

Life and Death of John of Barneveld, Advocate of Holland : with a view of the primary causes and movements of the Thirty Years' War, 1609-14 eBook

Life and Death of John of Barneveld, Advocate of Holland : with a view of the primary causes and movements of the Thirty Years' War, 1609-14 by John Lothrop Motley

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

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

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

MOTLEY'S HISTORY OF THE NETHERLANDS, Project Gutenberg Edition, Volume 90

The Life of John of Barneveld, v5, 1609-14

CHAPTER VI.

Establishment of the Condominium in the Duchies—Dissensions between the Neuburgers and Brandenburgers—Occupation of Julich by the Brandenburgers assisted by the States-General—Indignation in Spain and at the Court of the Archdukes—Subsidy despatched to Brussels Spinola descends upon Aix-la-Chapelle and takes possession of Orsoy and other places—Surrender of Wesel—Conference at Xanten—

Treaty permanently dividing the Territory between Brandenburg and Neuburg—
Prohibition from Spain—Delays and Disagreements.

Thus the 'Condominium' had been peaceably established.

Three or four years passed away in the course of which the evils of a joint and undivided sovereignty of two rival houses over the same territory could not fail to manifest themselves. Brandenburg, Calvinist in religion, and for other reasons more intimately connected with and more favoured by the States' government than his rival, gained ground in the duchies. The Palatine of Neuburg, originally of Lutheran faith like his father, soon manifested Catholic tendencies, which excited suspicion in the Netherlands. These suspicions grew into certainties at the moment when he espoused the sister of Maximilian of Bavaria and of the Elector of Cologne. That this close connection with the very heads of the Catholic League could bode no good to the cause of which the States-General were the great promoters was self-evident. Very soon afterwards the Palatine, a man of mature age and of considerable talents, openly announced his conversion to the ancient church. Obviously the sympathies of the States could not thenceforth fail to be on the side of Brandenburg. The Elector's brother died and was succeeded in the governorship of the Condominium by the Elector's brother, a youth of eighteen. He took up his abode in Cleve, leaving Dusseldorf to be the sole residence of his co-stadholder.

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Rivalry growing warmer, on account of this difference of religion, between the respective partisans of Neuburg and Brandenburg, an attempt was made in Dusseldorf by a sudden entirely unsuspected rising of the Brandenburgers to drive their antagonist colleagues and their portion of the garrison out of the city. It failed, but excited great anger. A more successful effort was soon afterwards made in Julich; the Neuburgers were driven out, and the Brandenburgers remained in sole possession of the town and citadel, far the most important stronghold in the whole territory. This was partly avenged by the Neuburgers, who gained absolute control of Dusseldorf. Here were however no important fortifications, the place being merely an agreeable palatial residence and a thriving mart. The States-General, not concealing their predilection for Brandenburg, but under pretext of guarding the peace which they had done so much to establish, placed a garrison of 1400 infantry and a troop or two of horse in the citadel of Julich.

Dire was the anger not unjustly excited in Spain when the news of this violation of neutrality reached that government. Julich, placed midway between Liege and Cologne, and commanding those fertile plains which make up the opulent duchy, seemed virtually converted into a province of the detested heretical republic. The German gate of the Spanish Netherlands was literally in the hands of its most formidable foe.

The Spaniards about the court of the Archduke did not dissemble their rage. The seizure of Julich was a stain upon his reputation, they cried. Was it not enough, they asked, for the United Provinces to have made a truce to the manifest detriment and discredit of Spain, and to have treated her during all the negotiation with such insolence? Were they now to be permitted to invade neutral territory, to violate public faith, to act under no responsibility save to their own will? What was left for them to do except to set up a tribunal in Holland for giving laws to the whole of Northern Europe? Arrogating to themselves absolute power over the controverted states of Cleve, Julich, and the dependencies, they now pretended to dispose of them at their pleasure in order at the end insolently to take possession of them for themselves.

These were the egregious fruits of the truce, they said tauntingly to the discomfited Archduke. It had caused a loss of reputation, the very soul of empires, to the crown of Spain. And now, to conclude her abasement, the troops in Flanders had been shaven down with such parsimony as to make the monarch seem a shopkeeper, not a king. One would suppose the obedient Netherlands to be in the heart of Spain rather than outlying provinces surrounded by their deadliest enemies. The heretics had gained possession of the government at Aix-la-Chapelle; they had converted the insignificant town of Mulheim into a thriving and fortified town in defiance of

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Cologne and to its manifest detriment, and in various other ways they had insulted the Catholics throughout those regions. And who could wonder at such insolence, seeing that the army in Flanders, formerly the terror of heretics, had become since the truce so weak as to be the laughing-stock of the United Provinces? If it was expensive to maintain these armies in the obedient Netherlands, let there be economy elsewhere, they urged.

From India came gold and jewels. From other kingdoms came ostentation and a long series of vain titles for the crown of Spain. Flanders was its place of arms, its nursery of soldiers, its bulwark in Europe, and so it should be preserved.

There was ground for these complaints. The army at the disposition of the Archduke had been reduced to 8000 infantry and a handful of cavalry. The peace establishment of the Republic amounted to 20,000 foot, 3000 horse, besides the French and English regiments.

So soon as the news of the occupation of Julich was officially communicated to the Spanish cabinet, a subsidy of 400,000 crowns was at once despatched to Brussels. Levies of Walloons and Germans were made without delay by order of Archduke Albert and under guidance of Spinola, so that by midsummer the army was swollen to 18,000 foot and 3000 horse. With these the great Genoese captain took the field in the middle of August. On the 22nd of that month the army was encamped on some plains mid-way between Maestricht and Aachen. There was profound mystery both at Brussels and at the Hague as to the objective point of these military movements. Anticipating an attack upon Julich, the States had meantime strengthened the garrison of that important place with 3000 infantry and a regiment of horse. It seemed scarcely probable therefore that Spinola would venture a foolhardy blow at a citadel so well fortified and defended. Moreover, there was not only no declaration of war, but strict orders had been given by each of the apparent belligerents to their military commanders to abstain from all offensive movements against the adversary. And now began one of the strangest series of warlike evolution's that were ever recorded. Maurice at the head of an army of 14,000 foot and 3000 horse manoeuvred in the neighbourhood of his great antagonist and professional rival without exchanging a blow. It was a phantom campaign, the prophetic rehearsal of dreadful marches and tragic histories yet to be, and which were to be enacted on that very stage and on still wider ones during a whole generation of mankind. That cynical commerce in human lives which was to become one of the chief branches of human industry in the century had already begun.

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Spinola, after hovering for a few days in the neighbourhood, descended upon the Imperial city of Aachen (Aix-la-Chapelle). This had been one of the earliest towns in Germany to embrace the Reformed religion, and up to the close of the sixteenth century the control of the magistracy had been in the hands of the votaries of that creed. Subsequently the Catholics had contrived to acquire and keep the municipal ascendancy, secretly supported by Archduke Albert, and much oppressing the Protestants with imprisonments, fines, and banishment, until a new revolution which had occurred in the year 1610, and which aroused the wrath of Spinola. Certainly, according to the ideas of that day, it did not seem unnatural in a city where a very large majority of the population were Protestants that Protestants should have a majority in the town council. It seemed, however, to those who surrounded the Archduke an outrage which could no longer be tolerated, especially as a garrison of 600 Germans, supposed to have formed part of the States' army, had recently been introduced into the town. Aachen, lying mostly on an extended plain, had but very slight fortifications, and it was commanded by a neighbouring range of hills. It had no garrison but the 600 Germans. Spinola placed a battery or two on the hills, and within three days the town surrendered. The inhabitants expected a scene of carnage and pillage, but not a life was lost. No injury whatever was inflicted on person or property, according to the strict injunctions of the Archduke. The 600 Germans were driven out, and 1200 other Germans then serving under Catholic banners were put in their places to protect the Catholic minority, to whose keeping the municipal government was now confided.

