

History of the United Netherlands, 1586c eBook

History of the United Netherlands, 1586c by John Lothrop Motley

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HISTORY OF THE UNITED NETHERLANDS From the Death of William the Silent to the Twelve Year's Truce—1609

By John Lothrop Motley

MOTLEY'S HISTORY OF THE NETHERLANDS, Project Gutenberg Edition, Vol. 48

History of the United Netherlands, 1586

CHAPTER IX.

Military Plans in the Netherlands—The Elector and Electorate of Cologne—Martin Schenk—His Career before serving the States— Franeker University founded—Parma attempts Grave—Battle on the Meuse—Success and Vainglory of Leicester—St. George's Day triumphantly kept at Utrecht—Parma not so much appalled as it was thought—He besieges and reduces Grave—And is Master of the Meuse— Leicester's Rage at the Surrender of Grave—His Revenge—Parma on the Rhine—He besieges aid assaults Neusz—Horrible Fate of the Garrison and City—Which Leicester was unable to relieve—Asel surprised by Maurice and Sidney—The Zeeland Regiment given to Sidney—Condition of the Irish and English Troops—Leicester takes the Field—He reduces Doesburg—He lays siege to Zutphen—Which Parma prepares to relieve—The



English intercept the Convoy—Battle of Warnsfeld—Sir Philip Sidney wounded—
Results of the Encounter— Death of Sidney at Arnheim—Gallantry of Edward Stanley.

Five great rivers hold the Netherland territory in their coils. Three are but slightly separated—the Yssel, Waal, and ancient Rhine, while the Scheldt and, Meuse are spread more widely asunder. Along each of these streams were various fortified cities, the possession of which, in those days, when modern fortification was in its infancy, implied the control of the surrounding country. The lower part of all the rivers, where they mingled with the sea and became wide estuaries, belonged to the Republic, for the coasts and the ocean were in the hands of the Hollanders and English. Above, the various strong places were alternately in the hands of the Spaniards and of the patriots. Thus Antwerp, with the other Scheldt cities, had fallen into Parma's power,

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but Flushing, which controlled them all, was held by Philip Sidney for the Queen and States. On the Meuse, Maastricht and Roermond were Spanish, but Yenloo, Grave, Meghem, and other towns, held for the commonwealth. On the Waal, the town of Nymegen had, through the dexterity of Martin Schenk, been recently transferred to the royalists, while the rest of that river's course was true to the republic. The Rhine, strictly so called, from its entrance into Netherland, belonged to the rebels. Upon its elder branch, the Yssel, Zutphen was in Parma's hands, while, a little below, Deventer had been recently and adroitly saved by Leicester and Count Meurs from falling into the same dangerous grasp.

Thus the triple Rhine, after it had crossed the German frontier, belonged mainly, although not exclusively, to the States. But on the edge of the Batavian territory, the ancient river, just before dividing itself into its three branches, flowed through a debatable country which was even more desolate and forlorn, if possible, than the land of the obedient Provinces.

This unfortunate district was the archi-episcopal electorate of Cologne. The city of Cologne itself, Neusz, and Rheinberg, on the river, Werll and other places in Westphalia and the whole country around, were endangered, invaded, ravaged, and the inhabitants plundered, murdered, and subjected to every imaginable outrage, by rival bands of highwaymen, enlisted in the support of the two rival bishops—beggars, outcasts, but high-born and learned churchmen both—who disputed the electorate.

At the commencement of the year a portion of the bishopric was still in the control of the deposed Protestant elector Gebhard Truchsess, assisted of course by the English and the States. The city of Cologne was held by the Catholic elector, Ernest of Bavaria, bishop of Liege; but Neusz and Rheinberg were in the hands of the Dutch republic.

The military operations of the year were, accordingly, along the Meuse, where the main object of Parma was to wrest Grave From the Netherlands; along the Waal, where, on the other hand, the patriots wished to recover Nymegen; on the Yssel, where they desired to obtain the possession of Zutphen; and in the Cologne electorate, where the Spaniards meant, if possible, to transfer Neusz and Rheinberg from Truchsess to Elector Ernest. To clear the course of these streams, and especially to set free that debatable portion of the river-territory which hemmed him in from neutral Germany, and cut off the supplies from his starving troops, was the immediate design of Alexander Farnese.

Nothing could be more desolate than the condition of the electorate. Ever since Gebhard Truchsess had renounced the communion of the Catholic Church for the love of Agnes Mansfeld, and so gained a wife and lost his principality, he had been a dependant upon the impoverished Nassaus, or a supplicant for alms to the thrifty



Elizabeth. The Queen was frequently implored by Leicester, without much effect, to send the ex-electoral a few hundred pounds to keep him from starving, as "he had not one groat to live upon," and, a little later, he was employed as a go-between, and almost a spy, by the Earl, in his quarrels with the patrician party rapidly forming against him in the States.



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At Godesberg—the romantic ruins of which stronghold the traveller still regards with interest, placed as it is in the midst of that enchanting region where Drachenfels looks down on the crumbling tower of Roland and the convent of Nonnenwerth—the unfortunate Gebhard had sustained a conclusive defeat. A small, melancholy man, accomplished, religious, learned, “very poor but very wise,” comely, but of mean stature, altogether an unlucky and forlorn individual, he was not, after all, in very much inferior plight to that in which his rival, the Bavarian bishop, had found himself. Prince Ernest, archbishop of Liege and Cologne, a hangeron of his brother, who sought to shake him off, and a stipendiary of Philip, who was a worse paymaster than Elizabeth, had a sorry life of it, notwithstanding his nominal possession of the see. He was forced to go, disguised and in secret, to the Prince of Parma at Brussels, to ask for assistance, and to mention, with lacrymose vehemence, that both his brother and himself had determined to renounce the episcopate, unless the forces of the Spanish King could be employed to recover the cities on the Rhine. If Neusz and Rheinberg were not wrested from the rebels; Cologne itself would soon be gone. Ernest represented most eloquently to Alexander, that if the protestant archbishop were reinstated in the ancient see, it would be a most perilous result for the ancient church throughout all northern Europe. Parma kept the wandering prelate for a few days in his palace in Brussels, and then dismissed him, disguised and on foot, in the dusk of the evening, through the park-gate. He encouraged him with hopes of assistance, he represented to his sovereign the importance of preserving the Rhenish territory to Bishop Ernest and to Catholicism, but hinted that the declared intention of the Bavarian to resign the dignity, was probably a trick, because the archi-episcopate was no such very bad thing after all.

The archi-episcopate might be no very bad thing, but it was a most uncomfortable place of residence, at the moment, for prince or peasant. Overrun by hordes of brigands, and crushed almost out of existence by that most deadly of all systems of taxations, the ‘brandschatzung,’ it was fast becoming a mere den of thieves. The ‘brandschatzung’ had no name in English, but it was the well-known impost, levied by roving commanders, and even by respectable generals of all nations. A hamlet, cluster of farm-houses, country district, or wealthy city, in order to escape being burned and ravaged, as the penalty of having fallen into a conqueror’s hands, paid a heavy sum of ready money on the nail at command of the conqueror. The free companions of the sixteenth century drove a lucrative business in this particular branch of industry; and when to this was added the more direct profits derived from actual plunder, sack, and ransoming, it was natural that a large fortune was often the result to the thrifty and persevering commander of free lances.



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Of all the professors of this comprehensive art, the terrible Martin Schenk was preeminent; and he was now ravaging the Cologne territory, having recently passed again to the service of the States. Immediately connected with the chief military events of the period which now occupies us, he was also the very archetype of the marauders whose existence was characteristic of the epoch. Born in 1549 of an ancient and noble family of Gelderland, Martin Schenk had inherited no property but a sword. Serving for a brief term as page to the Seigneur of Ysselstein, he joined, while yet a youth, the banner of William of Orange, at the head of two men-at-arms. The humble knight-errant, with his brace of squires, was received with courtesy by the Prince and the Estates, but he soon quarrelled with his patrons. There was a castle of Blyenbeek, belonging to his cousin, which he chose to consider his rightful property, because he was of the same race, and because it was a convenient and productive estate and residence. The courts had different views of public law, and supported the ousted cousin. Martin shut himself up in the castle, and having recently committed a rather discreditable homicide, which still further increased his unpopularity with the patriots, he made overtures to Parma. Alexander was glad to enlist so bold a soldier on his side, and assisted Schenk in his besieged stronghold. For years afterwards, his services under the King's banner were most brilliant, and he rose to the highest military command, while his coffers, meantime, were rapidly filling with the results of his robberies and 'brandschatzungs.' "'Tis a most courageous fellow," said Parma, "but rather a desperate highwayman than a valiant soldier." Martin's couple of lances had expanded into a corps of free companions, the most truculent, the most obedient, the most rapacious in Christendom. Never were freebooters more formidable to the world at large, or more docile to their chief, than were the followers of General Schenk. Never was a more finished captain of highwaymen. He was a man who was never sober, yet who never smiled. His habitual intoxication seemed only to increase both his audacity and his taciturnity, without disturbing his reason. He was incapable of fear, of fatigue, of remorse. He could remain for days and nights without dismounting-eating, drinking, and sleeping in the saddle; so that to this terrible centaur his horse seemed actually a part of himself. His soldiers followed him about like hounds, and were treated by him like hounds. He habitually scourged them, often took with his own hand the lives of such as displeased him, and had been known to cause individuals of them to jump from the top of church steeples at his command; yet the pack were ever stanch to his orders, for they knew that he always led them where the game was plenty. While serving under Parma he had twice most brilliantly defeated Hohenlo. At the battle of Hardenberg Heath he had completely

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outgeneralled that distinguished chieftain, slaying fifteen hundred of his soldiers at the expense of only fifty or sixty of his own. By this triumph he had preserved the important city of Groningen for Philip, during an additional quarter of a century, and had been received in that city with rapture. Several startling years of victory and rapine he had thus run through as a royalist partisan. He became the terror and the scourge of his native Gelderland, and he was covered with wounds received in the King's service. He had been twice captured and held for ransom. Twice he had effected his escape. He had recently gained the city of Nymegen. He was the most formidable, the most unscrupulous, the most audacious Netherlander that wore Philip's colours; but he had received small public reward for his services, and the wealth which he earned on the high-road did not suffice for his ambition. He had been deeply disgusted, when, at the death of Count Renneberg, Verdugo, a former stable-boy of Mansfeld, a Spaniard who had risen from the humblest rank to be a colonel and general, had been made governor of Friesland. He had smothered his resentment for a time however, but had sworn within himself to desert at the most favourable opportunity. At last, after he had brilliantly saved the city of Breda from falling into the hands of the patriots, he was more enraged than he had ever been before, when Haultepenne, of the house of Berlapmont, was made governor of that place in his stead.

