from Elizabeth to Don John, was requested by the states-general to convey to her Majesty a faithful report of the recent correspondence, and especially of the language held by the Governor-General. He was also urged to use his influence with the Queen, to the end that her promises of assistance might be speedily fulfilled.

Troops were rapidly enrolled, and again, by the same honest but mistaken policy, the chief offices were conferred upon the great nobles—Aerschot, Champagny, Bossu, Egmont, Lalain, the Viscount of Ghent, Baron de Ville, and many others, most of whom were to desert the cause in the hour of its need. On the other hand, Don John was proceeding with his military preparations upon an extensive scale. The King had recently furnished him with one million nine hundred thousand dollars, and had promised to provide him with two hundred thousand more, monthly. With these funds his Majesty estimated that an army of thirty thousand foot, sixteen thousand cavalry, and thirty pieces of artillery, could be levied and kept on foot. If more remittances should prove to be necessary, it was promised that they should be forthcoming.

This was the result of many earnest remonstrances made by the Governor concerning the dilatory policy of the King. Wearied with being constantly ordered “to blow hot and cold with the same, breath,” he had insisted that his Majesty should select the hot or the cold, and furnish him with the means of enforcing the choice. For himself, Don John assured his brother that the hottest measures were most to his taste, and most suitable to the occasion. Fire and sword could alone save the royal authority, for all the provinces had “abandoned themselves, body and soul, to the greatest heretic and tyrant that prince ever had for vassal.” Unceasing had been the complaints and entreaties of the Captain-General, called forth by the apathy or irresolution of Philip. It was—only by assuring him that the Netherlands actually belonged to Orange, that the monarch could be aroused. “His they are; and none other’s,” said the Governor, dolefully. The King had accordingly

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sent back De Billy, Don John's envoy; with decided injunctions to use force and energy to put down the revolt at once, and with an intimation that funds might be henceforth more regularly depended upon, as the Indian fleets were expected in July. Philip also advised his brother to employ a portion of his money in purchasing the governors and principal persons who controlled the cities and other strong places belonging to the states.

Meantime, Don John thundered forth a manifesto which had been recently prepared in Madrid, by which the estates, both general and particular, were ordered forthwith to separate, and forbidden to assemble again, except by especial licence. All commissions, civil or military, granted by states' authority, were moreover annulled, together with a general prohibition of any act of obedience to such functionaries, and of contribution to any imposts which might be levied by their authority. Such thunders were now comparatively harmless, for the states had taken their course, and were busily engaged, both at home and abroad, in arming for the conflict. Saint Aldegonde was deputed to attend the Imperial diet, then in session at Worms, where he delivered an oration, which was very celebrated in its day as a composition, but, which can hardly be said to have produced much practical effect. The current was setting hard in Germany against the Reformed religion and against the Netherland cause, the Augsburg Confessionists showing hardly more sympathy with Dutch Calvinists than with Spanish Papists.

Envoys from Don John also attended the diet, and requested Saint Aldegonde to furnish them with a copy of his oration. This he declined to do. While in Germany, Saint Aldegonde was informed by John Casimir that Duke Charles of Sweden, had been solicited to furnish certain ships of war for a contemplated operation against Amsterdam. The Duke had himself given information of this plot to the Prince Palatine. It was therefore natural that Saint Aldegonde should forthwith despatch the intelligence to his friends in the Netherlands, warning them of the dangers still to be apprehended from the machinations of the Catholic agents and functionaries in Amsterdam; for although the Reformation had made rapid progress in that important city since the conclusion of the Satisfaction, yet the magistracy remained Catholic.

William Bardez, son of a former high-sheriff, a warm partisan of Orange and of the "religion," had already determined to overthrow that magistracy and to expel the friars who infested the city. The recent information despatched by Saint Aldegonde confirmed him in his purpose. There had been much wrangling between the Popish functionaries and those of the Reformed religion concerning the constitution of the burgher guard. The Calvinists could feel no security for their own lives, or the repose of the commonwealth of Holland, unless they were themselves allowed a full participation in the government of those

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important bands. They were, moreover, dissatisfied with the assignment which had been made of the churchyards to the members of their communion. These causes of discord had maintained a general irritation among the body of the inhabitants, and were now used as pretexts by Bardez for his design. He knew the city to be ripe for the overthrow of the magistracy, and he had arranged with Governor Sonoy to be furnished with a sufficient number of well-trying soldiers, who were to be concealed in the houses of the confederates. A large number of citizens were also ready to appear at his bidding with arms in their hands.

On the 24th of May, he wrote to Sonoy, begging him to hold himself in readiness, as all was prepared within the city. At the same time, he requested the governor to send him forthwith a "morion and a buckler of proof;" for, he intended to see the matter fairly through. Sonoy answered encouragingly, and sent him the armor, as directed. On the 28th of May, Bardez, with four confederates, went to the council-room, to remonstrate with the senate concerning the grievances which had been so often discussed. At about mid-day, one of the confederates, upon leaving the council-room, stepped out for a moment upon the balcony, which looked towards the public square. Standing there for a moment, he gravely removed his hat, and then as gravely replaced it upon his head. This was a preconcerted signal. At the next instant a sailor was seen to rush across the square, waving a flag in both hands. "All ye who love the Prince of Orange, take heart and follow me!" he shouted. In a moment the square was alive. Soldiers and armed citizens suddenly sprang forth, as if from the bowels of the earth. Bardez led a strong force directly into the council-chamber, and arrested every one of the astonished magistrates. At the same time, his confederates had scoured the town and taken every friar in the city into custody. Monks and senators were then marched solemnly down towards the quay, where a vessel was in readiness to receive them. "To the gallows with them—to the gallows with them!" shouted the populace, as they passed along. "To the gibbet, whither they have brought many a good fellow before his time!" Such were the openly, expressed desires of their fellow-citizens, as these dignitaries and holy men proceeded to what they believed their doom. Although treated respectfully by those who guarded them, they were filled with trepidation, for they believed the execrations of the populace the harbingers of their fate. As they entered the vessel, they felt convinced that a watery death had been substituted for the gibbet. Poor old Heinrich Dirckzoon, ex-burgomaster, pathetically rejected a couple of clean shirts which his careful wife had sent him by the hands of the housemaid. "Take them away; take them home again," said the rueful burgomaster; "I shall never need clean shirts again in this world." He entertained no

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doubt that it was the intention of his captors to scuttle the vessel as soon as they had put a little out to sea, and so to leave them to their fate. No such tragic end was contemplated, however, and, in fact, never was a complete municipal revolution accomplished in so good-natured and jocose a manner. The Catholic magistrates and friars escaped with their fright. They were simply turned out of town, and forbidden, for their lives, ever to come back again. After the vessel had proceeded a little distance from the city, they were all landed high and dry upon a dyke, and so left unharmed within the open country.