Spinola, then entering the territory of Cleve, took session of Orsoy, an important place on the Rhine, besides Duren, Duisburg, Kaster, Greevenbroek and Berchem. Leaving garrisons in these places, he razed the fortifications of Mulheim, much to the joy of the Archbishop and his faithful subjects of Cologne, then crossed the Rhine at Rheinberg, and swooped down upon Wesel. This flourishing and prosperous city had formerly belonged to the Duchy of Cleve. Placed at the junction of the Rhine and Lippe and commanding both rivers, it had become both powerful and Protestant, and had set itself up as a free Imperial city, recognising its dukes no longer as sovereigns, but only as protectors. So fervent was it in the practice of the Reformed religion that it was called the Rhenish Geneva, the cradle of German Calvinism. So important was its preservation considered to the cause of Protestantism that the States-General had urged its authorities to accept from them a garrison. They refused. Had they complied, the city would have been saved, because it was the rule in this extraordinary campaign that the belligerents made war not upon each other, nor in each others territory, but against neutrals and upon neutral soil. The Catholic forces under Spinola or his lieutenants, meeting occasionally and accidentally with the Protestants under Maurice or his generals, exchanged no cannon shots or buffets, but only acts of courtesy; falling away each before the other, and each ceding to the other with extreme politeness the possession of towns which one had preceded the other in besieging.

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The citizens of Wesel were amazed at being attacked, considering themselves as Imperial burghers. They regretted too late that they had refused a garrison from Maurice, which would have prevented Spinola from assailing them. They had now nothing for it but to surrender, which they did within three days. The principal condition of the capitulation was that when Julich should be given up by the States Wesel should be restored to its former position. Spinola then took and garrisoned the city of Xanten, but went no further. Having weakened his army sufficiently by the garrisons taken from it for the cities captured by him, he declined to make any demonstration upon the neighbouring and important towns of Emmerich and Rees. The Catholic commander falling back, the Protestant moved forward. Maurice seized both Emmerich and Rees, and placed garrisons within them, besides occupying Goch, Kranenburg, Gennip, and various places in the County of Mark. This closed the amicable campaign.

Spinola established himself and his forces near Wesel. The Prince encamped near Rees. The two armies were within two hours' march of each other. The Duke of Neuburg—for the Palatine had now succeeded on his father's death to the ancestral dukedom and to his share of the Condominium of the debateable provinces—now joined Spinola with an army of 4000 foot and 400 horse. The young Prince of Brandenburg came to Maurice with 800 cavalry and an infantry regiment of the Elector-Palatine.

Negotiations destined to be as spectral and fleeting as the campaign had been illusory now began. The whole Protestant world was aflame with indignation at the loss of Wesel. The States' government had already proposed to deposit Julich in the hands of a neutral power if the Archduke would abstain from military movements. But Albert, proud of his achievements in Aachen, refused to pause in his career. Let them make the deposit first, he said.

Both belligerents, being now satiated with such military glory as could flow from the capture of defenceless cities belonging to neutrals, agreed to hold conferences at Xanten. To this town, in the Duchy of Cleve, and midway between the rival camps, came Sir Henry Wotton and Sir Dudley Carleton, ambassadors of Great Britain; de Refuge and de Russy, the special and the resident ambassador of France at the Hague; Chancellor Peter Pecquius and Counsellor Visser, to represent the Archdukes; seven deputies from the United Provinces, three from the Elector of Cologne, three from Brandenburg, three from Neuburg, and two from the Elector-Palatine, as representative of the Protestant League.

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In the earlier conferences the envoys of the Archduke and of the Elector of Cologne were left out, but they were informed daily of each step in the negotiation. The most important point at starting was thought to be to get rid of the 'Condominium.' There could be no harmony nor peace in joint possession. The whole territory should be cut provisionally in halves, and each possessory prince rule exclusively within the portion assigned to him. There might also be an exchange of domain between the two every six months. As for Wesel and Julich, they could remain respectively in the hands then holding them, or the fortifications of Julich might be dismantled and Wesel restored to the status quo. The latter alternative would have best suited the States, who were growing daily more irritated at seeing Wesel, that Protestant stronghold, with an exclusively Calvinistic population, in the hands of Catholics.

The Spanish ambassador at Brussels remonstrated, however, at the thought of restoring his precious conquest, obtained without loss of time, money, or blood, into the hands of heretics, at least before consultation with the government at Madrid and without full consent of the King.

"How important to your Majesty's affairs in Flanders," wrote Guadaleste to Philip, "is the acquisition of Wesel may be seen by the manifest grief of your enemies. They see with immense displeasure your royal ensigns planted on the most important place on the Rhine, and one which would become the chief military station for all the armies of Flanders to assemble in at any moment.

"As no acquisition could therefore be greater, so your Majesty should never be deprived of it without thorough consideration of the case. The Archduke fears, and so do his ministers, that if we refuse to restore Wesel, the United Provinces would break the truce. For my part I believe, and there are many who agree with me, that they would on the contrary be more inclined to stand by the truce, hoping to obtain by negotiation that which it must be obvious to them they cannot hope to capture by force. But let Wesel be at once restored. Let that be done which is so much desired by the United Provinces and other great enemies and rivals of your Majesty, and what security will there be that the same Provinces will not again attempt the same invasion? Is not the example of Julich fresh? And how much more important is Wesel! Julich was after all not situate on their frontiers, while Wesel lies at their principal gates. Your Majesty now sees the good and upright intentions of those Provinces and their friends. They have made a settlement between Brandenburg and Neuburg, not in order to breed concord but confusion between those two, not tranquillity for the country, but greater turbulence than ever before. Nor have they done this with any other thought than that the United Provinces might find new opportunities to derive the same profit from fresh tumults as they have already done so shamelessly from those which are past. After all I don't say that Wesel should never be restored, if circumstances require it, and if your Majesty, approving the Treaty of Xanten, should sanction the measure. But such a result should be reached only after full consultation with your Majesty, to whose glorious military exploits these splendid results are chiefly owing."

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The treaty finally decided upon rejected the principle of alternate possession, and established a permanent division of the territory in dispute between Brandenburg and Neuburg.

The two portions were to be made as equal as possible, and lots were to be thrown or drawn by the two princes for the first choice. To the one side were assigned the Duchy of Cleve, the County of Mark, and the Seigniories of Ravensberg and Ravenstein, with some other baronies and feuds in Brabant and Flanders; to the other the Duchies of Julich and Berg with their dependencies. Each prince was to reside exclusively within the territory assigned to him by lot. The troops introduced by either party were to be withdrawn, fortifications made since the preceding month of May to be razed, and all persons who had been expelled, or who had emigrated, to be restored to their offices, property, or benefices. It was also stipulated that no place within the whole debateable territory should be put in the hands of a third power.

These articles were signed by the ambassadors of France and England, by the deputies of the Elector-Palatine and of the United Provinces, all binding their superiors to the execution of the treaty. The arrangement was supposed to refer to the previous conventions between those two crowns, with the Republic, and the Protestant princes and powers. Count Zollern, whom we have seen bearing himself so arrogantly as envoy from the Emperor Rudolph to Henry IV., was now despatched by Matthias on as fruitless a mission to the congress at Xanten, and did his best to prevent the signature of the treaty, except with full concurrence of the Imperial government. He likewise renewed the frivolous proposition that the Emperor should hold all the provinces in sequestration until the question of rightful sovereignty should be decided. The “proud and haggard” ambassador was not more successful in this than in the diplomatic task previously entrusted to him, and he then went to Brussels, there to renew his remonstrances, menaces, and intrigues.

For the treaty thus elaborately constructed, and in appearance a triumphant settlement of questions so complicated and so burning as to threaten to set Christendom at any moment in a blaze, was destined to an impotent and most unsatisfactory conclusion.