On the 25th of May, 1585, at an hour after midnight, he had a secret interview with Count Meurs, stadholder for the States of Gelderland, and agreed to transfer his mercenary allegiance to the republic. He made good terms. He was to be lieutenant-governor of Gelderland, and he was to have rank as marshal of the camp in the States' army, with a salary of twelve hundred and fifty guilders a month. He agreed to resign his famous castle of Blyenbeek, but was to be reimbursed with estates in Holland and Zeeland, of the annual value of four thousand florins.

After this treaty, Martin and his free lances served the States faithfully, and became sworn foes to Parma and the King. He gave and took no quarter, and his men, if captured, "paid their ransom with their heads." He ceased to be the scourge of Gelderland, but he became the terror of the electorate. Early in 1586, accompanied by Herman Kloet, the young and daring Dutch commandant of Neusz, he had swept down into the Westphalian country, at the head of five hundred foot and five hundred horse. On the 18th of March he captured the city of Werll by a neat stratagem. The citizens, hemmed in on all sides by marauders, were in want of many necessaries of life, among other things, of salt. Martin had, from time to time, sent some of his soldiers into the place, disguised as boors from the neighbourhood, and carrying bags of that article. A pacific trading intercourse had thus been established between



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the burghers within and the banditti without the gates. Agreeable relations were formed within the walls, and a party of townsmen had agreed to cooperate with the followers of Schenk. One morning a train of waggons laden with soldiers neatly covered with salt, made their appearance at the gate. At the same time a fire broke out most opportunely within the town. The citizens busily employed themselves in extinguishing the flames. The salted soldiers, after passing through the gateway, sprang from the waggons, and mastered the watch. The town was carried at a blow. Some of the inhabitants were massacred as a warning to the rest; others were taken prisoners and held for ransom; a few, more fortunate, made their escape to the citadel. That fortress was stormed in vain, but the city was thoroughly sacked. Every house was rifled of its contents. Meantime Haultepenne collected a force of nearly four thousand men, boors, citizens, and soldiers, and came to besiege Schenk in the town, while, at the same time, attacks were made upon him from the castle. It was impossible for him to hold the city, but he had completely robbed it of every thing valuable. Accordingly he loaded a train of waggons with his booty, took with him thirty of the magistrates as hostages, with other wealthy citizens, and marching in good order against Haultepenne, completely routed him, killing a number variously estimated at from five hundred to two thousand, and effected his retreat, desperately wounded in the thigh, but triumphant, and laden with the spoils to Venlo on the Meuse, of which city he was governor.

“Surely this is a noble fellow, a worthy fellow,” exclaimed Leicester, who was filled with admiration at the bold marauder’s progress, and vowed that he was “the only soldier in truth that they had, for he was never idle, and had succeeded hitherto very happily.”

And thus, at every point of the doomed territory of the little commonwealth, the natural atmosphere in which the inhabitants existed was one of blood and rapine. Yet during the very slight lull, which was interposed in the winter of 1585-6 to the eternal clang of arms in Friesland, the Estates of that Province, to their lasting honour, founded the university of Franeker. A dozen years before, the famous institution at Leyden had been established, as a reward to the burghers for their heroic defence of the city. And now this new proof was given of the love of Netherlanders, even in the midst of their misery and their warfare, for the more humane arts. The new college was well endowed from ancient churchlands, and not only was the education made nearly gratuitous, while handsome salaries were provided for the professors, but provision was made by which the poorer scholars could be fed and boarded at a very moderate expense. There was a table provided at an annual cost to the student of but fifty florins, and a second and third table at the very low price of forty and thirty florins



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respectively. Thus the sum to be paid by the poorer class of scholars for a year's maintenance was less than three pounds sterling a year [1855 exchange rate D.W.]. The voice with which this infant seminary of the Muses first made itself heard above the din of war was but feeble, but the institution was destined to thrive, and to endow the world, for many successive generations, with the golden fruits of science and genius.

Early in the spring, the war was seriously taken in hand by Farnese. It has already been seen that the republic had been almost entirely driven out of Flanders and Brabant. The Estates, however, still held Grave, Megem, Batenburg, and Venlo upon the Meuse. That river formed, as it were, a perfect circle of protection for the whole Province of Brabant, and Farnese determined to make himself master of this great natural moat. Afterwards, he meant to possess himself of the Rhine, flowing in a parallel course, about twenty-five miles further to the east. In order to gain and hold the Meuse, the first step was to reduce the city of Grave. That town, upon the left or Brabant bank, was strongly fortified on its land-side, where it was surrounded by low and fertile pastures, while, upon the other, it depended upon its natural Toss, the river. It was, according to Lord North and the Earl of Leicester, the "strongest town in all the Low Countries, though but a little one."

Baron Hemart, a young Gueldrian noble, of small experience in military affairs, commanded in the city, his garrison being eight hundred soldiers, and about one thousand burgher guard. As early as January, Farnese had ordered Count Mansfeld to lay siege to the place. Five forts had accordingly been constructed, above and below the town, upon the left bank of the river, while a bridge of boats thrown across the stream led to a fortified camp on the opposite side. Mansfeld, Mondragon, Bobadil, Aquila, and other distinguished veterans in Philip's service, were engaged in the enterprise. A few unimportant skirmishes between Schenk and the Spaniards had taken place, but the city was already hard pressed, and, by the series of forts which environed it, was cut off from its supplies. It was highly important, therefore, that Grave should be relieved, with the least possible delay.

Early in Easter week, a force of three thousand men, under Hohenlo and Sir John Norris, was accordingly despatched by Leicester, with orders, at every hazard, to throw reinforcements and provisions into the place. They took possession, at once, of a stone sconce, called the Mill-Fort, which was guarded by fifty men, mostly boors of the country. These were nearly all hanged for "using malicious words," and for "railing against Queen Elizabeth," and—a sufficient number of men being left to maintain the fort—the whole relieving force marched with great difficulty—for the river was rapidly rising, and flooding the country—along the right bank of the Meuse, taking possession of



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Batenburg and Ravenstein castles, as they went. A force of four or five hundred Englishmen was then pushed forward to a point almost exactly opposite Grave, and within an English mile of the head of the bridge constructed by the Spaniards. Here, in the night of Easter Tuesday, they rapidly formed an entrenched camp, upon the dyke along the river, and, although molested by some armed vessels, succeeded in establishing themselves in a most important position.

On the morning of Easter Wednesday, April 16, Mansfeld, perceiving that the enemy had thus stolen a march upon him, ordered one thousand picked troops, all Spaniards, under Aquila, Casco and other veterans, to assault this advanced post. A reserve of two thousand was placed in readiness to support the attack. The Spaniards slowly crossed the bridge, which was swaying very dangerously with the current, and then charged the entrenched camp at a run. A quarrel between the different regiments as to the right of precedence precipitated the attack, before the reserve, consisting of some picked companies of Mondragon's veterans, had been able to arrive. Coming in breathless and fatigued, the first assailants were readily repulsed in their first onset. Aquila then opportunely made his appearance, and the attack was renewed with great vigour: The defenders of the camp yielded at the third charge and fled in dismay, while the Spaniards, leaping the barriers, scattered hither and thither in the ardour of pursuit. The routed Englishmen fled swiftly along the oozy dyke, in hopes of joining the main body of the relieving party, who were expected to advance, with the dawn, from their position six miles farther down the river. Two miles long the chase lasted, and it seemed probable that the fugitives would be overtaken and destroyed, when, at last, from behind a line of mounds which stretched towards Batenburg and had masked their approach, appeared Count Hohenlo and Sir John Norris, at the head of twenty-five hundred Englishmen and Hollanders. This force, advanced as rapidly as the slippery ground and the fatigue of a two hours' march would permit to the rescue of their friends, while the retreating English rallied, turned upon their pursuers, and drove them back over the path along which they had just been charging in the full career of victory. The fortune of the day was changed, and in a few minutes Hohenlo and Norris would have crossed the river and entered Grave, when the Spanish companies of Bobadil and other commanders were seen marching along the quaking bridge.

Three thousand men on each side now met at push of pike on the bank of the Meuse. The rain was pouring in torrents, the wind was blowing a gale, the stream was rapidly rising, and threatening to overwhelm its shores. By a tacit and mutual consent, both armies paused for a few moments in full view of each other. After this brief interval they closed again, breast to breast, in sharp and steady conflict.



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The ground, slippery with rain and with blood, which was soon flowing almost as fast as the rain, afforded an unsteady footing to the combatants. They staggered like drunken men, fell upon their knees, or upon their backs, and still, kneeling or rolling prostrate, maintained the deadly conflict. For the space of an hour and a half the fierce encounter of human passion outmastered the fury of the elements. Norris and Hohenlo fought at the head of their columns, like paladins of old. The Englishman was wounded in the mouth and breast, the Count was seen to gallop past one thousand musketeers and caliver-men of the enemy, and to escape unscathed. But as the strength of the soldiers exhausted itself, the violence of the tempest increased. The floods of rain and the blasts of the hurricane at last terminated the affray. The Spaniards, fairly conquered, were compelled to a retreat, lest the rapidly rising river should sweep away the frail and trembling bridge, over which they had passed to their unsuccessful assault. The English and Netherlanders remained masters of the field. The rising flood, too, which was fast converting the meadows into a lake, was as useful to the conquerors as it was damaging to the Spaniards.

In the course of the few following days, a large number of boats was despatched before the very eyes of Parma, from Batenburg into Grave; Hohenlo, who had “most desperately adventured his person” throughout the whole affair, entering the town himself.

A force of five hundred men, together with provisions enough to last a year, was thrown into the city, and the course of the Meuse was, apparently, secured to the republic. In this important action about one hundred and fifty Dutch and English were killed, and probably four hundred Spaniards, including several distinguished officers.

The Earl of Leicester was incredibly elated so soon as the success of this enterprise was known. “Oh that her Majesty knew,” he cried, “how easy a match now she hath with the King of Spain, and what millions of afflicted people she hath relieved in these countries. This summer, this summer, I say, would make an end to her immortal glory.” He was no friend to his countryman, the gallant Sir John Norris—whom, however, he could not help applauding on this occasion,—but he was in raptures with Hohenlo. Next to God, he assured the Queen’s government that the victory was owing to the Count. “He is both a valiant man and a wise man, and the painfulest that ever I knew,” he said; adding—as a secret—that “five hundred Englishmen of the best Flemish training had flatly and shamefully run away,” when the fight had been renewed by Hohenlo and Norris. He recommended that her Majesty should, send her picture to the Count, worth two hundred pounds, which he would value at more than one thousand pounds in money, and he added that “for her sake the Count had greatly left his drinking.”