A new board of magistrates, of which stout William Bardez was one, was soon appointed; the train-bands were reorganized, and the churches thrown open to the Reformed worship—to the exclusion, at first, of the Catholics. This was certainly contrary to the Ghent treaty, and to the recent Satisfaction; it was also highly repugnant to the opinions of Orange. After a short time, accordingly, the Catholics were again allowed access to the churches, but the tables had now been turned for ever in the capital of Holland, and the Reformation was an established fact throughout that little province.

Similar events occurring upon the following day at Harlem, accompanied with some bloodshed—for which, however, the perpetrator was punished with death—opened the great church of that city to the Reformed congregations, and closed them for a time to the Catholics.

Thus, the cause of the new religion was triumphant in Holland and Zeeland, while it was advancing with rapid strides through the other provinces. Public preaching was of daily occurrence everywhere. On a single Sunday; fifteen different ministers of the Reformed religion preached in different places in Antwerp. “Do you think this can be put down?” said Orange to the remonstrating burgomaster of that city. “’Tis for you to repress it,” said the functionary, “I grant your Highness full power to do so.” “And do you think,” replied the Prince, “that I can do at this late moment, what the Duke of Alva was unable to accomplish in the very plenitude of his power?” At the same time, the Prince of Orange was more than ever disposed to rebuke his own Church for practising persecution in her turn. Again he lifted his commanding voice in behalf of the Anabaptists of Middelburg. He reminded the magistrates of that city that these peaceful burghers were always perfectly willing to bear their part in all the common burthens, that their word was as good as their oath, and that as to the matter of military service, although their principles forbade them to bear arms, they had ever been ready to provide and pay for substitutes. “We declare to you therefore,” said he, “that you have no right to trouble yourselves with any man’s conscience, so long as nothing is done to cause private harm or public scandal. We therefore expressly ordain that you desist from molesting these Baptists, from offering hindrance to their handicraft and daily trade, by which they can earn bread for their wives and children, and that you permit

them henceforth to open their shops and to do their work, according to the custom of former days. Beware, therefore, of disobedience and of resistance to the ordinance which we now establish.”

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Meantime, the armies on both sides had been assembled, and had been moving towards each other. Don John was at the head of nearly thirty thousand troops, including a large proportion of Spanish and Italian veterans. The states' army hardly numbered eighteen thousand foot and two thousand cavalry, under the famous Francois de la Nove, surnamed Bras de Fer, who had been recently appointed Marechal de Camp, and, under Count Bossu, commander-in-chief. The muster-place of the provincial forces was in the plains between Herenthals and Lier. At this point they expected to be reinforced by Duke Casimir, who had been, since the early part of the summer, in the country of Zutphen, but who was still remaining there inglorious and inactive, until he could be furnished with the requisite advance-money to his troops. Don John was determined if possible, to defeat the states army, before Duke Casimir, with his twelve thousand Germans, should effect his juncture with Bossu. The Governor therefore crossed the Demer, near Aerschot, towards the end of July, and offered battle, day after day, to the enemy. A series of indecisive skirmishes was the result, in the last of which, near Rijnemants, on the first day of August, the royalists were worsted and obliged to retire, after a desultory action of nearly eight hours, leaving a thousand dead upon the field. Their offer of "double or quits," the following morning was steadily refused by Bossu, who, secure within his intrenchments, was not to be induced at that moment to encounter the chances of a general engagement. For this he was severely blamed by the more violent of the national party.

His patriotism, which was of such recent origin, was vehemently suspected; and his death, which occurred not long afterwards, was supposed to have alone prevented his deserting the states to fight again under Spanish colours. These suspicions were probably unjust. Bossu's truth of character had been as universally recognized as was his signal bravery. If he refused upon this occasion a general battle, those who reflected upon the usual results to the patriot banner of such engagements, might confess, perhaps, that one disaster the more had been avoided. Don John, finding it impossible to accomplish his purpose, and to achieve another Gemblours victory, fell back again to the neighbourhood of Namur.

The states' forces remained waiting for the long-promised succor of John Casimir. It was the 26th of August, however, before the Duke led his twelve thousand men to the neighbourhood of Mechlin, where Bossu was encamped. This young prince possessed neither the ability nor the generosity which were requisite for the heroic part which he was ambitious to perform in the Netherland drama. He was inspired by a vague idea of personal aggrandizement, although he professed at the same time the utmost deference to William of Orange. He expressed the hope that he and the Prince "should be but two heads under

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one hat;" but he would have done well to ask himself whether his own contribution to this partnership of brains would very much enrich the silent statesman. Orange himself regarded him with respectful contempt, and considered his interference with Netherland matters but as an additional element of mischief. The Duke's right hand man, however, Peter Peutterich, the "equestrian doctor"—as Sir Philip Sydney called him—equally skilful with the sword as with the pen, had succeeded, while on a mission to England, in acquiring the Queen's favor for his master. To Casimir, therefore, had been entrusted the command of the levies, and the principal expenditure of the subsidies which she had placed at the disposition of the states. Upon Casimir she relied, as a counterweight to the Duke of Alencon, who, as she knew, had already entered the provinces at the secret solicitation of a large faction among the nobles. She had as much confidence as ever in Orange, but she imagined herself to be strengthening his cause by providing him with such a lieutenant. Casimir's immediate friends had but little respect for his abilities. His father-in-law, Augustus of Saxony, did not approve his expedition. The Landgrave William, to whom he wrote for counsel, answered, in his quaint manner, that it was always difficult for one friend to advise another in three matters—to wit, in taking a wife, going to sea, and going to war; but that, nevertheless, despite the ancient proverb, he would assume the responsibility of warning Casimir not to plunge into what he was pleased to call the "confusum chaos" of Netherland politics." The Duke felt no inclination, however, to take the advice which he had solicited. He had been stung by the sarcasm which Alva had once uttered, that the German potentates carried plenty of lions, dragons, eagles, and griffins on their shields; but that these ferocious animals were not given to biting or scratching. He was therefore disposed, once for all, to show that the teeth and claws of German princes could still be dangerous. Unfortunately, he was destined to add a fresh element of confusion to the chaos, and to furnish rather a proof than a refutation of the correctness of Alva's gibe.