The signatures were more easily obtained than the ratifications. Execution was surrounded with insurmountable difficulties which in negotiation had been lightly skipped over at the stroke of a pen. At the very first step, that of military evacuation, there was a stumble. Maurice and Spinola were expected to withdraw their forces, and to undertake to bring in no troops in the future, and to make no invasion of the disputed territory.

But Spinola construed this undertaking as absolute; the Prince as only binding in consequence of, with reference to, and for the duration of; the Treaty of Xanten. The ambassadors and other commissioners, disgusted with the long controversy which ensued, were making up their minds to depart when a courier arrived from Spain, bringing not a ratification but strict prohibition of the treaty. The articles were not to be

executed, no change whatever was to be made, and, above all, Wesel was not to be restored without fresh negotiations with Philip, followed by his explicit concurrence.

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Thus the whole great negotiation began to dissolve into a shadowy, unsatisfactory pageant. The solid barriers which were to imprison the vast threatening elements of religious animosity and dynastic hatreds, and to secure a peaceful future for Christendom, melted into films of gossamer, and the great war of demons, no longer to be quelled by the commonplaces of diplomatic exorcism, revealed its close approach. The prospects of Europe grew blacker than ever.

The ambassadors, thoroughly disheartened and disgusted, all took their departure from Xanten, and the treaty remained rather a by-word than a solution or even a suggestion.

“The accord could not be prevented,” wrote Archduke Albert to Philip, “because it depended alone on the will of the signers. Nor can the promise to restore Wesel be violated, should Julich be restored. Who can doubt that such contravention would arouse great jealousies in France, England, the United Provinces, and all the members of the heretic League of Germany? Who can dispute that those interested ought to procure the execution of the treaty? Suspicions will not remain suspicions, but they light up the flames of public evil and disturbance. Either your Majesty wishes to maintain the truce, in which case Wesel must be restored, or to break the truce, a result which is certain if Wesel be retained. But the reasons which induced your Majesty to lay down your arms remain the same as ever. Our affairs are not looking better, nor is the requisition of Wesel of so great importance as to justify our involving Flanders in a new and more atrocious war than that which has so lately been suspended. The restitution is due to the tribunal of public faith. It is a great advantage when actions done for the sole end of justice are united to that of utility. Consider the great successes we have had. How well the affairs of Aachen and Mulheim have been arranged; those of the Duke of Neuburg how completely re-established. The Catholic cause, always identical with that of the House of Austria, remains in great superiority to the cause of the heretics. We should use these advantages well, and to do so we should not immaturely pursue greater ones. Fortune changes, flies when we most depend on her, and delights in making her chief sport of the highest quality of mortals.”

Thus wrote the Archduke sensibly, honourably from his point of view, and with an intelligent regard to the interests of Spain and the Catholic cause. After months of delay came conditional consent from Madrid to the conventions, but with express condition that there should be absolute undertaking on the part of the United Provinces never to send or maintain troops in the duchies. Tedious and futile correspondence followed between Brussels, the Hague, London, Paris. But the difficulties grew every moment. It was a Penelope's web of negotiation, said one of the envoys. Amid pertinacious and wire-drawn

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subtleties, every trace of practical business vanished. Neuburg departed to look after his patrimonial estates; leaving his interests in the duchies to be watched over by the Archduke. Even Count Zollern, after six months of wrangling in Brussels, took his departure. Prince Maurice distributed his army in various places within the debateable land, and Spinola did the same, leaving a garrison of 3000 foot and 300 horse in the important city of Wesel. The town and citadel of Julich were as firmly held by Maurice for the Protestant cause. Thus the duchies were jointly occupied by the forces of Catholicism and Protestantism, while nominally possessed and administered by the princes of Brandenburg and Neuburg. And so they were destined to remain until that Thirty Years' War, now so near its outbreak, should sweep over the earth, and bring its fiery solution at last to all these great debates.

CHAPTER VII.

Proud Position of the Republic—France obeys her—Hatred of Carleton —Position and Character of Aerssens—Claim for the “Third”—Recall of Aerssens—Rivalry between Maurice and Barneveld, who always sustains the separate Sovereignities of the Provinces—Conflict between Church and State added to other Elements of Discord in the Commonwealth—Religion a necessary Element in the Life of all Classes.

Thus the Republic had placed itself in as proud a position as it was possible for commonwealth or kingdom to occupy. It had dictated the policy and directed the combined military movements of Protestantism. It had gathered into a solid mass the various elements out of which the great Germanic mutiny against Rome, Spain, and Austria had been compounded. A breathing space of uncertain duration had come to interrupt and postpone the general and inevitable conflict. Meantime the Republic was encamped upon the enemy's soil.

France, which had hitherto commanded, now obeyed. England, vacillating and discontented, now threatening and now cajoling, saw for the time at least its influence over the councils of the Netherlands neutralized by the genius of the great statesman who still governed the Provinces, supreme in all but name. The hatred of the British government towards the Republic, while in reality more malignant than at any previous period, could now only find vent in tremendous, theological pamphlets, composed by the King in the form of diplomatic instructions, and hurled almost weekly at the heads of the States-General, by his ambassador, Dudley Carleton.

Few men hated Barneveld more bitterly than did Carleton. I wish to describe as rapidly, but as faithfully, as I can the outline at least of the events by which one of the saddest and most superfluous catastrophes in modern history was brought about. The web was a complex one, wrought apparently of many materials; but the more completely it is

unravelling the more clearly we shall detect the presence of the few simple but elemental fibres which make up the tissue of most human destinies, whether illustrious or obscure, and out of which the most moving pictures of human history are composed.

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The religious element, which seems at first view to be the all pervading and controlling one, is in reality rather the atmosphere which surrounds and colours than the essence which constitutes the tragedy to be delineated.

Personal, sometimes even paltry, jealousy; love of power, of money, of place; rivalry between civil and military ambition for predominance in a free state; struggles between Church and State to control and oppress each other; conflict between the cautious and healthy, but provincial and centrifugal, spirit on the one side, and the ardent centralizing, imperial, but dangerous, instinct on the other, for ascendancy in a federation; mortal combat between aristocracy disguised in the plebeian form of trading and political corporations and democracy sheltering itself under a famous sword and an ancient and illustrious name;—all these principles and passions will be found hotly at work in the melancholy five years with which we are now to be occupied, as they have entered, and will always enter, into every political combination in the great tragi-comedy which we call human history. As a study, a lesson, and a warning, perhaps the fate of Barneveld is as deserving of serious attention as most political tragedies of the last few centuries.

Francis Aerssens, as we have seen, continued to be the Dutch ambassador after the murder of Henry IV. Many of the preceding pages of this volume have been occupied with his opinions, his pictures, his conversations, and his political intrigues during a memorable epoch in the history of the Netherlands and of France. He was beyond all doubt one of the ablest diplomatists in Europe. Versed in many languages, a classical student, familiar with history and international law, a man of the world and familiar with its usages, accustomed to associate with dignity and tact on friendliest terms with sovereigns, eminent statesmen, and men of letters; endowed with a facile tongue, a fluent pen, and an eye and ear of singular acuteness and delicacy; distinguished for unflagging industry and singular aptitude for secret and intricate affairs;—he had by the exercise of these various qualities during a period of nearly twenty years at the court of Henry the Great been able to render inestimable services to the Republic which he represented. Of respectable but not distinguished lineage, not a Hollander, but a Belgian by birth, son of Cornelis Aerssens, Greffer of the States-General, long employed in that important post, he had been brought forward from a youth by Barneveld and early placed by him in the diplomatic career, of which through his favour and his own eminent talents he had now achieved the highest honours.

He had enjoyed the intimacy and even the confidence of Henry IV., so far as any man could be said to possess that monarch's confidence, and his friendly relations and familiar access to the King gave him political advantages superior to those of any of his colleagues at the same court.