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As for the Prince of Parma, Leicester looked upon him as conclusively beaten. He spoke of him as “marvellously appalled” by this overthrow of his forces; but he assured the government that if the Prince’s “choler should press him to seek revenge,” he should soon be driven out of the country. The Earl would follow him “at an inch,” and effectually frustrate all his undertakings. “If the Spaniard have such a May as he has had an April,” said Lord North, “it will put water in his wine.”

Meantime, as St. George’s Day was approaching, and as the Earl was fond of banquets and ceremonies, it was thought desirable to hold a great triumphal feast at Utrecht. His journey to that city from the Hague was a triumphal procession. In all the towns through which he passed he was entertained with military display, pompous harangues, interludes, dumb shows, and allegories. At Amsterdam—a city which he compared to Venice for situation and splendour, and where one thousand ships were constantly lying—he was received with “sundry great whales and other fishes of hugeness,” that gambolled about his vessel, and convoyed him to the shore. These monsters of the deep presented him to the burgomaster and magistrates who were awaiting him on the quay. The burgomaster made him a Latin oration, to which Dr. Bartholomew Clerk responded, and then the Earl was ushered to the grand square, upon which, in his honour, a magnificent living picture was exhibited, in which he figured as Moses, at the head of the Israelites, smiting the Philistines hip and thigh. After much mighty banqueting in Amsterdam, as in the other cities, the governor-general came to Utrecht. Through the streets of this antique and most picturesque city flows the palsied current of the Rhine, and every barge and bridge were decorated with the flowers of spring. Upon this spot, where, eight centuries before the Anglo-Saxon, Willebrod had first astonished the wild Frisians with the pacific doctrines of Jesus, and had been stoned to death as his reward, stood now a more arrogant representative of English piety. The balconies were crowded with fair women, and decorated with scarves and banners. From the Earl’s residence—the ancient palace of the Knights of Rhodes—to the cathedral, the way was lined with a double row of burgher guards, wearing red roses on their arms, and apparelled in the splendid uniforms for which the Netherlanders were celebrated. Trumpeters in scarlet and silver, barons, knights, and great officers, in cloth of gold and silks of all colours; the young Earl of Essex, whose career was to be so romantic, and whose fate so tragic; those two ominous personages, the deposed little archbishop-elect of Cologne, with his melancholy face, and the unlucky Don Antonio, Pretender of Portugal, for whom, dead or alive, thirty thousand crowns and a dukedom were perpetually offered by Philip II.; young Maurice of Nassau, the future controller of European destinies; great counsellors of state, gentlemen, guardsmen, and portcullis-herald, with the coat of arms of Elizabeth, rode in solemn procession along. Then great Leicester himself, “most princelike in the robes of his order,” guarded by a troop of burghers, and by his own fifty halberd-men in scarlet cloaks trimmed with white and purple velvet, pranced gorgeously by.



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The ancient cathedral, built on the spot where Saint Willebrod had once ministered, with its light, tapering, brick tower, three hundred and sixty feet in height, its exquisitely mullioned windows, and its elegantly foliated columns, soon received the glittering throng. Hence, after due religious ceremonies, and an English sermon from Master Knewstubs, Leicester's chaplain, was a solemn march back again to the palace, where a stupendous banquet was already laid in the great hall.

On the dais at the upper end of the table, blazing with plate and crystal, stood the royal chair, with the Queen's plate and knife and fork before it, exactly as if she had been present, while Leicester's trencher and stool were set respectfully quite at the edge of the board. In the neighbourhood of this post of honour sat Count Maurice, the Elector, the Pretender, and many illustrious English personages, with the fair Agnes Mansfeld, Princess Chimay, the daughters of William the Silent, and other dames of high degree.

Before the covers were removed, came limping up to the dais grim-visaged Martin Schenk, freshly wounded, but triumphant, from the sack of Werll, and black John Norris, scarcely cured of the spearwounds in his face and breast received at the relief of Grave. The sword of knighthood was laid upon the shoulder of each hero, by the Earl of Leicester, as her Majesty's vicegerent; and then the ushers marshalled the mighty feast. Meats in the shape of lions, tigers, dragons, and leopards, flanked by peacocks, swans, pheasants, and turkeys "in their natural feathers as in their greatest pride," disappeared, course after course, sonorous metal blowing meanwhile the most triumphant airs. After the banquet came dancing, vaulting, tumbling; together with the "forces of Hercules, which gave great delight to the strangers," after which the company separated until evensong.

Then again, "great was the feast," says the chronicler,—a mighty supper following hard upon the gigantic dinner. After this there was tilting at the barriers, the young Earl of Essex and other knights bearing themselves more chivalrously than would seem to comport with so much eating and drinking. Then, horrible to relate, came another "most sumptuous banquet of sugar-meates for the men-at-arms and the ladies," after which, it being now midnight, the Lord of Leicester bade the whole company good rest, and the men-at-arms and ladies took their leave.

But while all this chivalrous banqueting and holiday-making was in hand, the Prince of Parma was in reality not quite so much "appalled" by the relief of Grave as his antagonist had imagined. The Earl, flushed with the success of Hohenlo, already believed himself master of the country, and assured his government, that, if he should be reasonably well supplied, he would have Antwerp back again and Bruges besides before mid June. Never, said he, was "the Prince of Parma so dejected nor so melancholy

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since he came into these countries, nor so far out of courage.” And it is quite true that Alexander had reason to be discouraged. He had but eight or nine thousand men, and no money to pay even this little force. The soldiers were perishing daily, and nearly all the survivors were described by their chief, as sick or maimed. The famine in the obedient Provinces was universal, the whole population was desperate with hunger; and the merchants, frightened by Drake’s successes, and appalled by the ruin all around them, drew their purse-strings inexorably. “I know not to what saint to devote myself,” said Alexander. He had been compelled, by the movement before Grave, to withdraw Haultepenne from the projected enterprise against Neusz, and he was quite aware of the cheerful view which Leicester was inclined to take of their relative positions. “The English think they are going to do great things,” said he; “and consider themselves masters of the field.”

Nevertheless, on the 11th May, the dejected melancholy man had left Brussels, and joined his little army, consisting of three thousand Spaniards and five thousand of all other nations. His veterans, though unpaid; ragged, and half-starved were in raptures to, have their idolized commander among them again, and vowed that under his guidance there was nothing which they could not accomplish. The King’s honour, his own, that of the army, all were pledged to take the city. On the success of, that enterprise, he said, depended all his past conquests, and every hope for the future. Leicester and the, English, whom he called the head and body of the rebel forces, were equally pledged to relieve the place, and were bent upon meeting him in the field. The Earl had taken some forts in the Batavia—Betuwe; or “good meadow,” which he pronounced as fertile and about as large as Herefordshire,—and was now threatening Nymegen, a city which had been gained for Philip by the last effort of Schenk, on the royalist side. He was now observing Alexander’s demonstrations against Grave; but, after the recent success in victualling that place, he felt a just confidence in its security.

On the 31st May the trenches were commenced, and on the 5th June the batteries were opened. The work went rapidly forward when Farnese was in the field. “The Prince of Parma doth batter it like a Prince,” said Lord North, admiring the enemy with the enthusiasm of an honest soldier: On the 6th of June, as Alexander rode through the camp to reconnoitre, previous to an attack. A well-directed cannon ball carried away the hinder half, of his horse. The Prince fell to the ground, and, for a moment, dismay was in the Spanish ranks. At the next instant, though somewhat bruised, he was on his feet again, and, having found the breach sufficiently promising, he determined on the assault.



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As a preliminary measure, he wished to occupy a tower which had been battered nearly to ruins, situate near the river. Captain de Solis was ordered, with sixty veterans, to take possession of this tower, and to “have a look at the countenance of the enemy, without amusing himself with anything else.” The tower was soon secured, but Solis, in disobedience to his written instructions led his men against the ravelin, which was still in a state of perfect defence. A musket-ball soon stretched him dead beneath the wall, and his followers, still attempting to enter the impracticable breach, were repelled by a shower of stones and blazing pitch-hoops. Hot sand; too, poured from sieves and baskets, insinuated itself within the armour of the Spaniards, and occasioned such exquisite suffering, that many threw themselves into the river to allay the pain. Emerging refreshed, but confused, they attempted in vain to renew the onset. Several of the little band were slain, the assault was quite unsuccessful, and the trumpet sounded a recal. So completely discomfited were the Spaniards by this repulse, and so thoroughly at their ease were the besieged, that a soldier let himself down from the ramparts of the town for the sake of plundering the body of Captain Solis, who was richly dressed, and, having accomplished this feat, was quietly helped back again by his comrades from above.

To the surprise of the besiegers, however, on the very next morning came a request from the governor of the city, Baron Hemart, to negotiate for a surrender. Alexander was, naturally, but too glad to grant easy terms, and upon the 7th of June the garrison left the town with colours displayed and drums beating, and the Prince of Parma marched into it, at the head of his troops. He found a year's provision there for six thousand men, while, at the same time, the walls had suffered so little, that he must have been obliged to wait long for a practicable breach.

“There was no good reason even for women to have surrendered the place,” exclaimed Leicester, when he heard the news. And the Earl had cause to be enraged at such a result. He had received a letter only the day before, signed by Hemart himself and by all the officers in Grave, asserting their determination and ability to hold the place for a good five months, or for an indefinite period, and until they should be relieved. And indeed all the officers, with three exceptions, had protested against the base surrender. But at the bottom of the catastrophe—of the disastrous loss of the city and the utter ruin of young Hemart—was a woman. The governor was governed by his mistress, a lady of good family in the place, but of Spanish inclinations, and she, for some mysterious reasons, had persuaded him thus voluntarily to capitulate.

Parma lost no time, however, in exulting over his success. Upon the same day the towns of Megen and Batenburg surrendered to him, and immediately afterwards siege was laid to Venlo, a town of importance, lying thirty miles farther up the Meuse. The wife and family of Martin Schenk were in the city, together with two hundred horses, and from forty to one hundred thousand crowns in money, plate; and furniture belonging to him.

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That bold partisan, accompanied by the mad Welshman, Roger Williams, at the head of one hundred and thirty English lances and thirty of Schenk's men, made a wild nocturnal attempt to cut their way through the besieging force, and penetrate to the city. They passed through the enemy's lines, killed all the corps-de-garde, and many Spanish troopers—the terrible Martin's own hand being most effective in this midnight slaughter—and reached the very door of Parma's tent, where they killed his secretary and many of his guards. It was even reported; and generally believed, that Farnese himself had been in imminent danger, that Schenk had fired his pistol at him unsuccessfully, and had then struck him on the head with its butt-end, and that the Prince had only saved his life by leaping from his horse, and scrambling through a ditch. But these seem to have been fables. The alarm at last became general, the dawn of a summer's day was fast approaching; the drums beat to arms, and the bold marauders were obliged to effect their retreat, as they best might, hotly pursued by near two thousand men. Having slain many of, the Spanish army, and lost nearly half their own number, they at last obtained shelter in Wachtendonk.