This was the hero who was now thrust, head and shoulders as it were, into the entangled affairs of the Netherlanders, and it was Elizabeth of England, more than ever alarmed at the schemes of Alencon, who had pushed forward this Protestant champion, notwithstanding the disinclination of Orange.

The Queen was right in her uneasiness respecting the French prince. The Catholic nobles, relying upon the strong feeling still rife throughout the Walloon country against the Reformed religion, and inflamed more than ever by their repugnance to Orange, whose genius threw them so completely into the shade, had already drawn closer to the Duke. The same influences were at work to introduce Alencon, which had formerly been employed to bring Matthias from

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Vienna. Now that the Archduke, who was to have been the rival, had become the dependent of William, they turned their attention to the son of Catherine de Medici, Orange himself having always kept the Duke in reserve, as an instrument to overcome the political coquetry of Elizabeth. That great Princess never manifested less greatness than in her earlier and most tormenting connexion with the Netherlands. Having allured them for years with bright but changeful face, she still looked coldly down upon the desolate sea where they were drifting. She had promised much; her performance had been nothing. Her jealousy of French influence had at length been turned to account; a subsidy and a levy extorted from her fears. Her ministers and prominent advisers were one and all in favor of an open and generous support to the provinces. Walsingham, Burleigh, Knollys, Davidson, Sidney, Leicester, Fleetwood, Wilson, all desired that she should frankly espouse their cause. A bold policy they believed to be the only prudent one in this case; yet the Queen considered it sagacious to despatch envoys both to Philip and to Don John, as if after what they knew of her secret practices, such missions could effect any useful purpose. Better, therefore, in the opinion of the honest and intrepid statesmen of England, to throw down the gauntlet at once in the cause of the oppressed than to shuffle and palter until the dreaded rival should cross the frontier. A French Netherlands they considered even more dangerous than a Spanish, and Elizabeth partook of their sentiments, although incapable of their promptness. With the perverseness which was the chief blot upon her character, she was pleased that the Duke should be still a dangler for her hand, even while she was intriguing against his political hopes. She listened with undisguised rapture to his proposal of love, while she was secretly thwarting the plans of his ambition.

Meanwhile, Alencon had arrived at Mons, and we have seen already the feminine adroitness with which his sister of Navarre had prepared his entrance. Not in vain had she cajoled the commandant of Cambray citadel; not idly had she led captive the hearts of Lalain and his Countess, thus securing the important province of Hainault for the Duke. Don John might, indeed, gnash his teeth with rage, as he marked the result of all the feasting and flattery, the piping and dancing at Namur.

Francis Duke of Alencon, and since the accession of his brother Henry to the French throne—Duke of Anjou was, upon the whole, the most despicable personage who had ever entered the Netherlands. His previous career at home had, been so flagrantly false that he had forfeited the esteem of every honest man in Europe, Catholic or Lutheran, Huguenot or Malcontent. The world has long known his character. History will always retain him as an example, to show mankind the amount of mischief which may be perpetrated by a prince, ferocious without courage, ambitious without

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talent, and bigoted without opinions. Incapable of religious convictions himself, he had alternately aspired to be a commander of Catholic and of Huguenot zealots, and he had acquired nothing by his vacillating course, save the entire contempt of all parties and of both religions. Scared from the aide of Navarre and Conde by the menacing attitude of the "league," fearing to forfeit the succession to the throne, unless he made his peace with the court, he had recently resumed his place among the Catholic commanders. Nothing was easier for him than to return shamelessly to a party which he had shamelessly deserted, save perhaps to betray it again, should his interest prompt him to do so, on the morrow. Since the peace of 1576, it had been evident that the Protestants could not count upon his friendship, and he had soon afterwards been placed at the head of the army which was besieging the Huguenots of Issoire. He sought to atone for having commanded the troops of the new religion by the barbarity with which he now persecuted its votaries. When Issoire fell into his hands, the luckless city was spared none of the misery which can be inflicted by a brutal and frenzied soldiery. Its men were butchered, its females outraged; its property plundered with a thoroughness which rivalled the Netherland practice of Alva, or Frederic Toledo, or Julian Romero. The town was sacked and burned to ashes by furious Catholics, under the command of Francis Alencon,—almost at the very moment when his fair sister, Margaret, was preparing the way in the Netherlands for the fresh treason—which he already meditated to the Catholic cause. The treaty of Bergerac, signed in the autumn of 1577, again restored a semblance of repose to France, and again afforded an opportunity for Alencon to change his politics, and what he called his religion. Reeking with the blood of the Protestants of Issoire, he was now at leisure to renew his dalliance with the Queen of Protestant England, and to resume his correspondence with the great-chieftain of the Reformation in the Netherlands.

It is perhaps an impeachment upon the perspicacity of Orange, that he could tolerate this mischievous and worthless "son of France," even for the grave reasons which influenced him. Nevertheless, it must be remembered that he only intended to keep him in reserve, for the purpose of irritating the jealousy and quickening the friendship of the English Queen. Those who see anything tortuous in such politics must beware of judging the intriguing age of Philip and Catherine de' Medici by the higher standard of later, and possibly more candid times. It would have been puerile for a man of William the Silent's resources, to allow himself to be outwitted by the intrigues of all the courts and cabinets in Europe. Moreover, it must be remembered that, if he alone could guide himself and his country through the perplexing labyrinth in which they were involved; it was because he held in his hand the clue of an honest purpose. His position in regard to the Duke of Alencon, had now become sufficiently complicated, for the tiger that he had led in a chain had been secretly unloosed by those who meant mischief. In the autumn of the previous year, the aristocratic and Catholic party in the states-general had opened their communications with a prince, by whom they hoped to be indemnified for their previous defeat.