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Acting entirely and faithfully according to the instructions of the Advocate of Holland, he always gratefully and copiously acknowledged the privilege of being guided and sustained in the difficult paths he had to traverse by so powerful and active an intellect. I have seldom alluded in terms to the instructions and despatches of the chief, but every position, negotiation, and opinion of the envoy—and the reader has seen many of them—is pervaded by their spirit. Certainly the correspondence of Aerssens is full to overflowing of gratitude, respect, fervent attachment to the person and exalted appreciation of the intellect and high character of the Advocate.

There can be no question of Aerssens's consummate abilities. Whether his heart were as sound as his head, whether his protestations of devotion had the ring of true gold or not, time would show. Hitherto Barneveld had not doubted him, nor had he found cause to murmur at Barneveld.

But the France of Henry IV., where the Dutch envoy was so all-powerful, had ceased to exist. A duller eye than that of Aerssens could have seen at a glance that the potent kingdom and firm ally of the Republic had been converted, for a long time to come at least, into a Spanish province. The double Spanish marriages (that of the young Louis XIII. with the Infanta Anna, and of his sister with the Infante, one day to be Philip IV.), were now certain, for it was to make them certain that the knife of Ravallac had been employed. The condition precedent to those marriages had long been known. It was the renunciation of the alliance between France and Holland. It was the condemnation to death, so far as France had the power to condemn her to death, of the young Republic. Had not Don Pedro de Toledo pompously announced this condition a year and a half before? Had not Henry spurned the bribe with scorn? And now had not Francis Aerssens been the first to communicate to his masters the fruit which had already ripened upon Henry's grave? As we have seen, he had revealed these intrigues long before they were known to the world, and the French court knew that he had revealed them. His position had become untenable. His friendship for Henry could not be of use to him with the delicate-featured, double-chinned, smooth and sluggish Florentine, who had passively authorized and actively profited by her husband's murder.

It was time for the Envoy to be gone. The Queen-Regent and Concini thought so. And so did Villeroy and Sillery and the rest of the old servants of the King, now become pensionaries of Spain. But Aerssens did not think so. He liked his position, changed as it was. He was deep in the plottings of Bouillon and Conde and the other malcontents against the Queen-Regent. These schemes, being entirely personal, the rank growth of the corruption and apparent disintegration of France, were perpetually changing, and could be reduced to no principle. It was a mere struggle of the great lords of France to wrest places, money, governments, military commands from the Queen-Regent, and frantic attempts on her part to save as much as possible of the general wreck for her lord and master Concini.

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It was ridiculous to ascribe any intense desire on the part of the Duc de Bouillon to aid the Protestant cause against Spain at that moment, acting as he was in combination with Conde, whom we have just seen employed by Spain as the chief instrument to effect the destruction of France and the bastardy of the Queen's children. Nor did the sincere and devout Protestants who had clung to the cause through good and bad report, men like Duplessis-Mornay, for example, and those who usually acted with him, believe in any of these schemes for partitioning France on pretence of saving Protestantism. But Bouillon, greatest of all French fishermen in troubled waters, was brother-in-law of Prince Maurice of Nassau, and Aerssens instinctively felt that the time had come when he should anchor himself to firm holding ground at home.

The Ambassador had also a personal grievance. Many of his most secret despatches to the States-General in which he expressed himself very freely, forcibly, and accurately on the general situation in France, especially in regard to the Spanish marriages and the Treaty of Hampton Court, had been transcribed at the Hague and copies of them sent to the French government. No baser act of treachery to an envoy could be imagined. It was not surprising that Aerssens complained bitterly of the deed. He secretly suspected Barneveld, but with injustice, of having played him this evil turn, and the incident first planted the seeds of the deadly hatred which was to bear such fatal fruit.

"A notable treason has been played upon me," he wrote to Jacques de Maldere, "which has outraged my heart. All the despatches which I have been sending for several months to M. de Barneveld have been communicated by copy in whole or in extracts to this court. Villeroy quoted from them at our interview to-day, and I was left as it were without power of reply. The despatches were long, solid, omitting no particularity for giving means to form the best judgment of the designs and intrigues of this court. No greater damage could be done to me and my usefulness. All those from whom I have hitherto derived information, princes and great personages, will shut themselves up from me What can be more ticklish than to pass judgment on the tricks of those who are governing this state? This single blow has knocked me down completely. For I was moving about among all of them, making my profit of all, without any reserve. M. de Barneveld knew by this means the condition of this kingdom as well as I do. Certainly in a well-ordered republic it would cost the life of a man who had thus trifled with the reputation of an ambassador. I believe M. de Barneveld will be sorry, but this will never restore to me the confidence which I have lost. If one was jealous of my position at this court, certainly I deserved rather pity from those who should contemplate it closely. If one wished to procure my downfall in order to raise oneself above me, there

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was no need of these tricks. I have been offering to resign my embassy this long time, which will now produce nothing but thorns for me. How can I negotiate after my private despatches have been read? L'Hoste, the clerk of Villeroy, was not so great a criminal as the man who revealed my despatches; and L'Hoste was torn by four horses after his death. Four months long I have been complaining of this to M. de Barneveld. . . . Patience! I am groaning without being able to hope for justice. I console myself, for my term of office will soon arrive. Would that my embassy could have finished under the agreeable and friendly circumstances with which it began. The man who may succeed me will not find that this vile trick will help him much Pray find out whence and from whom this intrigue has come."

Certainly an envoy's position could hardly be more utterly compromised. Most unquestionably Aerssens had reason to be indignant, believing as he did that his conscientious efforts in the service of his government had been made use of by his chief to undermine his credit and blast his character. There was an intrigue between the newly appointed French minister, de Russey, at the Hague and the enemies of Aerssens to represent him to his own government as mischievous, passionate, unreasonably vehement in supporting the claims and dignity of his own country at the court to which he was accredited. Not often in diplomatic history has an ambassador of a free state been censured or removed for believing and maintaining in controversy that his own government is in the right. It was natural that the French government should be disturbed by the vivid light which he had flashed upon their pernicious intrigues with Spain to the detriment of the Republic, and at the pertinacity with which he resisted their preposterous claim to be reimbursed for one-third of the money which the late king had advanced as a free subsidy towards the war of the Netherlands for independence. But no injustice could be more outrageous than for the Envoy's own government to unite with the foreign State in damaging the character of its own agent for the crime of fidelity to itself.

Of such cruel perfidy Aerssens had been the victim, and he most wrongfully suspected his chief as its real perpetrator.

The claim for what was called the "Third" had been invented after the death of Henry. As already explained, the "Third" was not a gift from England to the Netherlands. It was a loan from England to France, or more properly a consent to abstain from pressing for payment for this proportion of an old debt. James, who was always needy, had often desired, but never obtained, the payment of this sum from Henry. Now that the King was dead, he applied to the Regent's government, and the Regent's government called upon the Netherlands, to pay the money.

Aerssens, as the agent of the Republic, protested firmly against such claim. The money had been advanced by the King as a free gift, as his contribution to a war in which he

was deeply interested, although he was nominally at peace with Spain. As to the private arrangements between France and England, the Republic, said the Dutch envoy, was in no sense bound by them. He was no party to the Treaty of Hampton Court, and knew nothing of its stipulations.

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Courtiers and politicians in plenty at the French court, now that Henry was dead, were quite sure that they had heard him say over and over again that the Netherlands had bound themselves to pay the Third. They persuaded Mary de' Medici that she likewise had often heard him say so, and induced her to take high ground on the subject in her interviews with Aerssens. The luckless queen, who was always in want of money to satisfy the insatiable greed of her favourites, and to buy off the enmity of the great princes, was very vehement—although she knew as much of those transactions as of the finances of Prester John or the Lama of Thibet—in maintaining this claim of her government upon the States.