Soon afterwards the place capitulated without waiting for a battery, upon moderate terms. Schenk's wife was sent away (28 June 1586) courteously with her family, in a coach and four, and with as much "apparel" as might be carried with her. His property was confiscated, for "no fair wars could be made with him."

Thus, within a few weeks after taking the field, the "dejected, melancholy" man, who was so "out of courage," and the soldiers who were so "marvellously beginning to run away"—according to the Earl of Leicester—had swept their enemy from every town on the Meuse. That river was now, throughout its whole course, in the power of the Spaniards. The Province of Brabant became thoroughly guarded again by its foes, and the enemy's road was opened into the northern Provinces.

Leicester, meantime, had not distinguished himself. It must be confessed that he had been sadly out-generalled. The man who had talked of following the enemy inch by inch, and who had pledged himself not only to protect Grave, and any other place that might be attacked, but even to recover Antwerp and Bruges within a few weeks, had wasted the time in very desultory operations. After the St. George feasting, Knewstub sermons, and forces of Hercules, were all finished, the Earl had taken the field with five thousand foot and fifteen hundred horse. His intention was to clear the Yssel; by getting possession of Doesburg and Zutphen, but, hearing of Parma's demonstrations upon Grave, he abandoned the contemplated siege of those cities, and came to Arnheim. He then crossed the Rhine into the Isle of Batavia, and thence, after taking a few sconces of inferior importance—while Schenk, meanwhile, was building on the Island of Gravenweert, at the bifurcation of the Rhine and Waal, the sconce so celebrated a century later as 'Schenk's Fort' (Schenkenschans)—he was preparing to pass the Waal in order to attack Farnese, when he heard to his astonishment, of the surrender of Grave.

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He could therefore—to his chagrin—no longer save that important city, but he could, at least, cut off the head of the culprit. Leicester was in Bommel when he heard of Baron Hemart's faint-heartedness or treachery, and his wrath was extravagant in proportion to the exultation with which his previous success had inspired him. He breathed nothing but revenge against the coward and the traitor, who had delivered up the town in "such lewd and beastly sort."

"I will never depart hence," he said, "till by the goodness of God I be satisfied someway of this villain's treachery." There could be little doubt that Hemart deserved punishment. There could be as little that Leicester would mete it out to him in ample measure. "The lewd villain who gave up Grave," said he, "and the captains as deep in fault as himself, shall all suffer together."

Hemart came boldly to meet him. "The honest man came to me at Bommel," said Leicester, and he assured the government that it was in the hope of persuading the magistrates of that and other towns to imitate his own treachery.

But the magistrates straightway delivered the culprit to the governor-general, who immediately placed him under arrest. A court-martial was summoned, 26th of June, at Utrecht, consisting of Hohenlo, Essex, and other distinguished officers. They found that the conduct of the prisoner merited death, but left it to the Earl to decide whether various extenuating circumstances did not justify a pardon. Hohenlo and Norris exerted themselves to procure a mitigation of the young man's sentence, and they excited thereby the governor's deep indignation. Norris, according to Leicester, was in love with the culprit's aunt, and was therefore especially desirous of saving his life. Moreover, much use was made of the discredit which had been thrown by the Queen on the Earl's authority, and it was openly maintained, that, being no longer governor-general, he had no authority to order execution upon a Netherland officer.

The favourable circumstances urged in the case, were, that Hemart was a young man, without experience in military matters, and that he had been overcome by the supplications and outcries of the women, panic-struck after the first assault. There were no direct proofs of treachery, or even of personal cowardice. He begged hard for a pardon, not on account of his life, but for the sake of his reputation. He earnestly implored permission to serve under the Queen of England, as a private soldier, without pay, on land or sea, for as many years as she should specify, and to be selected for the most dangerous employments, in order that, before he died, he might wipe out the disgrace, which, through his fault, in an hour of weakness, had come upon an ancient and honourable house. Much interest was made for him—his family connection being powerful—and a general impression prevailing that he had erred through folly rather than deep guilt. But Leicester beating himself upon the breast—as he was wont when excited—swore that there should be no pardon for such a traitor. The States of Holland and Zeeland, likewise, were decidedly in favour of a severe example.

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Hemart was accordingly led to the scaffold on the 28th June. He spoke to the people with great calmness, and, in two languages, French and Flemish, declared that he was guiltless of treachery, but that the terror and tears of the women, in an hour of panic, had made a coward of him. He was beheaded, standing. The two captains, Du Ban and Koeboekum, who had also been condemned, suffered with him. A third captain, likewise convicted, was, "for very just cause," pardoned by Leicester. The Earl persisted in believing that Hemart had surrendered the city as part of a deliberate plan, and affirmed that in such a time, when men had come to think no more of giving up a town than of abandoning a house, it was highly necessary to afford an example to traitors and satisfaction to the people. And the people were thoroughly satisfied, according to the governor, and only expressed their regret that three or four members of the States-General could not have their heads cut off as well, being as arrant knaves as Henlart; "and so I think they be," added Leicester.

Parma having thus made himself master of the Meuse, lost no time in making a demonstration upon the parallel course of the Rhine, thirty miles farther east. Schenk, Kloet; and other partisans, kept that portion of the archi-episcopate and of Westphalia in a state of perpetual commotion. Early in the, preceding year, Count de Meurs had, by a fortunate stratagem, captured the town of Neusz for the deposed elector, and Herman Kloet, a young and most determined Geldrian soldier, now commanded in the place.

The Elector Ernest had made a visit in disguise to the camp of Parma, and had represented the necessity of recovering the city. It had become the stronghold of heretics, rebels, and banditti. The Rhine was in their hands, and with it the perpetual power of disturbing the loyal Netherlands. It was as much the interest of his Catholic Majesty as that of the Archbishop that Neusz should be restored to its lawful owner. Parma had felt the force of this reasoning, and had early in the year sent Haultepenne to invest the city. He had been obliged to recal that commander during the siege of Grave. The place being reduced, Alexander, before the grass could grow beneath his feet advanced to the Rhine in person. Early in July he appeared before the walls of Neusz with eight thousand foot and two thousand horse. The garrison under Kloet numbered scarcely more than sixteen hundred effective soldiers, all Netherlanders and Germans, none being English.

The city is twenty-miles below Cologne. It was so well fortified that a century before it had stood a year's siege from the famous Charles the Bold, who, after all, had been obliged to retire. It had also resisted the strenuous efforts of Charles the Fifth; and was now stronger than it ever had been. It was thoroughly well provisioned, so that it was safe enough "if those within it," said Leicester, "be men." The Earl expressed the opinion, however, that "those fellows were not good to defend towns, unless the besiegers were obliged to swim to the attack." The issue was to show whether the sarcasm were just or not. Meantime the town was considered by the governor-general to be secure, "unless towns were to be had for the asking."



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Neusz is not immediately upon the Rhine, but that river, which sweeps away in a north-easterly direction from the walls, throws out an arm which completely encircles the town. A part of the place, cut into an island by the Erpt, was strengthened by two redoubts. This island was abandoned, as being too weak to hold, and the Spaniards took possession of it immediately. There were various preliminary and sanguinary sorties and skirmishes, during which the Spaniards after having been once driven from the island, again occupied that position. Archbishop Ernest came into the camp, and, before proceeding to a cannonade, Parma offered to the city certain terms of capitulation, which were approved by that prelate. Kloet replied to this proposal, that he was wedded to the town and to his honour, which were as one. These he was incapable of sacrificing, but his life he was ready to lay down. There was, through some misapprehension, a delay in reporting this answer to Farnese. Meantime that general became impatient, and advanced to the battery of the Italian regiment. Pretending to be a plenipotentiary from the commander-in-chief, he expostulated in a loud voice at the slowness of their counsels. Hardly had he begun to speak, when a shower of balls rattled about him. His own soldiers were terrified at his danger, and a cry arose in the town that "Holofernese"—as the Flemings and Germans were accustomed to nickname Farnese—was dead. Strange to relate, he was quite unharmed, and walked back to his tent with dignified slowness and a very frowning face. It was said that this breach of truce had been begun by the Spaniards, who had fired first, and had been immediately answered by the town. This was hotly denied, and Parma sent Colonel Tasais with a flag of truce to the commander, to rebuke and to desire an explanation of this dishonourable conduct.

The answer given, or imagined, was that Commander Kloet had been sound asleep, but that he now much regretted this untoward accident. The explanation was received with derision, for it seemed hardly probable that so young and energetic a soldier would take the opportunity to refresh himself with slumber at a moment when a treaty for the capitulation of a city under his charge was under discussion. This terminated the negotiation.

A few days afterwards, the feast of St James was celebrated in the Spanish camp, with bonfires and other demonstrations of hilarity. The townsmen are said to have desecrated the same holiday by roasting alive in the market-place two unfortunate soldiers, who had been captured in a sortie a few days before; besides burning the body of the holy Saint Quirinus, with other holy relics. The detestable deed was to be most horribly avenged.

A steady cannonade from forty-five great guns was kept up from 2 A.M. of July 15 until the dawn of the following day; the cannoners—being all provided with milk and vinegar to cool the pieces. At daybreak the assault was ordered. Eight separate attacks were made with the usual impetuosity of Spaniards, and were steadily repulsed.



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At the ninth, the outer wall was carried, and the Spaniards shouting "Santiago" poured over it, bearing back all resistance. An Italian Knight of the Sepulchre, Cesar Guidiccioni by name, and a Spanish ensign, one Alphonao de Mesa, with his colours in one hand and a ladder in the other, each claimed the honour of having first mounted the breach. Both being deemed equally worthy of reward, Parma, after the city had been won, took from his own cap a sprig of jewels and a golden wheat-ear ornamented with a gem, which he had himself worn in place of a plume, and thus presented each with a brilliant token of his regard. The wall was then strengthened against the inner line of fortification, and all night long a desperate conflict was maintained in the dark upon the narrow space between the two barriers. Before daylight Kloet, who then, as always, had led his men in the moat desperate adventures, was carried into the town, wounded in five places, and with his leg almost severed at the thigh. "'Tis the bravest man," said the enthusiastic Lord North, "that was ever heard of in the world."—"He is but a boy," said Alexander Farnese, "but a commander of extraordinary capacity and valour."