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The ill effects of Elizabeth's coquetry too plainly manifested themselves at last, and Alencon had now a foothold in the Netherlands. Precipitated by the intrigues of the party which had always been either openly or secretly hostile to Orange, his advent could no longer be delayed. It only remained for the Prince to make himself his master, as he had already subdued each previous rival. This he accomplished with his customary adroitness. It was soon obvious, even to so dull and so base a nature as that of the Duke, that it was his best policy to continue to cultivate so powerful a friendship. It cost him little to crouch, but events were fatally, to prove at a later day, that there are natures too malignant to be trusted or to be tamed. For the present, however, Alencon professed the most friendly sentiments towards the Prince. Solicited by so ardent and considerable a faction, the Duke was no longer to be withheld from trying the venture, and if, he could not effect his entrance by fair means, was determined to do so by force.—He would obtrude his assistance, if it were declined. He would do his best to dismember the provinces, if only a portion of them would accept his proffered friendship. Under these circumstances, as the Prince could no longer exclude him from the country, it became necessary to accept his friendship, and to hold him in control. The Duke had formally offered his assistance to the states-general, directly after the defeat of Gemblours, and early in July had made his appearance in *Mons*. Hence he despatched his envoys, Des Pruneaux and Rochefort, to deal with the States-general and with Orange, while he treated Matthias with contempt, and declared that he had no intention to negotiate with him. The Archduke burst into tears when informed of this slight; and feebly expressed a wish that succor might be found in Germany which would render this French alliance unnecessary. It was not the first nor the last mortification which the future Emperor was to undergo. The Prince was addressed with distinguished consideration; Des Pruneaux protesting that he desired but three things—the glory of his master, the glory of God, and the glory of William of Orange.

The French King was naturally supposed to be privy to his brother's schemes, for it was thought ridiculous to suggest that Henry's own troops could be led by his own brother, on this foreign expedition, without his connivance. At the same time, private letters, written by him at this epoch, expressed disapprobation of the schemes of Alencon, and jealousy of his aggrandizement. It was, perhaps, difficult to decide as to the precise views of a monarch who was too weak to form opinions for himself, and too false to maintain those with which he had been furnished by others. With the Medicean mother it was different, and it was she who was believed to be at the bottom of the intrigue. There was even a vague idea that the Spanish Sovereign

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himself might be privy to the plot, and that a possible marriage between Alencon and the Infanta might be on the cards. In truth, however, Philip felt himself outraged by the whole proceedings. He resolutely refused to accept the excuses proffered by the French court, or to doubt the complicity of the Queen Dowager, who, it was well known, governed all her sons. She had, to be sure, thought proper to read the envoys of the states-general a lecture upon the impropriety of subjects opposing the commands of their lawful Prince, but such artifices were thought too transparent to deceive. Granvelle scouted the idea of her being ignorant of Anjou's scheme, or opposed to its success. As for William of Hesse, while he bewailed more than ever the luckless plunge into "confusum chaos" which Casimir had taken, he unhesitatingly expressed his conviction that the invasion of Alencon was a master-piece of Catherine. The whole responsibility of the transaction he divided, in truth, between the Dowager and the comet, which just then hung over the world, filling the soul of the excellent Landgrave with dismal apprehension.

The Queen of England was highly incensed by the actual occurrence of the invasion which she had so long dreaded. She was loud in her denunciations of the danger and dishonor which would be the result to the provinces of this French alliance. She threatened not only to withdraw herself from their cause, but even to take arms against a commonwealth which had dared to accept Alencon for its master. She had originally agreed to furnish one hundred thousand pounds by way of loan. This assistance had been afterwards commuted into a levy of three thousand foot and two thousand horse, to be added to the forces of John Casimir, and to be placed under his command. It had been stipulated; also, that the Palatine should have the rank and pay of an English general-in-chief, and be considered as the Queen's lieutenant. The money had been furnished and the troops enrolled. So much had been already bestowed, and could not be recalled, but it was not probable that, in her present humor, the Queen would be induced to add to her favors.

The Prince, obliged by the necessity of the case, had prescribed the terms and the title under which Alencon should be accepted. Upon the 13th of August the Duke's envoy concluded a convention in twenty-three articles; which were afterwards subscribed by the Duke himself, at Mons, upon the twentieth of the same month. The substance of this arrangement was that Alencon should lend his assistance to the provinces against the intolerable tyranny of the Spaniards and the unjustifiable military invasion of Don John. He was, moreover, to bring into the field ten thousand foot and two thousand horse for three months. After the expiration of this term, his forces might be reduced to three thousand foot and five hundred horse. The states were to confer upon him the title of "Defender of the Liberty of the Netherlands"

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against the Tyranny of the Spaniards and their adherents.” He was to undertake no hostilities against Queen Elizabeth. The states were to aid him, whenever it should become necessary, with the same amount of force with which he now assisted them. He was to submit himself contentedly to the civil government of the country, in everything regarding its internal polity. He was to make no special contracts or treaties with any cities or provinces of the Netherlands. Should the states-general accept another prince as sovereign, the Duke was to be preferred to all others, upon conditions afterwards to be arranged. All cities which might be conquered within the territory of the united provinces were to belong to the states. Such places not in that territory, as should voluntarily surrender, were to be apportioned, by equal division, between the Duke and the states. The Duke was to bring no foreign troops but French into the provinces. The month of August was reserved, during which the states were, if possible, to make a composition with Don John.

These articles were certainly drawn up with skill. A high-sounding but barren title, which gratified the Duke’s vanity and signified nothing, had been conferred upon him, while at the same time he was forbidden to make conquests or contracts, and was obliged to submit himself to the civil government of the country: in short, he was to obey the Prince of Orange in all things—and so here was another plot of the Prince’s enemies neutralized. Thus, for the present at least, had the position of Anjou been defined.

As the month of August, during which it was agreed that negotiations with the Governor-General should remain open, had already half expired, certain articles, drawn up by the states-general, were at once laid before Don John. Lord Cobham and Sir Francis Walsingham were then in the Netherlands, having been sent by Elizabeth for the purpose of effecting a pacification of the estates with the Governor, if possible. They had also explained—so far as an explanation was possible—the assistance which the English government had rendered to the rebels, upon the ground that the French invasion could be prevented in no other way. This somewhat lame apology had been passed over in silence rather than accepted by Don John. In the same interview the envoys made an equally unsuccessful effort to induce the acceptance by the Governor of the terms offered by the states. A further proposition, on their part, for an “Interim,” upon the plan attempted by Charles the Fifth in Germany, previously to the Peace of Passau, met with no more favor than it merited, for certainly that name—which became so odious in Germany that cats and dogs were called “Interim” by the common people, in derision—was hardly a potent word to conjure with, at that moment, in the Netherlands. They then expressed their intention of retiring to England, much grieved at the result of their mission.