"After talking with the ministers," said Aerssens, "I had an interview with the Queen. I knew that she had been taught her lesson, to insist on the payment of the Third. So I did not speak at all of the matter, but talked exclusively and at length of the French regiments in the States' service. She was embarrassed, and did not know exactly what to say. At last, without replying a single word to what I had been saying, she became very red in the face, and asked me if I were not instructed to speak of the money due to England. Whereupon I spoke in the sense already indicated. She interrupted me by saying she had a perfect recollection that the late king intended and understood that we were to pay the Third to England, and had talked with her very seriously on the subject. If he were living, he would think it very strange, she said, that we refused; and so on.

"Soissons, too, pretends to remember perfectly that such were the King's intentions. 'Tis a very strange thing, Sir. Every one knows now the secrets of the late king, if you are willing to listen. Yet he was not in the habit of taking all the world into his confidence. The Queen takes her opinions as they give them to her. 'Tis a very good princess, but I am sorry she is so ignorant of affairs. As she says she remembers, one is obliged to say one believes her. But I, who knew the King so intimately, and saw him so constantly, know that he could only have said that the Third was paid in acquittal of his debts to and for account of the King of England, and not that we were to make restitution thereof. The Chancellor tells me my refusal has been taken as an affront by the Queen, and Puysieux says it is a contempt which she can't swallow."

Aerssens on his part remained firm; his pertinacity being the greater as he thoroughly understood the subject which he was talking about, an advantage which was rarely shared in by those with whom he conversed. The Queen, highly scandalized by his demeanour, became from that time forth his bitter enemy, and, as already stated, was resolved to be rid of him.

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Nor was the Envoy at first desirous of remaining. He had felt after Henry's death and Sully's disgrace, and the complete transformation of the France which he had known, that his power of usefulness was gone. "Our enemies," he said, "have got the advantage which I used to have in times past, and I recognize a great coldness towards us, which is increasing every day." Nevertheless, he yielded reluctantly to Barneveld's request that he should for the time at least remain at his post. Later on, as the intrigues against him began to unfold themselves, and his faithful services were made use of at home to blacken his character and procure his removal, he refused to resign, as to do so would be to play into the hands of his enemies, and by inference at least to accuse himself of infidelity to his trust.

But his concealed rage and his rancor grew more deadly every day. He was fully aware of the plots against him, although he found it difficult to trace them to their source.

"I doubt not," he wrote to Jacques de Maldere, the distinguished diplomatist and senator, who had recently returned from his embassy to England, "that this beautiful proposition of de Russy has been sent to your Province of Zealand. Does it not seem to you a plot well woven as well in Holland as at this court to remove me from my post with disreputation? What have I done that should cause the Queen to disapprove my proceedings? Since the death of the late king I have always opposed the Third, which they have been trying to fix upon the treasury, on the ground that Henry never spoke to me of restitution, that the receipts given were simple ones, and that the money given was spent for the common benefit of France and the States under direction of the King's government. But I am expected here to obey M. de Villeroy, who says that it was the intention of the late king to oblige us to make the payment. I am not accustomed to obey authority if it be not supported by reason. It is for my masters to reply and to defend me. The Queen has no reason to complain. I have maintained the interests of my superiors. But this is not the cause of the complaints. My misfortune is that all my despatches have been sent from Holland in copy to this court. Most of them contained free pictures of the condition and dealings of those who govern here. M. de Villeroy has found himself depicted often, and now under pretext of a public negotiation he has found an opportunity of revenging himself . . . Besides this cause which Villeroy has found for combing my head, Russy has given notice here that I have kept my masters in the hopes of being honourably exempted from the claims of this government. The long letter which I wrote to M. de Barneveld justifies my proceedings."

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It is no wonder that the Ambassador was galled to the quick by the outrage which those concerned in the government were seeking to put upon him. How could an honest man fail to be overwhelmed with rage and anguish at being dishonoured before the world by his masters for scrupulously doing his duty, and for maintaining the rights and dignity of his own country? He knew that the charges were but pretexts, that the motives of his enemies were as base as the intrigues themselves, but he also knew that the world usually sides with the government against the individual, and that a man's reputation is rarely strong enough to maintain itself unsullied in a foreign land when his own government stretches forth its hand not to, shield, but to stab him.

[See the similarity of Aerssens position to that of Motley 250 years later, in the biographical sketch of Motley by Oliver Wendell Holmes. D.W.]

"I know," he said, "that this plot has been woven partly in Holland and partly here by good correspondence, in order to drive me from my post with disreputation. To this has tended the communication of my despatches to make me lose my best friends. This too was the object of the particular imparting to de Russy of all my propositions, in order to draw a complaint against me from this court.

"But as I have discovered this accurately, I have resolved to offer to my masters the continuance of my very humble service for such time and under such conditions as they may think good to prescribe. I prefer forcing my natural and private inclinations to giving an opportunity for the ministers of this kingdom to discredit us, and to my enemies to succeed in injuring me, and by fraud and malice to force me from my post . . . I am truly sorry, being ready to retire, wishing to have an honourable testimony in recompense of my labours, that one is in such hurry to take advantage of my fall. I cannot believe that my masters wish to suffer this. They are too prudent, and cannot be ignorant of the treachery which has been practised on me. I have maintained their cause. If they have chosen to throw down the fruits of my industry, the blame should be imputed to those who consider their own ambition more than the interests of the public What envoy will ever dare to speak with vigour if he is not sustained by the government at home? My enemies have misrepresented my actions, and my language as passionate, exaggerated, mischievous, but I have no passion except for the service of my superiors. They say that I have a dark and distrustful disposition, but I have been alarmed at the alliance now forming here with the King of Spain, through the policy of M. de Villeroy. I was the first to discover this intrigue, which they thought buried in the bosom of the Triumvirate. I gave notice of it to My Lords the States as in duty bound. It all came back to the government in the copies

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furnished of my secret despatches. This is the real source of the complaints against me. The rest of the charges, relating to the Third and other matters, are but pretexts. To parry the blow, they pretend that all that is said and done with the Spaniard is but feigning. Who is going to believe that? Has not the Pope intervened in the affair? . . . I tell you they are furious here because I have my eyes open. I see too far into their affairs to suit their purposes. A new man would suit them better.”

His position was hopelessly compromised. He remained in Paris, however, month after month, and even year after year, defying his enemies both at the Queen’s court and in Holland, feeding fat the grudge he bore to Barneveld as the supposed author of the intrigue against him, and drawing closer the personal bands which united him to Bouillon and through him to Prince Maurice.

The wrath of the Ambassador flamed forth without disguise against Barneveld and all his adherents when his removal, as will be related on a subsequent page, was at last effected. And his hatred was likely to be deadly. A man with a shrewd, vivid face, cleanly cut features and a restless eye; wearing a close-fitting skull cap, which gave him something the look of a monk, but with the thoroughbred and facile demeanour of one familiar with the world; stealthy, smooth, and cruel, a man coldly intellectual, who feared no one, loved but few, and never forgot or forgave; Francis d’Aerssens, devoured by ambition and burning with revenge, was a dangerous enemy.

Time was soon to show whether it was safe to injure him. Barneveld, from well-considered motives of public policy, was favouring his honourable recall. But he allowed a decorous interval of more than three years to elapse in which to terminate his affairs, and to take a deliberate departure from that French embassy to which the Advocate had originally promoted him, and in which there had been so many years of mutual benefit and confidence between the two statesmen. He used no underhand means. He did not abuse the power of the States-General which he wielded to cast him suddenly and brutally from the distinguished post which he occupied, and so to attempt to dishonour him before the world. Nothing could be more respectful and conciliatory than the attitude of the government from first to last towards this distinguished functionary. The Republic respected itself too much to deal with honourable agents whose services it felt obliged to dispense with as with vulgar malefactors who had been detected in crime. But Aerssens believed that it was the Advocate who had caused copies of his despatches to be sent to the French court, and that he had deliberately and for a fixed purpose been undermining his influence at home and abroad and blackening his character. All his ancient feelings of devotion, if they had ever genuinely existed towards his former friend and patron, turned to gall. He was almost ready to deny that he had ever respected Barneveld, appreciated his public services, admired his intellect, or felt gratitude for his guidance.