Early in the morning, when this mishap was known, an officer was sent to the camp of the besiegers to treat. The soldiers received him with furious laughter, and denied him access to the general. "Commander Kloet had waked from his nap at a wrong time," they said, "and the Prince of Parma was now sound asleep, in his turn." There was no possibility of commencing a negotiation. The Spaniards, heated by the conflict, maddened by opposition, and inspired by the desire to sack a wealthy city, overpowered all resistance. "My little soldiers were not to be restrained," said Farnese, and so compelling a reluctant consent on the part of the commander-in-chief to an assault, the Italian and Spanish legions poured into the town at two opposite gates; which were no longer strong enough to withstand the enemy. The two streams met in the heart of the place, and swept every living thing in their path out of existence. The garrison was butchered to a man, and subsequently many of the inhabitants—men, women, and children-also, although the women; to the honour of Alexander, had been at first secured from harm in some of the churches, where they had been ordered to take refuge. The first blast of indignation was against the commandant of the place. Alexander, who had admired, his courage, was not unfavourably disposed towards him, but Archbishop Ernest vehemently, demanded his immediate death, as a personal favour to himself. As the churchman was nominally sovereign of the city although in reality a beggarly dependant on Philip's alms, Farnese felt bound to comply. The manner in which it was at first supposed that the Bishop's Christian request had; been complied, with, sent a shudder through every-heart in the Netherlands. "They took Kloet, wounded as he was," said Lord North, "and first strangled, him, then smeared him with pitch, and burnt him with gunpowder; thus, with their holiness, they, made a tragical end of an heroical service. It is wondered that the Prince would suffer so great an outrage to be done to so noble a soldier, who did but his duty."



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But this was an error. A Jesuit priest was sent to the house of the commandant, for a humane effort was thought necessary in order to save the soul of the man whose life was forfeited for the crime of defending his city. The culprit was found lying in bed. His wife, a woman of remarkable beauty, with her sister, was in attendance upon him. The spectacle of those two fair women, nursing a wounded soldier fallen upon the field of honour, might have softened devils with sympathy. But the Jesuit was closely followed by a band of soldiers, who, notwithstanding the supplications of the women, and the demand of Kloet to be indulged with a soldier's death, tied a rope round the commandant's necks dragged him from his bed, and hanged him from his own window. The Calvinist clergyman, Fossierus of Oppenheim, the deacons of the congregation, two military officers, and—said Parma—"forty other rascals," were murdered in the same way at the same time. The bodies remained at the window till they were devoured by the flames, which soon consumed the house. For a vast conflagration, caused none knew whether by accident, by the despair of the inhabitants; by the previous, arrangements of the commandant, by the latest-arrived bands of the besiegers enraged that the Italians and Spaniards had been beforehand with them in the spoils, or—as Farnese more maturely believed—by the special agency of the Almighty, offended with the burning of Saint Quirinus,—now came to complete the horror of the scene. Three-quarters of the town were at once in a blaze. The churches, where the affrighted women had been cowering during the sack and slaughter, were soon on fire, and now, amid the crash of falling houses and the uproar of the drunken soldiery, those unhappy victims were seen flitting along the flaming streets; seeking refuge against the fury of the elements in the more horrible cruelty of man. The fire lasted all day and night, and not one stone would have been left upon another, had not the body of a second saint, saved on a former occasion from the heretics by the piety of a citizen, been fortunately deposited in his house. At this point the conflagration was stayed—for the flames refused to consume these holy relics—but almost the whole of the town was destroyed, while at least four thousand people, citizens and soldiers, had perished by sword or fire.

Three hundred survivors of the garrison took refuge in a tower. Its base was surrounded, and, after brief parley, they descended as prisoners. The Prince and Haultepenne attempted in vain to protect them against the fury of the soldiers, and every man of them was instantly put to death.

The next day, Alexander gave orders that the wife and sister of the commandant should be protected—for they had escaped, as if by miracle, from all the horrors of that day and night—and sent, under escort, to their friends! Neusz had nearly ceased to exist, for according to contemporaneous accounts, but eight houses had escaped destruction.

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And the reflection was most painful to Leicester and to every generous Englishman or Netherlander in the country, that this important city and its heroic defenders might have been preserved, but for want of harmony and want of money. Twice had the Earl got together a force of four thousand men for the relief of the place, and twice had he been obliged to disband them again for the lack of funds to set them in the field.

He had pawned his plate and other valuables, exhausted his credit, and had nothing for it but to wait for the Queen's tardy remittances, and to wrangle with the States; for the leaders of that body were unwilling to accord large supplies to a man who had become personally suspected by them, and was the representative of a deeply-suspected government. Meanwhile, one-third at least of the money which really found its way from time to time out of England, was filched from the "poor starved wretches," as Leicester called his soldiers, by the dishonesty of Norris, uncle of Sir John and army-treasurer. This man was growing so rich on his speculations, on his commissions, and on his profits from paying the troops in a depreciated coin, that Leicester declared the whole revenue of his own landed estates in England to be less than that functionary's annual income. Thus it was difficult to say whether the "ragged rogues" of Elizabeth or the maimed and neglected soldiers of Philip were in the more pitiable plight.

The only consolation in the recent reduction of Neusz was to be found in the fact that Parma had only gained a position, for the town had ceased to exist; and in the fiction that he had paid for his triumph by the loss of six thousand soldiers, killed and wounded. In reality not more than five hundred of Farnese's army lost their lives, and although the town, excepting some churches, had certainly been destroyed; yet the Prince was now master of the Rhine as far as Cologne, and of the Meuse as far as Grave. The famine which pressed so sorely upon him, might now be relieved, and his military communications with Germany be considered secure.

The conqueror now turned his attention to Rheinberg, twenty-five miles farther down the river.

Sir Philip Sidney had not been well satisfied by the comparative idleness in which, from these various circumstances; he had been compelled to remain. Early in the spring he had been desirous of making an attack upon Flanders by capturing the town of Steenberg. The faithful Roger Williams had strongly seconded the proposal. "We wish to show your Excellency," said he to Leicester, "that we are not sound asleep." The Welshman was not likely to be accused of somnolence, but on this occasion Sidney and himself had been overruled. At a later moment, and during the siege of Neusz, Sir Philip had the satisfaction of making a successful foray into Flanders.

The expedition had been planned by Prince Maurice of Nassau, and was his earliest military achievement. He proposed carrying by surprise, the city of Axel, a well-built, strongly-fortified town on the south-western edge of the great Scheldt estuary, and very important from its position. Its acquisition would make the hold of the patriots and the

English upon Sluys and Ostend more secure, and give them many opportunities of annoying the enemy in Flanders.



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Early in July, Maurice wrote to the Earl of Leicester, communicating the particulars of his scheme, but begging that the affair might be “very secretly handled,” and kept from every one but Sidney. Leicester accordingly sent his nephew to Maurice that they might consult together upon the enterprise, and make sure “that there was no ill intent, there being so much treachery in the world.” Sidney found no treachery in young Maurice, but only, a noble and intelligent love of adventure, and the two arranged their plans in harmony.

Leicester, then, in order to deceive the enemy, came to Bergen-op-Zoom, with five hundred men, where he remained two days, not sleeping a wink, as he averred, during the whole time. In the night of Tuesday, 16th of July, the five hundred English soldiers were despatched by water, under charge of Lord Willoughby, “who,” said the Earl, “would needs go with them.” Young Hatton, too, son of Sir Christopher, also volunteered on the service, “as his first nursling.” Sidney had, five hundred of his own Zeeland regiment in readiness, and the rendezvous was upon the broad waters of the Scheldt, opposite Flushing. The plan was neatly carried out, and the united flotilla, in a dark, calm, midsummer’s night, rowed across the smooth estuary and landed at Ter Neuse, about a league from Axel. Here they were joined by Maurice with some Netherland companies, and the united troops, between two and three thousand strong, marched at once to the place proposed. Before two in the morning they had reached Axel, but found the moat very deep. Forty soldiers immediately plunged in, however, carrying their ladders with them, swam across, scaled the rampart, killed the guard, whom they found asleep in their beds, and opened the gates for their comrades. The whole force then marched in, the Dutch companies under Colonel Pyion being first, Lord Willoughby’s men being second, and Sir Philip with his Zeelanders bringing up the rear. The garrison, between five and six hundred in number, though surprised, resisted gallantly, and were all put to the sword. Of the invaders, not a single man lost his life. Sidney most generously rewarded from his own purse the adventurous soldiers who had swum the moat; and it was to his care and intelligence that the success of Prince Maurice’s scheme was generally attributed. The achievement was hailed with great satisfaction, and it somewhat raised the drooping spirits of the patriots after their severe losses at Grave and Venlo. “This victory hath happened in good time,” wrote Thomas Cecil to his father, “and hath made us somewhat to lift up our heads.” A garrison of eight hundred, under Colonel Pyron, was left in Axel, and the dykes around were then pierced. Upwards of two millions’ worth of property in grass, cattle, corn, was thus immediately destroyed in the territory of the obedient Netherlands.

After an unsuccessful attempt to surprise Gravelines, the governor of which place, the veteran La Motte, was not so easily taken napping; Sir Philip having gained much reputation by this conquest of Axel, then joined the main body of the army, under Leicester, at Arnheim.



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Yet, after all, Sir Philip had not grown in favour with her Majesty during his service in the Low Countries. He had also been disappointed in the government of Zeeland, to which post his uncle had destined him. The cause of Leicester's ambition had been frustrated by the policy of Barneveld and Buys, in pursuance of which Count or Prince Maurice—as he was now purposely designated, in order that his rank might surpass that of the Earl—had become stadholder and captain general both of Holland and Zeeland. The Earl had given his nephew, however, the colonelcy of the Zeeland regiment, vacant by the death of Admiral Haultain on the Kowenstyn Dyke. This promotion had excited much anger among the high officers in the Netherlands who, at the instigation of Count Hohenlo, had presented a remonstrance upon the subject to the governor-general. It had always been the custom, they said, with the late Prince of Orange, to confer promotion according to seniority, without regard to social rank, and they were therefore unwilling that a young foreigner, who had just entered the service; should thus be advanced over the heads of veterans who had been campaigning there so many weary years. At the same time the gentlemen who signed the paper protested to Sir Philip, in another letter, "with all the same hands," that they had no personal feeling towards him, but, on the contrary, that they wished him all honour.

Young Maurice himself had always manifested the most friendly feelings toward Sidney, although influenced in his action by the statesmen who were already organizing a powerful opposition to Leicester. "Count Maurice showed himself constantly, kind in the matter of the regiment," said Sir Philip, "but Mr. Paul Buss has so many busses in his head, such as you shall find he will be to God and man about one pitch. Happy is the communication of them that join in the fear of God." Hohenlo, too, or Hollock, as he was called by the French and English, was much governed by Buys and Olden-Barneveld. Reckless and daring, but loose of life and uncertain of purpose, he was most dangerous, unless under safe guidance. Roger Williams—who vowed that but for the love he bore to Sidney and Leicester, he would not remain ten days in the Netherlands—was much disgusted by Hohenlo's conduct in regard to the Zeeland regiment. "'Tis a mutinous request of Hollock," said he, "that strangers should not command Netherlanders. He and his Alemaynes are farther born from Zeeland than Sir Philip is. Either you must make Hollock assured to you, or you must disgrace him. If he will not be yours, I will show you means to disinherit him of all his commands at small danger. What service doth he, Count Solms, Count Overatein, with their Almaynes, but spend treasure and consume great contributions?"