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The Governor replied that they might do as they liked, but that he, at least, had done all in his power to bring about a peace, and that the King had been equally pacific in his intentions. He then asked the envoys what they themselves thought of the terms proposed. "Indeed, they are too hard, your Highness," answered Walsingham, "but 'tis only by pure menace that we have extorted them from the states, unfavorable though they, seem."

"Then you may tell them," replied the Governor, "to keep their offers to themselves. Such terms will go but little way in any negotiation with me."

The envoys shrugged their shoulders.

"What is your own opinion on the whole affair?" resumed Don John. "Perhaps your advice may yet help me to a better conclusion."

The envoys continued silent and pensive.

"We can only answer," said Walsingham, at length, "by imitating the physician, who would prescribe no medicine until he was quite sure that the patient was ready to swallow it. 'Tis no use wasting counsel or drugs."

The reply was not satisfactory, but the envoys had convinced themselves that the sword was the only surgical instrument likely to find favor at that juncture. Don John referred, in vague terms, to his peaceable inclinations, but protested that there was no treating with so unbridled a people as the Netherlanders. The ambassadors soon afterwards took their leave. After this conference, which was on the 24th of August, 1578, Walsingham and Cobham addressed a letter to the states-general, deploring the disingenuous and procrastinating conduct of the Governor, and begging that the failure to effect a pacification might not be imputed to them. They then returned to England.

The Imperial envoy, Count Schwartzburg, at whose urgent solicitation this renewed attempt at a composition had been made, was most desirous that the Governor should accept the articles. They formed, indeed, the basis of a liberal, constitutional, representative government, in which the Spanish monarch was to retain only a strictly limited sovereignty. The proposed convention required Don John, with all his troops and adherents, forthwith to leave the land after giving up all strongholds and cities in his possession. It provided that the Archduke Matthias should remain as Governor general, under the conditions according to which he had been originally accepted. It left the question of religious worship to the decision of the states-general. It provided for the release of all prisoners, the return of all exiles, the restoration of all confiscated property. It stipulated that upon the death or departure of Matthias, his Majesty was not to appoint a governor-general without the consent of the states-general.

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When Count Schwartzburg waited upon the Governor with these astonishing propositions—which Walsingham might well call somewhat hard—he found him less disposed to explode with wrath than he had been in previous conferences. Already the spirit of the impetuous young soldier was broken, both by the ill health which was rapidly undermining his constitution and by the helpless condition in which he had been left while contending with the great rebellion. He had soldiers, but no money to pay them withal; he had no means of upholding that supremacy of crown and church which he was so vigorously instructed to maintain; and he was heartily wearied of fulminating edicts which he had no power to enforce. He had repeatedly solicited his recal, and was growing daily more impatient that his dismissal did not arrive. Moreover, the horrible news of Escovedo's assassination had sickened him to the soul. The deed had flashed a sudden light into the abyss of dark duplicity in which his own fate was suspended. His most intimate and confidential friend had been murdered by royal command, while he was himself abandoned by Philip, exposed to insult, left destitute of defence. No money was forthcoming, in spite of constant importunities and perpetual promises. Plenty of words were sent him; he complained, as if he possessed the art of extracting gold from them, or as if war could be carried on with words alone.

Being in so desponding a mood, he declined entering into any controversy with regard to the new propositions, which, however, he characterized as most iniquitous. He stated merely that his Majesty had determined to refer the Netherland matters to the arbitration of the Emperor; that the Duke de Terra Nova would soon be empowered to treat upon the subject at the imperial court; and that, in the meantime, he was himself most anxiously awaiting his recal.

A synod of the Reformed churches had been held, during the month of June, at Dort. There they had laid down a platform of their principles of church government in one hundred and one articles. In the same month, the leading members of the Reformed Church had drawn up an ably reasoned address to Matthias and the Council of State on the subject of a general peace of religion for the provinces.

William of Orange did his utmost to improve the opportunity. He sketched a system of provisional toleration, which he caused to be signed by the Archduke Matthias, and which, at least for a season, was to establish religious freedom. The brave; tranquil, solitary man still held his track across the raging waves, shedding as much light as one clear human soul could dispense; yet the dim lantern, so far in advance, was swallowed in the mist, ere those who sailed in his wake could shape their course by his example. No man understood him. Not even his nearest friends comprehended his views, nor saw that he strove to establish not freedom for Calvinism, but freedom for conscience.

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Saint Aldegonde complained that the Prince would not persecute the Anabaptists, Peter Dathenus denounced him as an atheist, while even Count John; the only one left of his valiant and generous brothers, opposed the religious peace—except where the advantage was on the side of the new religion. Where the Catholics had been effectually put down, as in Holland and Zeeland, honest John saw so reason for allowing them to lift themselves up again. In the Popish provinces, on the other hand, he was for a religious peace. In this bigoted spirit he was followed by too many of the Reforming mass, while, on their part, the Walloons were already banding themselves together in the more southern provinces, under the name of Malcontents. Stigmatized by the Calvinists as “Paternoster Jacks,” they were daily drawing closer their alliance with Alencon; and weakening the bands which united them with their Protestant brethren. Count John had at length become a permanent functionary in the Netherlands. Urgently solicited by the leaders and the great multitude of the Reformers, he had long been unwilling to abandon his home, and to neglect the private affairs which his devotion to the Netherland cause had thrown into great confusion. The Landgrave, too, whose advice he had asked, had strongly urged him not to “dip his fingers into the olla podrida.” The future of the provinces was, in his opinion, so big with disaster, that the past, with all its horrors; under Alva and Requesens, had only furnished the “preludia” of that which was to ensue. For these desperate views his main reason, as usual, was the comet; that mischievous luminary still continuing to cast a lurid glare across the Landgrave’s path. Notwithstanding these direful warnings from a prince of the Reformation, notwithstanding the “olla podrida” and the “comet,” Count John had nevertheless accepted the office of Governor of Gelderland, to which he had been elected by the estates of that province on the 11th of March. That important bulwark of Holland, Zeeland, and Utrecht on the one side, and of Groningen and Friesland on the other—the main buttress, in short, of the nascent republic, was now in hands which would defend it to the last.