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A fierce controversy—to which at a later period it will be necessary to call the reader's attention, because it is intimately connected with dark scenes afterwards to be enacted—took place between the late ambassador and Cornelis van der Myle. Meantime Barneveld pursued the policy which he had marked out for the States-General in regard to France.

Certainly it was a difficult problem. There could be no doubt that metamorphosed France could only be a dangerous ally for the Republic. It was in reality impossible that she should be her ally at all. And this Barneveld knew. Still it was better, so he thought, for the Netherlands that France should exist than that it should fall into utter decomposition. France, though under the influence of Spain, and doubly allied by marriage contracts to Spain, was better than Spain itself in the place of France. This seemed to be the only choice between two evils. Should the whole weight of the States-General be thrown into the scale of the malcontent and mutinous princes against the established but tottering government of France, it was difficult to say how soon Spain might literally, as well as inferentially, reign in Paris.

Between the rebellion and the legitimate government, therefore, Barneveld did not hesitate. France, corporate France, with which the Republic had been so long in close and mutually advantageous alliance, and from whose late monarch she had received such constant and valuable benefits, was in the Advocate's opinion the only power to be recognised, Papal and Spanish though it was. The advantage of an alliance with the fickle, self-seeking, and ever changing mutiny, that was seeking to make use of Protestantism to effect its own ends, was in his eyes rather specious than real.

By this policy, while making the breach irreparable with Aerssens and as many leading politicians as Aerssens could influence, he first brought on himself the stupid accusation of swerving towards Spain. Dull murmurs like these, which were now but faintly making themselves heard against the reputation of the Advocate, were destined ere long to swell into a mighty roar; but he hardly listened now to insinuations which seemed infinitely below his contempt. He still effectually ruled the nation through his influence in the States of Holland, where he reigned supreme. Thus far Barneveld and My Lords the States-General were one personage.

But there was another great man in the State who had at last grown impatient of the Advocate's power, and was secretly resolved to brook it no longer. Maurice of Nassau had felt himself too long rebuked by the genius of the Advocate. The Prince had perhaps never forgiven him for the political guardianship which he had exercised over him ever since the death of William the Silent. He resented the leading strings by which his youthful footstep had been sustained, and which he seemed always to feel about his limbs so long as Barneveld existed. He had never forgotten the unpalatable advice given to him by the Advocate through the Princess-Dowager.

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The brief campaign in Cleve and Julich was the last great political operation in which the two were likely to act in even apparent harmony. But the rivalry between the two had already pronounced itself emphatically during the negotiations for the truce. The Advocate had felt it absolutely necessary for the Republic to suspend the war at the first moment when she could treat with her ancient sovereign on a footing of equality. Spain, exhausted with the conflict, had at last consented to what she considered the humiliation of treating with her rebellious provinces as with free states over which she claimed no authority. The peace party, led by Barneveld, had triumphed, notwithstanding the steady opposition of Prince Maurice and his adherents.

Why had Maurice opposed the treaty? Because his vocation was over, because he was the greatest captain of the age, because his emoluments, his consideration, his dignity before the world, his personal power, were all vastly greater in war than in his opinion they could possibly be in peace. It was easy for him to persuade himself that what was manifestly for his individual interest was likewise essential to the prosperity of the country.

The diminution in his revenues consequent on the return to peace was made good to him, his brother, and his cousin, by most munificent endowments and pensions. And it was owing to the strenuous exertions of the Advocate that these large sums were voted. A hollow friendship was kept up between the two during the first few years of the truce, but resentment and jealousy lay deep in Maurice's heart.

At about the period of the return of Aerssens from his French embassy, the suppressed fire was ready to flame forth at the first fanning by that artful hand. It was impossible, so Aerssens thought and whispered, that two heads could remain on one body politic. There was no room in the Netherlands for both the Advocate and the Prince. Barneveld was in all civil affairs dictator, chief magistrate, supreme judge; but he occupied this high station by the force of intellect, will, and experience, not through any constitutional provision. In time of war the Prince was generalissimo, commander-in-chief of all the armies of the Republic. Yet constitutionally he was not captain-general at all. He was only stadholder of five out of seven provinces.

Barneveld suspected him of still wishing to make himself sovereign of the country. Perhaps his suspicions were incorrect. Yet there was every reason why Maurice should be ambitious of that position. It would have been in accordance with the openly expressed desire of Henry IV. and other powerful allies of the Netherlands. His father's assassination had alone prevented his elevation to the rank of sovereign Count of Holland. The federal policy of the Provinces had drifted into a republican form after their renunciation of their Spanish sovereign, not because the people,

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or the States as representing the people, had deliberately chosen a republican system, but because they could get no powerful monarch to accept the sovereignty. They had offered to become subjects of Protestant England and of Catholic France. Both powers had refused the offer, and refused it with something like contumely. However deep the subsequent regret on the part of both, there was no doubt of the fact. But the internal policy in all the provinces, and in all the towns, was republican. Local self-government existed everywhere. Each city magistracy was a little republic in itself. The death of William the Silent, before he had been invested with the sovereign power of all seven provinces, again left that sovereignty in abeyance. Was the supreme power of the Union, created at Utrecht in 1579, vested in the States-General?

They were beginning theoretically to claim it, but Barneveld denied the existence of any such power either in law or fact. It was a league of sovereignties, he maintained; a confederacy of seven independent states, united for certain purposes by a treaty made some thirty years before. Nothing could be more imbecile, judging by the light of subsequent events and the experience of centuries, than such an organization. The independent and sovereign republic of Zeeland or of Groningen, for example, would have made a poor figure campaigning, or negotiating, or exhibiting itself on its own account before the world. Yet it was difficult to show any charter, precedent, or prescription for the sovereignty of the States-General. Necessary as such an incorporation was for the very existence of the Union, no constitutional union had ever been enacted. Practically the Province of Holland, representing more than half the population, wealth, strength, and intellect of the whole confederation, had achieved an irregular supremacy in the States-General. But its undeniable superiority was now causing a rank growth of envy, hatred, and jealousy throughout the country, and the great Advocate of Holland, who was identified with the province, and had so long wielded its power, was beginning to reap the full harvest of that malice.

Thus while there was so much of vagueness in theory and practice as to the sovereignty, there was nothing criminal on the part of Maurice if he was ambitious of obtaining the sovereignty himself. He was not seeking to compass it by base artifice or by intrigue of any kind. It was very natural that he should be restive under the dictatorship of the Advocate. If a single burgher and lawyer could make himself despot of the Netherlands, how much more reasonable that he—with the noblest blood of Europe in his veins, whose direct ancestor three centuries before had been emperor not only of those provinces, but of all Germany and half Christendom besides, whose immortal father had under God been the creator and saviour of the new commonwealth, had made sacrifices such as man never made for a people, and had at last

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laid down his life in its defence; who had himself fought daily from boyhood upwards in the great cause, who had led national armies from victory to victory till he had placed his country as a military school and a belligerent power foremost among the nations, and had at last so exhausted and humbled the great adversary and former tyrant that he had been glad of a truce while the rebel chief would have preferred to continue the war—should aspire to rule by hereditary right a land with which his name and his race were indelibly associated by countless sacrifices and heroic achievements.

It was no crime in Maurice to desire the sovereignty. It was still less a crime in Barneveld to believe that he desired it. There was no special reason why the Prince should love the republican form of government provided that an hereditary one could be legally substituted for it. He had sworn allegiance to the statutes, customs, and privileges of each of the provinces of which he had been elected stadholder, but there would have been no treason on his part if the name and dignity of stadholder should be changed by the States themselves for those of King or sovereign Prince.

Yet it was a chief grievance against the Advocate on the part of the Prince that Barneveld believed him capable of this ambition.