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It was, very natural that the chivalrous Sidney, who had come to the Netherlands to win glory in the field, should be desirous of posts that would bring danger and distinction with them. He was not there merely that he might govern Flushing, important as it was, particularly as the garrison was, according to his statement, about as able to maintain the town, "as the Tower was to answer for London." He disapproved of his wife's inclination to join him in Holland, for he was likely—so he wrote to her father, Walsingham—"to run such a course as would not be fit for any of the feminine gender." He had been, however; grieved to the heart, by the spectacle which was perpetually exhibited of the Queen's parsimony, and of the consequent suffering of the soldiers. Twelve or fifteen thousand Englishmen were serving in the Netherlands—more than two thirds of them in her Majesty's immediate employment. No troops had ever fought better, or more honourably maintained the ancient glory of England. But rarely had more ragged and wretched warriors been seen than they, after a few months' campaigning.

The Irish Kernes—some fifteen hundred of whom were among the auxiliaries—were better off, for they habitually dispensed with clothing; an apron from waist to knee being the only protection of these wild Kelts, who fought with the valour, and nearly, in the costume of Homeric heroes. Fearing nothing, needing nothing, sparing nothing, they stalked about the fens of Zeeland upon their long stilts, or leaped across running rivers, scaling ramparts, robbing the highways, burning, butchering, and maltreating the villages and their inhabitants, with as little regard for the laws of Christian warfare as for those of civilized costume.

Other soldiers, more sophisticated as to apparel, were less at their ease. The generous Sidney spent all his means, and loaded himself with debt, in order to relieve the necessities of the poor soldiers. He protested that if the Queen would not pay her troops, she would lose her troops, but that no living man should say the fault was in him. "What relief I can do them I will," he wrote to his father-in-law; "I will spare no danger, if occasion serves. I am sure that no creature shall lay injustice to my charge."

Very soon it was discovered that the starving troops had to contend not only with the Queen's niggardliness but with the dishonesty of her agents. Treasurer Norris was constantly accused by Leicester and Sidney of gross peculation. Five per cent., according to Sir Philip, was lost to the Zeeland soldiers in every payment, "and God knows," he said, "they want no such hindrance, being scarce able to keep life with their entire pay. Truly it is but poor increase to her Majesty, considering what loss it is to the miserable soldier." Discipline and endurance were sure to be sacrificed, in the end, to such short-sighted economy. "When soldiers," said Sidney, "grow to despair, and give up towns, then it is too late to buy with hundred thousands what might have been saved with a trifle."

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This plain dealing, on the part of Sidney, was anything but agreeable to the Queen, who was far from feeling regret that his high-soaring expectations had been somewhat blighted in the Provinces. He often expressed his mortification that her Majesty was disposed to interpret everything to, his disadvantage. “I understand,” said he, “that I am called ambitious, and very proud at home, but certainly, if they knew my heart, they would not altogether so judge me.” Elizabeth had taken part with Hohenlo against Sir Philip in the matter of the Zeeland regiment, and in this perhaps she was not entirely to be blamed. But she inveighed needlessly against his ambitious seeking of the office, and—as Walsingham observed—“she was very apt, upon every light occasion, to find fault with him.” It is probable that his complaints against the army treasurer, and his manful defence of the “miserable soldiers,” more than counterbalanced, in the Queen’s estimation, his chivalry in the field.

Nevertheless he had now the satisfaction of having gained an important city in Flanders; and on subsequently joining the army under his uncle, he indulged the hope of earning still greater distinction.

Martin Schenk had meanwhile been successfully defending Rheinberg, for several weeks, against Parma’s forces. It was necessary, however, that Leicester, notwithstanding the impoverished condition of his troops, should make some diversion, while his formidable antagonist was thus carrying all before him.

He assembled, accordingly, in the month of August, all the troops that could be brought into the field, and reviewed them, with much ceremony, in the neighbourhood of Arnheim. His army—barely numbered seven thousand foot and two thousand horse, but he gave out, very extensively, that he had fourteen thousand under his command, and he was moreover expecting a force of three thousand reiters, and as many pikemen recently levied in Germany. Lord Essex was general of the cavalry, Sir William Pelham—a distinguished soldier, who had recently arrived out of England, after the most urgent solicitations to the Queen, for that end, by Leicester—was lord-marshal of the camp, and Sir John Norris was colonel-general of the infantry.

After the parade, two sermons were preached upon the hillside to the soldiers, and then there was a council of war: It was decided— notwithstanding the Earl’s announcement of his intentions to attack Parma in person—that the condition of the army did not warrant such an enterprise. It was thought better to lay siege to Zutphen. This step, if successful, would place in the power of the republic and her ally a city of great importance and strength. In every event the attempt would probably compel Farnese to raise the siege of Berg.

Leicester, accordingly, with “his brave troop of able and likely men” —five thousand of the infantry being English—advanced as far as Doesburg. This city, seated at the confluence of the ancient canal of Drusus and the Yssel, five miles above Zutphen, it was necessary, as a preliminary measure, to secure. It was not a very strong place,

being rather slightly walled with brick, and with a foss drawing not more than three feet of water. By the 30th August it had been completely invested.



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On the same night, at ten o'clock, Sir William Pelham, came to the Earl to tell him "what beastly pioneers the Dutchmen were. "Leicester accordingly determined, notwithstanding the lord-marshal's entreaties, to proceed to the trenches in person. There being but faint light, the two lost their way, and soon found themselves nearly, at the gate of the town. Here, while groping about in the dark; and trying to effect their retreat, they were saluted with a shot, which struck Sir William in the stomach. For an instant; thinking himself mortally injured, he expressed his satisfaction that he had been, between the commander-in-chief and the blow, and made other "comfortable and resolute speeches." Very fortunately, however, it proved that the marshal was not seriously hurt, and, after a few days, he was about his work as usual, although obliged — as the Earl of Leicester expressed it—"to carry a bullet in his belly as long as he should live."

Roger Williams, too, that valiant adventurer—"but no, more valiant than wise, and worth his weight in gold," according to the appreciative Leicester—was shot through the arm. For the dare-devil Welshman, much to the Earl's regret, persisted in running up and down the trenches "with a great plume of feathers in his gilt morion," and in otherwise making a very conspicuous mark of himself "within pointblank of a caliver."

Notwithstanding these mishaps, however, the siege went successfully forward. Upon the 2nd September the Earl began to batter, and after a brisk cannonade, from dawn till two in the afternoon, he had considerably damaged the wall in two places. One of the breaches was eighty feet wide, the other half as large, but the besieged had stuffed them full of beds, tubs, logs of wood, boards, and "such like trash," by means whereof the ascent was not so easy as it seemed. The soldiers were excessively eager for the assault. Sir John Norris came to Leicester to receive his orders as to the command of the attacking party.

The Earl referred the matter to him. "There is no man," answered Sir John, "fitter for that purpose than myself; for I am colonel-general of the infantry."

But Leicester, not willing to indulge so unreasonable a proposal, replied that he would reserve him for service of less hazard and greater importance. Norris being, as usual, "satis prodigus magnae animae," was out of humour at the refusal, and ascribed it to the Earl's persistent hostility to him and his family. It was then arranged that the assault upon the principal breach should be led by younger officers, to be supported by Sir John and other veterans. The other breach was assigned to the Dutch and Scotch-black Norris scowling at them the while with jealous eyes; fearing that they might get the start of the English party, and be first to enter the town. A party of noble volunteers clustered about Sir John-Lord Burgh, Sir Thomas Cecil, Sir Philip Sidney, and his brother Robert among the rest—most

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impatient for the signal. The race was obviously to be a sharp one. The governor-general forbade these violent demonstrations, but Lord Burgh, "in a most vehement passion, waived the countermand," and his insubordination was very generally imitated. Before the signal was given, however, Leicester sent a trumpet to summon the town to surrender, and could with difficulty restrain his soldiers till the answer should be returned. To the universal disappointment, the garrison agreed to surrender. Norris himself then stepped forward to the breach, and cried aloud the terms, lest the returning herald, who had been sent back by Leicester, should offer too favourable a capitulation. It was arranged that the soldiers should retire without arms, with white wands in their hands—the officers remaining prisoners—and that the burghers, their lives, and property, should be at Leicester's disposal. The Earl gave most peremptory orders that persons and goods should be respected, but his commands were disobeyed. Sir William Stanley's men committed frightful disorders, and thoroughly rifled the town."

"And because," said Norris, "I found fault herewith, Sir William began to quarrel with me, hath braved me extremely, refuseth to take any direction from me, and although I have sought for redress, yet it is proceeded in so coldly, that he taketh encouragement rather to increase the quarrel than to leave it."

Notwithstanding therefore the decree of Leicester, the expostulations and anger of Norris, and the energetic efforts of Lord Essex and other generals, who went about smiting the marauders on the head, the soldiers sacked the city, and committed various disorders, in spite of the capitulation.

Doesburg having been thus reduced, the Earl now proceeded toward the more important city which he had determined to besiege. Zutphen, or South-Fen, an antique town of wealth and elegance, was the capital of the old Landgraves of Zutphen. It is situate on the right bank of the Yssel, that branch of the Rhine which flows between Gelderland and Overijssel into the Zuyder-Zee.

The ancient river, broad, deep, and languid, glides through a plain of almost boundless extent, till it loses itself in the flat and misty horizon. On the other side of the stream, in the district called the Veluwe, or bad meadow, were three sconces, one of them of remarkable strength. An island between the city and the shore was likewise well fortified. On the landward side the town was protected by a wall and moat sufficiently strong in those infant days of artillery. Near the hospital-gate, on the east, was an external fortress guarding the road to Warnsfeld. This was a small village, with a solitary slender church-spire, shooting up above a cluster of neat one-storied houses. It was about an English mile from Zutphen, in the midst of a wide, low, somewhat fenny plain, which, in winter, became so completely a lake, that peasants were not unfrequently



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drowned in attempting to pass from the city to the village. In summer, the vague expanse of country was fertile and cheerful of aspect. Long rows of poplars marking the straight highways, clumps of pollard willows scattered around the little meres, snug farm-houses, with kitchen-gardens and brilliant flower-patches dotting the level plain, verdant pastures sweeping off into seemingly infinite distance, where the innumerable cattle seemed to swarm like insects, wind-mills swinging their arms in all directions, like protective giants, to save the country from inundation, the lagging sail of market-boats shining through rows of orchard trees—all gave to the environs of Zutphen a tranquil and domestic charm.

Deventer and Kampen, the two other places on the river, were in the hands of the States. It was, therefore, desirable for the English and the patriots, by gaining possession of Zutphen, to obtain control of the Yssel; driven, as they had been, from the Meuse and Rhine.