As soon as the discussion came up in the states-general on the subject of the Dort petitions, Orange requested that every member who had formed his opinions should express them fully and frankly. All wished, however, to be guided and governed by the sentiments of the Prince. Not a man spoke, save to demand their leader’s views, and to express adhesion in advance to the course which his wisdom might suggest. The result was a projected convention, a draft for a religious peace, which, if definitely established, would have healed many wounds and averted much calamity. It was not, however, destined to be accepted at that time by the states of the different provinces where it was brought up for discussion; and several changes were made, both of form and substance, before the system

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was adopted at all. Meantime, for the important city of Antwerp, where religious broils were again on the point of breaking out, the Prince preferred a provisional arrangement, which he forthwith carried into execution. A proclamation, in the name of the Archduke Matthias and of the State Council, assigned five special places in the city where the members of the “pretended Reformed religion” should have liberty to exercise their religious worship, with preaching, singing, and the sacraments. The churchyards of the parochial churches were to be opened for the burial of their dead, but the funerals were to be unaccompanied with exhortation, or any public demonstration which might excite disturbance. The adherents of one religion were forbidden to disturb, to insult, or in any way to interfere with the solemnities of the other. All were to abstain from mutual jeerings—by pictures, ballads, books, or otherwise—and from all injuries to ecclesiastical property. Every man, of whatever religion, was to be permitted entrance to the churches of either religion, and when there, all were to conform to the regulations of the church with modesty and respect. Those of the new religion were to take oaths of obedience to the authorities, and to abstain from meddling with the secular administration of affairs. Preachers of both religions were forbidden to preach out of doors, or to make use of language tending to sedition. All were to bind themselves to assist the magistrates in quelling riots, and in sustaining the civil government.

This example of religious peace, together with the active correspondence thus occasioned with the different state assemblies, excited the jealousy of the Catholic leaders and of the Walloon population. Champagny, who despite his admirable qualities and brilliant services, was still unable to place himself on the same platform of toleration with Orange, now undertook a decided movement against the policy of the Prince. Catholic to the core, he drew up a petition, remonstrating most vigorously against the draft for a religious peace, then in circulation through the provinces. To this petition he procured many signatures among the more ardent Catholic nobles. De Heze, De Glimes, and others of the same stamp, were willing enough to follow the lead of so distinguished a chieftain. The remonstrance was addressed to the Archduke, the Prince of Orange, the State Council, and the States-general, and called upon them all to abide by their solemn promises to permit no schism in the ancient Church. Should the exercise of the new religion be allowed, the petitioners insisted that the godless licentiousness of the Netherlands would excite the contempt of all peoples and potentates. They suggested, in conclusion, that all the principal cities of France—and in particular the city of Paris—had kept themselves clear of the exercise of the new religion, and that repose and prosperity had been the result.

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This petition was carried with considerable solemnity by Champagny, attended by many of his confederates, to the Hotel-de Ville, and presented to the magistracy of Brussels. These functionaries were requested to deliver it forthwith to the Archduke and Council. The magistrates demurred. A discussion ensued, which grew warmer and warmer as it proceeded. The younger nobles permitted themselves abusive language, which the civic dignitaries would not brook. The session was dissolved, and the magistrates, still followed by the petitioners, came forth into the street. The confederates, more inflamed than ever, continued to vociferate and to threaten. A crowd soon collected in the square. The citizens were naturally curious to know why their senators were thus browbeaten and insulted by a party of insolent young Catholic nobles. The old politician at their head, who, in spite of many services, was not considered a friend to the nation, inspired them with distrust. Being informed of the presentation of the petition, the multitude loudly demanded that the document should be read. This was immediately done. The general drift of the remonstrance was anything but acceptable, but the allusion to Paris, at the close, excited a tempest of indignation. "Paris! Paris! Saint Bartholomew! Saint Bartholomew! Are we to have Paris weddings in Brussels also?" howled the mob, as is often the case, extracting but a single idea, and that a wrong one; from the public lecture which had just been made. "Are we to have a Paris massacre, a Paris blood-bath here in the Netherland capital? God forbid! God forbid! Away with the conspirators! Down with the Papists!"

It was easily represented to the inflamed imaginations of the populace that a Brussels Saint Bartholomew had been organized, and that Champagny, who stood there before them, was its originator and manager. The ungrateful Netherlanders forgot the heroism with which the old soldier had arranged the defence of Antwerp against the "Spanish Fury" but two years before. They heard only the instigations of his enemies; they remembered only that he was the hated Granvelle's brother; they believed only that there was a plot by which, in some utterly incomprehensible manner, they were all to be immediately engaged in cutting each others throats and throwing each other out of the windows, as had been done half a dozen years before in Paris. Such was the mischievous intention ascribed to a petition, which Champagny and his friends had as much right to offer—however narrow and mistaken their, opinions might now be considered—as had the, synod of Dort to present their remonstrances. Never was a more malignant or more stupid perversion of a simple and not very alarming phrase. No allusion had been made to Saint Bartholomew, but all its horrors were supposed to be concealed in the sentence which referred to Paris. The nobles were arrested on the spot and hurried to prison, with the exception

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of Champagne, who made his escape at first, and lay concealed for several days. He was, however, finally ferreted out of his hiding-place and carried off to Ghent. There he was thrown into strict confinement, being treated in all respects as the accomplice of Aerschot and the other nobles who had been arrested in the time of Ryhove's revolution. Certainly, this conduct towards a brave and generous gentleman was ill calculated to increase general sympathy for the cause, or to merit the approbation of Orange. There was, however, a strong prejudice against Champagne. His brother Granvelle had never been forgotten by the Netherlanders, and, was still regarded as their most untiring foe, while Champagne was supposed to be in close league with the Cardinal. In these views the people were entirely wrong.

While these events were taking place in Brussels and Antwerp, the two armies of the states and of Don John were indolently watching each other. The sinews of war had been cut upon both sides. Both parties were cramped by the most abject poverty. The troops under Bossu and Casimir, in the camp near Mechlin, were already discontented, for want of pay. The one hundred thousand pounds of Elizabeth had already been spent, and it was not probable that the offended Queen would soon furnish another subsidy. The states could with difficulty extort anything like the assessed quotas from the different provinces. The Duke of Alencon was still at Mons, from which place he had issued a violent proclamation of war against Don John—a manifesto which had, however, not been followed up by very vigorous demonstrations. Don John himself was in his fortified camp at Bouge, within a league of Namur, but there he was consuming with mental and with bodily fever. He was, as it were, besieged. He was left entirely without funds, while his royal brother obstinately refused compliance with his earnest demands to be recalled, and coldly neglected his importunities for pecuniary assistance.