The Republic existed as a fact, but it had not long existed, nor had it ever received a formal baptism. So undefined was its constitution, and so conflicting were the various opinions in regard to it of eminent men, that it would be difficult to say how high-treason could be committed against it. Great lawyers of highest intellect and learning believed the sovereign power to reside in the separate states, others found that sovereignty in the city magistracies, while during a feverish period of war and tumult the supreme function had without any written constitution, any organic law, practically devolved upon the States-General, who had now begun to claim it as a right. The Republic was neither venerable by age nor impregnable in law. It was an improvised aristocracy of lawyers, manufacturers, bankers, and corporations which had done immense work and exhibited astonishing sagacity and courage, but which might never have achieved the independence of the Provinces unaided by the sword of Orange-Nassau and the magic spell which belonged to that name.

Thus a bitter conflict was rapidly developing itself in the heart of the Commonwealth. There was the civil element struggling with the military for predominance; sword against gown; states' rights against central authority; peace against war; above all the rivalry of one prominent personage against another, whose mutual hatred was now artfully inflamed by partisans.

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And now another element of discord had come, more potent than all the rest: the terrible, never ending, struggle of Church against State. Theological hatred which forty years long had found vent in the exchange of acrimony between the ancient and the Reformed churches was now assuming other shapes. Religion in that age and country was more than has often been the case in history the atmosphere of men's daily lives. But during the great war for independence, although the hostility between the two religious forces was always intense, it was modified especially towards the close of the struggle by other controlling influences. The love of independence and the passion for nationality, the devotion to ancient political privileges, was often as fervid and genuine in Catholic bosoms as in those of Protestants, and sincere adherents of the ancient church had fought to the death against Spain in defence of chartered rights.

At that very moment it is probable that half the population of the United Provinces was Catholic. Yet it would be ridiculous to deny that the aggressive, uncompromising; self-sacrificing, intensely believing, perfectly fearless spirit of Calvinism had been the animating soul, the motive power of the great revolt. For the Provinces to have encountered Spain and Rome without Calvinism, and relying upon municipal enthusiasm only, would have been to throw away the sword and fight with the scabbard.

But it is equally certain that those hot gospellers who had suffered so much martyrdom and achieved so many miracles were fully aware of their power and despotic in its exercise. Against the oligarchy of commercial and juridical corporations they stood there the most terrible aristocracy of all: the aristocracy of God's elect, predestined from all time and to all eternity to take precedence of and to look down upon their inferior and lost fellow creatures. It was inevitable that this aristocracy, which had done so much, which had breathed into a new-born commonwealth the breath of its life, should be intolerant, haughty, dogmatic.

The Church of Rome, which had been dethroned after inflicting such exquisite tortures during its period of power, was not to raise its head. Although so large a proportion of the inhabitants of the country were secretly or openly attached to that faith, it was a penal offence to participate openly in its rites and ceremonies. Religious equality, except in the minds of a few individuals, was an unimaginable idea. There was still one Church which arrogated to itself the sole possession of truth, the Church of Geneva. Those who admitted the possibility of other forms and creeds were either Atheists or, what was deemed worse than Atheists, Papists, because Papists were assumed to be traitors also, and desirous of selling the country to Spain. An undevout man in that land and at that epoch was an almost unknown phenomenon. Religion was as much a recognized necessity of existence as food or drink. It were as easy to find people about without clothes as without religious convictions.

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The Advocate, who had always adhered to the humble spirit of his ancestral device, “*Nil scire tutissima fedes*,” and almost alone among his fellow citizens (save those immediate apostles and pupils of his who became involved in his fate) in favour of religious toleration, began to be suspected of treason and Papacy because, had he been able to give the law, it was thought he would have permitted such horrors as the public exercise of the Roman Catholic religion.

The hissings and screamings of the vulgar against him as he moved forward on his stedfast course he heeded less than those of geese on a common. But there was coming a time when this proud and scornful statesman, conscious of the superiority conferred by great talents and unparalleled experience, would find it less easy to treat the voice of slanderers, whether idiots or powerful and intellectual enemies, with contempt.

CHAPTER VIII.

Schism in the Church a Public Fact—Struggle for Power between the Sacerdotal and Political Orders—Dispute between Arminius and Gomarus—Rage of James I. at the Appointment of Voratius—Arminians called Remonstrants—Hague Conference—Contra-Remonstrance by Gomarites of Seven Points to the Remonstrants’ Five—Fierce Theological Disputes throughout the Country—Ryswyk Secession—Maurice wishes to remain neutral, but finds himself the Chieftain of the Contra-Remonstrant Party—The States of Holland Remonstrant by a large Majority—The States-General Contra-Remonstrant—Sir Ralph Winwood leaves the Hague—Three Armies to take the Field against Protestantism.

Schism in the Church had become a public fact, and theological hatred was in full blaze throughout the country.

The great practical question in the Church had been as to the appointment of preachers, wardens, schoolmasters, and other officers. By the ecclesiastical arrangements of 1591 great power was conceded to the civil authority in church matters, especially in regard to such appointments, which were made by a commission consisting of four members named by the churches and four by the magistrates in each district.

Barneveld, who above all things desired peace in the Church, had wished to revive this ordinance, and in 1612 it had been resolved by the States of Holland that each city or village should, if the magistracy approved, provisionally conform to it. The States of Utrecht made at the same time a similar arrangement.

It was the controversy which has been going on since the beginning of history and is likely to be prolonged to the end of time—the struggle for power between the sacerdotal

and political orders; the controversy whether priests shall control the state or the state govern the priests.

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This was the practical question involved in the fierce dispute as to dogma. The famous duel between Arminius and Gomarus; the splendid theological tournaments which succeeded; six champions on a side armed in full theological panoply and swinging the sharpest curtal axes which learning, passion, and acute intellect could devise, had as yet produced no beneficent result. Nobody had been convinced by the shock of argument, by the exchange of those desperate blows. The High Council of the Hague had declared that no difference of opinion in the Church existed sufficient to prevent fraternal harmony and happiness. But Gomarus loudly declared that, if there were no means of putting down the heresy of Arminius, there would before long be a struggle such as would set province against province, village against village, family against family, throughout the land. He should be afraid to die in such doctrine. He shuddered that any one should dare to come before God's tribunal with such blasphemies. Meantime his great adversary, the learned and eloquent, the musical, frolicsome, hospitable heresiarch was no more. Worn out with controversy, but peaceful and happy in the convictions which were so bitterly denounced by Gomarus and a large proportion of both preachers and laymen in the Netherlands, and convinced that the schism which in his view had been created by those who called themselves the orthodox would weaken the cause of Protestantism throughout Europe, Arminius died at the age of forty-nine.

The magistrates throughout Holland, with the exception of a few cities, were Arminian, the preachers Gomarian; for Arminius ascribed to the civil authority the right to decide upon church matters, while Gomarus maintained that ecclesiastical affairs should be regulated in ecclesiastical assemblies. The overseers of Leyden University appointed Conrad Vorstius to be professor of theology in place of Arminius. The selection filled to the brim the cup of bitterness, for no man was more audaciously latitudinarian than he. He was even suspected of Socinianism. There came a shriek from King James, fierce and shrill enough to rouse Arminius from his grave. James foamed to the mouth at the insolence of the overseers in appointing such a monster of infidelity to the professorship. He ordered his books to be publicly burned in St. Paul's Churchyard and at both Universities, and would have burned the Professor himself with as much delight as Torquemada or Peter Titelman ever felt in roasting their victims, had not the day for such festivities gone by. He ordered the States of Holland on pain of for ever forfeiting his friendship to exclude Vorstius at once from the theological chair and to forbid him from "nestling anywhere in the country."

He declared his amazement that they should tolerate such a pest as Conrad Vorstius. Had they not had enough of the seed sown by that foe of God, Arminius? He ordered the States-General to chase the blasphemous monster from the land, or else he would cut off all connection with their false and heretic churches and make the other Reformed churches of Europe do the same, nor should the youth of England ever be allowed to frequent the University of Leyden.