Sir John Norris, by Leicester's direction, took possession of a small rising-ground, called 'Gibbet Dill' on the land-side; where he established a fortified camp, and proceeded to invest the city. With him were Count Lewis William of Nassau, and Sir Philip Sidney, while the Earl himself, crossing the Yssel on a bridge of boats which he had constructed, reserved for himself the reduction of the forts upon the Veluwe side.

Farnese, meantime, was not idle; and Leicester's calculations proved correct. So soon as the Prince was informed of this important demonstration of the enemy he broke up—after brief debate with his officers—his camp before Rheinberg, and came to Wesel. At this place he built a bridge over the Rhine, and fortified it with two block-houses. These he placed under command of Claude Berlot, who was ordered to watch strictly all communication up the river with the city of Rheinberg, which he thus kept in a partially beleaguered state. Alexander then advanced rapidly by way of Groll and Burik, both which places he took possession of, to the neighbourhood of Zutphen. He was determined, at every hazard, to relieve that important city; and although, after leaving necessary detachments on the way; he had but five thousand men under his command, besides fifteen hundred under Verdugo—making sixty-five hundred in all—he had decided that the necessity of the case, and his own honour; required him to seek the enemy, and to leave, as he said, the issue with the God of battles, whose cause it was.

Tassis, lieutenant-governor of Gelderland, was ordered into the city with two cornets of horse and six hundred foot. As large a number, had already been stationed there. Verdugo, who had been awaiting the arrival of the Prince at Borkelo, a dozen miles from Zutphen, with four hundred foot and two hundred horse, now likewise entered the city.



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On the night of 29th August Alexander himself entered Zutphen for the purpose of encouraging the garrison by promise of relief, and of ascertaining the position of the enemy by personal observation. His presence as it always did, inspired the soldiers with enthusiasm, so that they could with difficulty be restrained from rushing forth to assault the besiegers. In regard to the enemy he found that Gibbet Hill was still occupied by Sir John Norris, "the best soldier, in his opinion, that they had," who had entrenched himself very strongly, and was supposed to have thirty-five hundred men under his command. His position seemed quite impregnable. The rest of the English were on the other side of the river, and Alexander observed, with satisfaction, that they had abandoned a small redoubt, near the leper-house, outside the Loor-Gate, through which the reinforcements must enter the city. The Prince determined to profit by this mistake, and to seize the opportunity thus afforded of sending those much needed supplies. During the night the enemy were found to be throwing up works "most furiously," and skirmishing parties were sent out of the town to annoy them. In the darkness nothing of consequence was effected, but a Scotch officer was captured, who informed the Spanish commander that the enemy was fifteen thousand strong—a number which was nearly double that of Leicester's actual force. In the morning Alexander returned to his camp at Borkelo—leaving Tassis in command of the Veluwe Forts, and Verdugo in the city itself—and he at once made rapid work in collecting victuals. He had soon wheat and other supplies in readiness, sufficient to feed four thousand mouths for three months, and these he determined to send into the city immediately, and at every hazard.

The great convoy which was now to be despatched required great care and a powerful escort. Twenty-five hundred musketeers and pikemen, of whom one thousand were Spaniards, and six hundred cavalry, Epirotes; Spaniards, and Italians, under Hannibal Gonzaga, George Crescia, Bentivoglio, Sesa, and others, were accordingly detailed for this expedition. The Marquis del Vasto, to whom was entrusted the chief command, was ordered to march from Borkelo at midnight on Wednesday, October 1 (St. Nov.) [N.S.]. It was calculated that he would reach a certain hillock not far from Warnsfeld by dawn of day. Here he was to pause, and send forward an officer towards the town, communicating his arrival, and requesting the cooperation of Verdugo, who was to make a sortie with one thousand men, according to Alexander's previous arrangements. The plan was successfully carried out. The Marquis arrived by daybreak at the spot indicated, and despatched Captain de Vega who contrived to send intelligence of the fact. A trooper, whom Parma had himself sent to Verdugo with earlier information of the movement, had been captured on the way. Leicester had therefore been apprized, at an early moment, of the Prince's intentions, but he was not aware that the convoy would be accompanied by so strong a force as had really been detailed.



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He had accordingly ordered Sir John Norris, who commanded on the outside of the town near the road which the Spaniards must traverse, to place an ambuscade in his way. Sir John, always ready for adventurous enterprises, took a body of two hundred cavalry, all picked men, and ordered Sir William Stanley, with three hundred pikemen, to follow. A much stronger force of infantry was held in reserve and readiness, but it was not thought that it would be required. The ambuscade was successfully placed, before the dawn of Thursday morning, in the neighbourhood of Warnsfeld church. On the other hand, the Earl of Leicester himself, anxious as to the result, came across the river just at daybreak. He was accompanied by the chief gentlemen in his camp, who could never be restrained when blows were passing current.

The business that morning was a commonplace and practical though an important, one—to “impeach” a convoy of wheat and barley, butter, cheese, and beef—but the names of those noble and knightly volunteers, familiar throughout Christendom, sound like the roll-call for some chivalrous tournament. There were Essex and Audley, Stanley, Pelham, Russell, both the Sidneys, all the Norrises, men whose valour had been proved on many a hard-fought battle-field. There, too, was the famous hero of British ballad whose name was so often to ring on the plains of the Netherlands—

“The brave Lord Willoughby,
Of courage fierce and fell,
Who would not give one inch of way
For all the devils in hell.”

Twenty such volunteers as these sat on horseback that morning around the stately Earl of Leicester. It seemed an incredible extravagance to send a handful of such heroes against an army.

But the English commander-in-chief had been listening to the insidious tongue of Roland York—that bold, plausible, unscrupulous partisan, already twice a renegade, of whom more was ere long to be heard in the Netherlands and England. Of the man’s courage there could be no doubt, and he was about to fight that morning in the front rank at the head of his company. But he had, for some mysterious reason, been bent upon persuading the Earl that the Spaniards were no match for Englishmen at a hand-to-hand contest. When they could ride freely up and down, he said, and use their lances as they liked, they were formidable. But the English were stronger men, better riders, better mounted, and better armed. The Spaniards hated helmets and proof armour, while the English trooper, in casque, cuirass, and greaves, was a living fortress impregnable to Spanish or Italian light horsemen. And Leicester seemed almost convinced by his reasoning.

It was five o’clock of a chill autumn morning. It was time for day to break, but the fog was so thick that a man at the distance of five yards was quite invisible. The creaking of waggon-wheels and the measured tramp of soldiers soon became faintly audible

however to Sir John Norris and his five hundred as they sat there in the mist. Presently came galloping forward in hot haste those nobles and gentlemen, with their esquires, fifty men in all—Sidney, Willoughby, and the rest—whom Leicester had no longer been able to restrain from taking part in the adventure.



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A force of infantry, the amount of which cannot be satisfactorily ascertained, had been ordered by the Earl to cross the bridge at a later moment. Sidney's cornet of horse was then in Deventer, to which place it had been sent in order to assist in quelling an anticipated revolt, so that he came, like most of his companions, as a private volunteer and knight-errant.

The arrival of the expected convoy was soon more distinctly heard, but no scouts or outposts had been stationed to give timely notice, of the enemy's movements. Suddenly the fog, which had shrouded the scene so closely, rolled away like a curtain, and in the full light of an October morning the Englishmen found themselves face to face with a compact body of more than three thousand men. The Marquis del Vasto rode at the head of the forces surrounded by a band of mounted arquebus men. The cavalry, under the famous Epirote chief George Crescia, Hannibal Gonzaga, Bentivoglio, Sesa, Conti, and other distinguished commanders, followed; the columns of pikemen and musketeers lined the hedge-rows on both sides the causeway; while between them the long train of waggons came slowly along under their protection. The whole force had got in motion after having sent notice of their arrival to Verdugo, who, with one or two thousand men, was expected to sally forth almost immediately from the city-gate.

There was but brief time for deliberation. Notwithstanding the tremendous odds there was no thought of retreat. Black Norris called to Sir William Stanley, with whom he had been at variance so lately at Doesburg.

"There hath been ill-blood between us," he said. "Let us be friends together this day, and die side by side, if need be, in her Majesty's cause."

"If you see me not serve my prince with faithful courage now," replied Stanley, "account, me for ever a coward. Living or dying I will stand err lie by you in friendship."

As they were speaking these words the young Earl of Essex, general of the horse, cried to his, handful of troopers:

"Follow me, good fellows, for the honour of England and of England's Queen!"

As he spoke he dashed, lance in rest, upon the enemy's cavalry, overthrew the foremost man, horse and rider, shivered his own spear to splinters, and then, swinging his cartel-axe, rode merrily forward. His whole little troop, compact, as an arrow-head, flew with an irresistible shock against the opposing columns, pierced clean through them, and scattered them in all directions. At the very first charge one hundred English horsemen drove the Spanish and Albanian cavalry back upon the musketeers and pikemen. Wheeling with rapidity, they retired before a volley of musket-shot, by which many horses and a few riders were killed; and then formed again to renew the attack. Sir Philip Sidney, an coming to the field, having met Sir William Pelham, the veteran lord



marshal, lightly armed, had with chivalrous extravagance thrown off his own cuishes, and now rode to the battle with no armour but his cuirass. At the second charge his horse was shot under him, but, mounting another, he was seen everywhere, in the thick of the fight, behaving himself with a gallantry which extorted admiration even from the enemy.



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For the battle was a series of personal encounters in which high officers were doing the work of private, soldiers. Lord North, who had been lying "bed-rid" with a musket-shot in the leg, had got himself put on horseback, and with "one boot on and one boot off," bore himself, "most lustily" through the whole affair. "I desire that her Majesty may know;" he said, "that I live but to, serve her. A better barony than I have could not hire the Lord North to live, on meaner terms." Sir William Russell laid about him with his curtel-axe to such purpose that the Spaniards pronounced him a devil and not a man. "Wherever," said an eye-witness, "he saw five or six of the enemy together; thither would he, and with his hard knocks soon separated their friendship." Lord Willoughby encountered George Crescia, general of the famed Albanian cavalry, unhorsed him at the first shock, and rolled him into the ditch. "I yield me thy prisoner," called out the Epirote in French, "for thou art a 'preux chevalier;'" while Willoughby, trusting to his captive's word, galloped onward, and with him the rest of the little troop, till they seemed swallowed up by the superior numbers of the enemy. His horse was shot under him, his basses were torn from his legs, and he was nearly taken a prisoner, but fought his way back with incredible strength and good fortune. Sir William Stanley's horse had seven bullets in him, but bore his rider unhurt to the end of the battle. Leicester declared Sir William and "old Reads" to be "worth their weight in pearl."