Compelled to carry on a war against an armed rebellion with such gold only as could be extracted from loyal swords; stung to the heart by the suspicion of which he felt himself the object at home, and by the hatred with which he was regarded in the provinces; outraged in his inmost feelings by the murder of Escovedo; foiled, outwitted, reduced to a political nullity by the masterly tactics of the “odious heretic of heretics” to whom he had originally offered his patronage and the royal forgiveness, the high-spirited soldier was an object to excite the tenderness even of religious and political opponents. Wearied with the turmoil of camps without battle and of cabinets without counsel, he sighed for repose, even if it could be found only in a cloister or the grave. “I rejoice to see by your letter,” he wrote, pathetically, to John Andrew Doria, at Genoa, “that your life is flowing on with such calmness, while the world around me is so tumultuously agitated.

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I consider you most fortunate that you are passing the remainder of your days for God and yourself; that you are not forced to put yourself perpetually in the scales of the world's events, nor to venture yourself daily on its hazardous games." He proceeded to inform his friend of his own painful situation, surrounded by innumerable enemies, without means of holding out more than three months, and cut off from all assistance by a government which could not see that if the present chance were lost all was lost. He declared it impossible for him to fight in the position to which he was reduced, pressed as he was within half a mile of the point which he had always considered as his last refuge. He stated also that the French were strengthening themselves in Hainault, under Alencon, and that the King of France was in readiness to break in through Burgundy, should his brother obtain a firm foothold in the provinces. "I have besought his Majesty over and over again," he continued, "to send to me his orders; if they come they shall be executed, unless they arrive too late. They have cut of our hands and we have now nothing for it but to stretch forth our heads also to the axe. I grieve to trouble you with my sorrows, but I trust to your sympathy as a man and a friend. I hope that you will remember me in your prayers, for you can put your trust where, in former days, I never could place my own."

The dying crusader wrote another letter, in the same mournful strain, to another intimate friend, Don Pedro Mendoza, Spanish envoy in Genoa. It was dated upon the same day from his camp near Namur, and repeated the statement that the King of France was ready to invade the Netherlands, so soon as Alencon should prepare an opening. "His Majesty," continued Don John, "is resolved upon nothing; at least, I am kept in ignorance of his intentions. Our life is doled out to us here by moments. I cry aloud, but it profits me little. Matters will soon be disposed, through our negligence, exactly as the Devil would best wish them. It is plain that we are left here to pine away till our last breath. God direct us all as He may see fit; in His hands are all things."

Four days later he wrote to the King, stating that he was confined to his chamber with a fever, by which he was already as much reduced as if he had been ill for a month. "I assure your Majesty," said he "that the work here is enough to destroy any constitution and any life." He reminded Philip how often he had been warned by him as to the insidious practices of the French. Those prophecies had now become facts. The French had entered the country, while some of the inhabitants were frightened, others disaffected. Don John declared himself in a dilemma. With his small force, hardly enough to make head against the enemy immediately in front, and to protect the places which required guarding, 'twas impossible for him to leave his position to attack the enemy in Burgundy. If he remained

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stationary, the communications were cut off through which his money and supplies reached him. "Thus I remain," said he, "perplexed and confused, desiring, more than life, some decision on your Majesty's part, for which I have implored so many times." He urged the King most vehemently to send him instructions as to the course to be pursued, adding that it wounded him to the soul to find them so long delayed. He begged to be informed whether he was to attack the enemy in Burgundy, whether he should await where he then was the succor of his Majesty, or whether he was to fight, and if so with which of his enemies: in fine, what he was to do; because, losing or winning, he meant to conform to his Majesty's will. He felt deeply pained, he said, at being disgraced and abandoned by the King, having served him, both as a brother, and a man, with love and faith and heartiness. "Our lives," said he, "are at stake upon this game, and all we wish is to lose them honorably." He begged the King to send a special envoy to France, with remonstrances on the subject of Alencon, and another to the Pope to ask for the Duke's excommunication. He protested that he would give his blood rather than occasion so much annoyance to the King, but that he felt it his duty to tell the naked truth. The pest was ravaging his little army. Twelve hundred were now in hospital, besides those nursed in private houses, and he had no means or money to remedy the evil. Moreover, the enemy, seeing that they were not opposed in the open field, had cut off the passage into Liege by the Meuse, and had advanced to Nivelles and Chimay for the sake of communications with France, by the same river.

Ten days after these pathetic passages had been written, the writer was dead. Since the assassination of Escovedo, a consuming melancholy had settled upon his spirits, and a burning fever came, in the month of September, to destroy his physical strength. The house where he lay was a hovel, the only chamber of which had been long used as a pigeon-house. This wretched garret was cleansed, as well as it could be of its filth, and hung with tapestry emblazoned with armorial bearings. In that dovecot the hero of Lepanto was destined to expire. During the last few, days of his illness, he was delirious. Tossing upon his uneasy couch, he again arranged in imagination, the combinations of great battles, again shouted his orders to rushing squadrons, and listened with brightening eye to the trumpet of victory. Reason returned, however, before the hour of death, and permitted him, the opportunity to make the dispositions rendered necessary by his condition. He appointed his nephew, Alexander of Parma, who had been watching assiduously over his deathbed, to succeed him, provisionally, in the command of the army and in his other dignities, received the last sacraments with composure, and tranquilly breathed his last upon the first day of October, the month which, since the battle of Lepanto, he had always considered a festive and a fortunate one.

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It was inevitable that suspicion of poison should be at once excited by his decease. Those suspicions have been never set at rest, and never proved. Two Englishmen, Ratcliff and Gray by name, had been arrested and executed on a charge of having been employed by Secretary Walsingham to assassinate the Governor. The charge was doubtless an infamous falsehood; but had Philip, who was suspected of being the real criminal, really compassed the death of his brother, it was none the less probable that an innocent victim or two would be executed, to save appearances. Now that time has unveiled to us many mysteries, now that we have learned from Philip's own lips and those of his accomplices the exact manner in which Montigny and Escovedo were put to death, the world will hardly be very charitable with regard to other imputations. It was vehemently suspected that Don John had been murdered by the command of Philip; but no such fact was ever proved.