Hannibal Gonzaga, leader of the Spanish cavalry, fell mortally wounded a The Marquis del Vasto, commander of the expedition, nearly met the same fate. An Englishman was just cleaving his head with a battle-axe, when a Spaniard transfixing the soldier with his pike. The most obstinate struggle took place about the train of waggons. The teamsters had fled in the beginning of the action, but the English and Spanish soldiers, struggling with the horses, and pulling them forward and backward, tried in vain to get exclusive possession of the convoy which was the cause of the action. The carts at last forced their way slowly nearer and nearer to the town, while the combat still went on, warm as ever, between the hostile squadrons. The action, lasted an hour and a half, and again and again the Spanish horsemen wavered and broke before the handful of English, and fell back upon their musketeers. Sir Philip Sidney, in the last charge, rode quite through the enemy's ranks till he came upon their entrenchments, when a musket-ball from the camp struck him upon the thigh, three inches above the knee. Although desperately wounded in a part which should have been protected by the cuishes which he had thrown aside, he was not inclined to leave the field; but his own horse had been shot under him at the-beginning of the action, and the one upon which he was now mounted became too restive for him, thus crippled, to control.

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He turned reluctantly away, and rode a mile and a half back to the entrenchments, suffering extreme pain, for his leg was dreadfully shattered. As he past along the edge of the battle-field his attendants brought him a bottle of water to quench his raging thirst. At that moment a wounded English soldier, "who had eaten his last at the same feast," looked up wistfully, in his face, when Sidney instantly handed him the flask, exclaiming, "Thy necessity is even greater than mine." He then pledged his dying comrade in a draught, and was soon afterwards met by his uncle. "Oh, Philip," cried Leicester, in despair, "I am truly grieved to see thee in this plight." But Sidney comforted him with manful words, and assured him that death was sweet in the cause of his Queen and country. Sir William Russell, too, all blood-stained from the fight, threw his arms around his friend, wept like a child, and kissing his hand, exclaimed, "Oh! noble Sir Philip, never did man attain hurt so honourably or serve so valiantly as you." Sir William Pelham declared "that Sidney's noble courage in the face of our enemies had won him a name of continuing honour."

The wounded gentleman was borne back to the camp, and thence in a barge to Arnheim. The fight was over. Sir John Norris bade Lord Leicester "be merry, for," said he, "you have had the honourablest day. A handful of men has driven the enemy three times to retreat. "But, in truth, it was now time for the English to retire in their turn. Their reserve never arrived. The whole force engaged against the thirty-five hundred Spaniards had never exceeded two hundred and fifty horse and three hundred foot, and of this number the chief work had been done by the fifty or sixty volunteers and their followers. The heroism which had been displayed was fruitless, except as a proof—and so Leicester wrote to the Palatine John Casimir—"that Spaniards were not invincible." Two thousand men now sallied from the Loor Gate under Verdugo and Tassis, to join the force under Vasto, and the English were forced to retreat. The whole convoy was then carried into the city, and the Spaniards remained masters of the field.

Thirteen troopers and twenty-two foot soldiers; upon the English side, were killed. The enemy lost perhaps two hundred men. They were thrice turned from their position, and thrice routed, but they succeeded at last in their attempt to carry their convoy into Zutphen. Upon that day, and the succeeding ones, the town was completely victualled. Very little, therefore, save honour, was gained by the display of English valour against overwhelming numbers; five hundred against, near, four thousand. Never in the whole course of the war had there been such fighting, for the troops upon both sides were picked men and veterans. For a long time afterwards it was the custom of Spaniards and Netherlanders, in characterising a hardly-contested action, to call it as warm as the fight at Zutphen.



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"I think I may call it," said Leicester, "the most notable encounter that hath been in our age, and it will remain to our posterity famous."

Nevertheless it is probable that the encounter would have been forgotten by posterity but for the melancholy close upon that field to Sidney's bright career. And perhaps the Queen of England had as much reason to blush for the incompetency of her general and favourite as to be proud of the heroism displayed by her officers and soldiers.

"There were too many indeed at this skirmish of the better sort," said Leicester; "only a two hundred and fifty horse, and most of them the best of this camp, and unawares to me. I was offended when I knew it, but could not fetch them back; but since they all so well escaped (save my dear nephew), I would not for ten thousand pounds but they had been there, since they have all won that honour they have. Your Lordship never heard of such desperate charges as they gave upon the enemies in the face of their muskets."

He described Sidney's wound as "very dangerous, the bone being broken in pieces;" but said that the surgeons were in good hope. "I pray God to save his life," said the Earl, "and I care not how lame he be." Sir Philip was carried to Arnheim, where the best surgeons were immediately in attendance upon him. He submitted to their examination and the pain which they inflicted, with great cheerfulness, although himself persuaded that his wound was mortal. For many days the result was doubtful, and messages were sent day by day to England that he was convalescent— intelligence which was hailed by the Queen and people as a matter not of private but of public rejoicing. He soon began to fail, however. Count Hohenlo was badly wounded a few days later before the great fort of Zutphen. A musket-ball entered his mouth; and passed through his cheek, carrying off a jewel which hung in his ear. Notwithstanding his own critical condition, however, Hohenlo sent his surgeon, Adrian van den Spiegel, a man of great skill, to wait upon Sir Philip, but Adrian soon felt that the case was hopeless. Meantime fever and gangrene attacked the Count himself; and those in attendance upon him, fearing for his life, sent for his surgeon. Leicester refused to allow Adrian to depart, and Hohenlo very generously acquiescing in the decree, but, also requiring the surgeon's personal care, caused himself to be transported in a litter to Arnheim.

Sidney was first to recognise the symptoms of mortification, which made a fatal result inevitable. His demeanour during his sickness and upon his death-bed was as beautiful as his life. He discoursed with his friends concerning the immortality of the soul, comparing the doctrines of Plato and of other ancient philosophers, whose writings were so familiar to him, with the revelations of Scripture and with the dictates of natural religion. He made his will with minute and elaborate provisions,

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leaving bequests, remembrances, and rings, to all his friends. Then he indulged himself with music, and listened particularly to a strange song which he had himself composed during his illness, and which he had entitled 'La Cuisse rompue.' He took leave of the friends around him with perfect calmness; saying to his brother Robert, "Love my memory. Cherish my friends. Above all, govern your will and affections by the will and word of your Creator; in me beholding the end of this world with all her vanities."

And thus this gentle and heroic spirit took its flight.

Parma, after thoroughly victualling Zutphen, turned his attention to the German levies which Leicester was expecting under the care of Count Meurs. "If the enemy is reinforced by these six thousand fresh troops," said Alexander; "it will make him master of the field." And well he might hold this opinion, for, in the meagre state of both the Spanish and the liberating armies, the addition of three thousand fresh reiters and as many infantry would be enough to turn the scale. The Duke of Parma— for, since the recent death of his father, Farnese had succeeded to his title—determined in person to seek the German troops, and to destroy them if possible. But they never gave him the chance. Their muster-place was Bremen, but when they heard that the terrible 'Holofernese' was in pursuit of them, and that the commencement of their service would be a pitched battle with his Spaniards and Italians, they broke up and scattered about the country. Soon afterwards the Duke tried another method of effectually dispersing them, in case they still retained a wish to fulfil their engagement with Leicester. He sent a messenger to treat with them, and in consequence two of their rittmeisters; paid him a visit. He offered to give them higher pay, and "ready money in place of tricks and promises." The mercenary heroes listened very favourably to his proposals, although they had already received—besides the tricks and promises—at least one hundred thousand florins out of the States' treasury.

After proceeding thus far in the negotiation, however, Parma concluded, as the season was so far advanced, that it was sufficient to have dispersed them, and to have deprived the English and patriots of their services. So he gave the two majors a gold chain a-piece, and they went their way thoroughly satisfied. "I have got them away from the enemy for this year," said Alexander; "and this I hold to be one of the best services that has been rendered for many a long day to your Majesty."

During the period which intervened between the action at Warnsfeld and the death of Sidney, the siege-operations before Zutphen had been continued. The city, strongly garrisoned and well supplied with provisions, as it had been by Parma's care, remained impregnable; but the sconces beyond the river and upon the island fell into Leicester's hands. The great fortress which commanded the Veluwe, and which was



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strong enough to have resisted Count Hohenlo on a former, occasion for nearly a whole year, was the scene of much hard fighting. It was gained at last by the signal valour of Edward Stanley, lieutenant to Sir William. That officer, at the commencement of an assault upon a not very practicable breach, sprang at the long pike of a Spanish soldier, who was endeavoring to thrust him from the wall, and seized it with both hands. The Spaniard struggled to maintain his hold of the weapon, Stanley to wrest it from his grasp. A dozen other soldiers broke their pikes upon his cuirass or shot at him with their muskets. Conspicuous by his dress, being all in yellow but his corslet, he was in full sight of Leicester and of fire thousand men. The earth was so shifty and sandy that the soldiers who were to follow him were not able to climb the wall. Still Stanley grasped his adversary's pike, but, suddenly changing his plan, he allowed the Spaniard to lift him from the ground. Then, assisting himself with his feet against the wall, he, much to the astonishment of the spectators, scrambled quite over the parapet, and dashed sword in hand among the defenders of the fort. Had he been endowed with a hundred lives it seemed impossible for him to escape death. But his followers, stimulated by his example, made ladders for themselves of each others' shoulders, clambered at last with great exertion over the broken wall, overpowered the garrison, and made themselves masters of the sconce. Leicester, transported with enthusiasm for this noble deed of daring, knighted Edward Stanley upon the spot, besides presenting him next day with forty pounds in gold and an annuity of one hundred marks, sterling for life. "Since I was born, I did never see any man behave himself as he did," said the Earl. "I shall never forget it, if I live a thousand year, and he shall have a part of my living for it as long as I live."

The occupation of these forts terminated the military operations of the year, for the rainy season, precursor of the winter, had now set in. Leicester, leaving Sir William Stanley, with twelve hundred English and Irish horse, in command of Deventer; Sir John Burrowes, with one thousand men, in Doesburg; and Sir Robert Yorke, with one thousand more, in the great sconce before Zutphen; took his departure for the Hague. Zutphen seemed so surrounded as to authorize the governor to expect ere long its capitulation. Nevertheless, the results of the campaign had not been encouraging. The States had lost ground, having been driven from the Meuse and Rhine, while they had with difficulty maintained themselves on the Flemish coast and upon the Yssel.

It is now necessary to glance at the internal politics of the Republic during the period of Leicester's administration and to explain the position in which he found himself at the close of the year.

ETEXT EDITOR'S BOOKMARKS:

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And thus this gentle and heroic spirit took its flight
Five great rivers hold the Netherland territory in their coils
High officers were doing the work of private, soldiers
I did never see any man behave himself as he did
There is no man fitter for that purpose than myself

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