The body, when opened that it might be embalmed, was supposed to offer evidence of poison. The heart was dry, the other internal organs were likewise so desiccated as to crumble when touched, and the general color of the interior was of a blackish brown, as if it had been singed. Various persona were mentioned as the probable criminals; various motives assigned for the commission of the deed. Nevertheless, it must be admitted that there were causes, which were undisputed, for his death, sufficient to render a search for the more mysterious ones comparatively superfluous. A disorder called the pest was raging in his camp, and had carried off a thousand of his soldiers within a few days, while his mental sufferings had been acute enough to turn his heart to ashes. Disappointed, tormented by friend and foe, suspected, insulted, broken spirited, it was not strange that he should prove an easy victim to a pestilent disorder before which many stronger men were daily falling.

On the third day after his decease, the funeral rites were celebrated. A dispute between the Spaniards, Germans, and Netherlanders in the army arose, each claiming precedence in the ceremony, on account of superior national propinquity to the illustrious deceased. All were, in truth, equally near to him, for different reasons, and it was arranged that all should share equally in the obsequies. The corpse disembowelled and embalmed, was laid upon a couch of state. The hero was clad in complete armor; his sword, helmet, and steel gauntlets lying at his feet, a coronet, blazing with precious stones, upon his head, the jewelled chain and insignia of the Golden Fleece about his neck, and perfumed gloves upon his hands. Thus royally and martially arrayed, he was placed upon his bier and borne forth from the house where he had died, by the gentlemen of his bedchamber. From them he was received by the colonels of the regiments stationed next his own quarters. These chiefs, followed by their troops with inverted arms and mined

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drums, escorted the body to the next station, where it was received by the commanding officers of other national regiments, to be again transmitted to those of the third. Thus by soldiers of the three nations, it was successively conducted to the gates of Namur, where it was received by the civic authorities. The pall-bearers, old Peter Ernest Mansfeld, Ottavio Gonzaga, the Marquis de Villa Franca, and the Count de Reux, then bore it to the church, where it was deposited until the royal orders should be received from Spain. The heart of the hero was permanently buried beneath the pavement of the little church, and a monumental inscription, prepared by Alexander Farnese, still indicates the spot where that lion heart returned to dust.

It had been Don John's dying request to Philip that his remains might be buried in the Escorial by the side of his imperial father, and the prayer being granted, the royal order in due time arrived for the transportation of the corpse to Spain. Permission had been asked and given for the passage of a small number of Spanish troops through France. The thrifty king had, however, made no allusion to the fact that those soldiers were to bear with them the mortal remains of Lepanto's hero, for he was disposed to save the expense which a public transportation of the body and the exchange of pompous courtesies with the authorities of every town upon the long journey would occasion. The corpse was accordingly divided into three parts, and packed in three separate bags; and thus the different portions, to save weight, being suspended at the saddle-bows of different troopers, the body of the conqueror was conveyed to its distant resting-place.

"Expende Hannibalem: quot libras in duce summo Invenies?"

Thus irreverently, almost blasphemously, the disjointed relics of the great warrior were hurried through France; France, which the romantic Saracen slave had traversed but two short years before, filled with high hopes, and pursuing extravagant visions. It has been recorded by classic historians, that the different fragments, after their arrival in Spain, were re-united, and fastened together with wire; that the body was then stuffed, attired in magnificent habiliments, placed upon its feet, and supported by a martial staff, and that thus prepared for a royal interview, the mortal remains of Don John were presented to his Most Catholic Majesty. Philip is said to have manifested emotion at sight of the hideous spectre—for hideous and spectral, despite of jewels, balsams, and brocades, must have been that unburied corpse, aping life in attitude and vestment, but standing there only to assert its privilege of descending into the tomb. The claim was granted, and Don John of Austria at last found repose by the side of his imperial father.

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A sufficient estimate of his character has been apparent in the course of the narrative. Dying before he had quite completed his thirty-third year, he excites pity and admiration almost as much as censure. His military career was a blaze of glory. Commanding in the Moorish wars at twenty-three, and in the Turkish campaigns at twenty-six, he had achieved a matchless renown before he had emerged from early youth; but his sun was destined to go down at noon. He found neither splendor nor power in the Netherlands, where he was deserted by his king and crushed by the superior genius of the Prince of Orange. Although he vindicated his martial skill at Gemblours, the victory was fruitless. It was but the solitary sprig of the tiger from his jungle, and after that striking conflict his life was ended in darkness and obscurity. Possessing military genius of a high order, with extraordinary personal bravery, he was the last of the paladins and the crusaders. His accomplishments were also considerable, and he spoke Italian, German, French, and Spanish with fluency. His beauty was remarkable; his personal fascinations acknowledged by either sex; but as a commander of men, excepting upon the battle-field, he possessed little genius. His ambition was the ambition of a knight-errant, an adventurer, a Norman pirate; it was a personal and tawdry ambition. Vague and contradictory dreams of crowns, of royal marriages, of extemporized dynasties, floated ever before him; but he was himself always the hero of his own romance. He sought a throne in Africa or in Britain; he dreamed of espousing Mary of Scotland at the expense of Elizabeth, and was even thought to aspire secretly to the hand of the great English Queen herself. Thus, crusader and bigot as he was, he was willing to be reconciled with heresy, if heresy could furnish him with a throne.

It is superfluous to state that he was no match, by mental endowments, for William of Orange; but even had he been so, the moral standard by which each measured himself placed the Conqueror far below the Father of a people. It must be admitted that Don John is entitled to but small credit for his political achievements in the Netherlands. He was incapable of perceiving that the great contest between the Reformation and the Inquisition could never be amicably arranged in those provinces, and that the character of William of Orange was neither to be softened by royal smiles, nor perverted by appeals to sordid interests. It would have been perhaps impossible for him, with his education and temperament, to have embraced what seems to us the right cause, but it ought, at least, to have been in his power to read the character of his antagonist, and to estimate his own position with something like accuracy. He may be forgiven that he did not succeed in reconciling hostile parties, when his only plan to accomplish such a purpose was the extermination of the most considerable faction; but although it was not to be expected that he would look on the provinces with the eyes of William the Silent, he might have comprehended that the Netherland chieftain was neither to be purchased nor cajoled. The only system by which the two religions could live together in peace had been discovered by the Prince; but toleration, in the eyes of Catholics, and of many Protestants, was still thought the deadliest heresy of all.

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ETEXT EDITOR'S BOOKMARKS:

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Toleration thought the deadliest heresy of all

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