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In point of fact the Professor was never allowed to qualify, to preach, or to teach; so tremendous was the outcry of Peter Plancius and many orthodox preachers, echoing the wrath of the King. He lived at Gouda in a private capacity for several years, until the Synod of Dordrecht at last publicly condemned his opinions and deprived him of his professorship.

Meantime, the preachers who were disciples of Arminius had in a private assembly drawn up what was called a Remonstrance, addressed to the States of Holland, and defending themselves from the reproach that they were seeking change in the Divine service and desirous of creating tumult and schism.

This Remonstrance, set forth by the pen of the famous Uytenbogaert, whom Gomarus called the Court Trumpeter, because for a long time he had been Prince Maurice's favourite preacher, was placed in the hands of Barneveld, for delivery to the States of Holland. Thenceforth the Arminians were called Remonstrants.

The Hague Conference followed, six preachers on a side, and the States of Holland exhorted to fraternal compromise. Until further notice, they decreed that no man should be required to believe more than had been laid down in the Five Points:

I. God has from eternity resolved to choose to eternal life those who through his grace believe in Jesus Christ, and in faith and obedience so continue to the end, and to condemn the unbelieving and unconverted to eternal damnation.

II. Jesus Christ died for all; so, nevertheless, that no one actually except believers is redeemed by His death.

III. Man has not the saving belief from himself, nor out of his free will, but he needs thereto God's grace in Christ.

IV. This grace is the beginning, continuation, and completion of man's salvation; all good deeds must be ascribed to it, but it does not work irresistibly.

V. God's grace gives sufficient strength to the true believers to overcome evil; but whether they cannot lose grace should be more closely examined before it should be taught in full security.

Afterwards they expressed themselves more distinctly on this point, and declared that a true believer, through his own fault, can fall away from God and lose faith.

Before the conference, however, the Gomarite preachers had drawn up a Contra-Remonstrance of Seven Points in opposition to the Remonstrants' five.

They demanded the holding of a National Synod to settle the difference between these Five and Seven Points, or the sending of them to foreign universities for arbitration, a mutual promise being given by the contending parties to abide by the decision.

Thus much it has been necessary to state concerning what in the seventeenth century was called the platform of the two great parties: a term which has been perpetuated in our own country, and is familiar to all the world in the nineteenth.

These were the Seven Points:

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I. God has chosen from eternity certain persons out of the human race, which in and with Adam fell into sin and has no more power to believe and Convert itself than a dead man to restore himself to life, in order to make them blessed through Christ; while He passes by the rest through His righteous judgment, and leaves them lying in their sins.

II. Children of believing parents, as well as full-grown believers, are to be considered as elect so long as they with action do not prove the contrary.

III. God in His election has not looked at the belief and the repentance of the elect; but, on the contrary, in His eternal and unchangeable design, has resolved to give to the elect faith and stedfastness, and thus to make them blessed.

IV. He, to this end, in the first place, presented to them His only begotten Son, whose sufferings, although sufficient for the expiation of all men's sins, nevertheless, according to God's decree, serves alone to the reconciliation of the elect.

V. God causeth the Gospel to be preached to them, making the same through the Holy Ghost, of strength upon their minds; so that they not merely obtain power to repent and to believe, but also actually and voluntarily do repent and believe.

VI. Such elect, through the same power of the Holy Ghost through which they have once become repentant and believing, are kept in such wise that they indeed through weakness fall into heavy sins; but can never wholly and for always lose the true faith.

VII. True believers from this, however, draw no reason for fleshly quiet, it being impossible that they who through a true faith were planted in Christ should bring forth no fruits of thankfulness; the promises of God's help and the warnings of Scripture tending to make their salvation work in them in fear and trembling, and to cause them more earnestly to desire help from that spirit without which they can do nothing.

There shall be no more setting forth of these subtle and finely wrought abstractions in our pages. We aspire not to the lofty heights of theological and supernatural contemplation, where the atmosphere becomes too rarefied for ordinary constitutions. Rather we attempt an objective and level survey of remarkable phenomena manifesting themselves on the earth; direct or secondary emanations from those distant spheres.

For in those days, and in that land especially, theology and politics were one. It may be questioned at least whether this practical fusion of elements, which may with more safety to the Commonwealth be kept separate, did not tend quite as much to lower and contaminate the religious sentiments as to elevate the political idea. To mix habitually the solemn phraseology which men love to reserve for their highest and most sacred needs with the familiar slang of politics and trade seems to our generation not a very desirable proceeding.

The aroma of doubly distilled and highly sublimated dogma is more difficult to catch than to comprehend the broader and more practical distinctions of every-day party strife.

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King James was furious at the thought that common men—the vulgar, the people in short—should dare to discuss deep problems of divinity which, as he confessed, had puzzled even his royal mind. Barneveld modestly disclaimed the power of seeing with absolute clearness into things beyond the reach of the human intellect. But the honest Netherlanders were not abashed by thunder from the royal pulpit, nor perplexed by hesitations which darkened the soul of the great Advocate.

In burghers' mansions, peasants' cottages, mechanics' back-parlours, on board herring smacks, canal boats, and East Indiamen; in shops, counting-rooms, farmyards, guard-rooms, ale-houses; on the exchange, in the tennis-court, on the mall; at banquets, at burials, christenings, or bridals; wherever and whenever human creatures met each other, there was ever to be found the fierce wrangle of Remonstrant and Contra-Remonstrant, the hissing of red-hot theological rhetoric, the pelting of hostile texts. The blacksmith's iron cooled on the anvil, the tinker dropped a kettle half mended, the broker left a bargain unclinched, the Scheveningen fisherman in his wooden shoes forgot the cracks in his pinkie, while each paused to hold high converse with friend or foe on fate, free will, or absolute foreknowledge; losing himself in wandering mazes whence there was no issue. Province against province, city against city, family against family; it was one vast scene of bickering, denunciation, heart-burnings, mutual excommunication and hatred.

Alas! a generation of mankind before, men had stood banded together to resist, with all the might that comes from union, the fell spirit of the Holy Inquisition, which was dooming all who had wandered from the ancient fold or resisted foreign tyranny to the axe, the faggot, the living grave. There had been small leisure then for men who fought for Fatherland, and for comparative liberty of conscience, to tear each others' characters in pieces, and to indulge in mutual hatreds and loathing on the question of predestination.

As a rule the population, especially of the humbler classes, and a great majority of the preachers were Contra-Remonstrant; the magistrates, the burgher patricians, were Remonstrant. In Holland the controlling influence was Remonstrant; but Amsterdam and four or five other cities of that province held to the opposite doctrine. These cities formed therefore a small minority in the States Assembly of Holland sustained by a large majority in the States-General. The Province of Utrecht was almost unanimously Remonstrant. The five other provinces were decidedly Contra-Remonstrant.

It is obvious therefore that the influence of Barneveld, hitherto so all-controlling in the States-General, and which rested on the complete submission of the States of Holland to his will, was tottering. The battle-line between Church and State was now drawn up; and it was at the same time a battle between the union and the principles of state sovereignty.

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It had long since been declared through the mouth of the Advocate, but in a solemn state manifesto, that My Lords the States-General were the foster-fathers and the natural protectors of the Church, to whom supreme authority in church matters belonged.

The Contra-Remonstrants, on the other hand, maintained that all the various churches made up one indivisible church, seated above the States, whether Provincial or General, and governed by the Holy Ghost acting directly upon the congregations.

As the schism grew deeper and the States-General receded from the position which they had taken up under the lead of the Advocate, the scene was changed. A majority of the Provinces being Contra-Remonstrant, and therefore in favour of a National Synod, the States-General as a body were of necessity for the Synod.

It was felt by the clergy that, if many churches existed, they would all remain subject to the civil authority. The power of the priesthood would thus sink before that of the burgher aristocracy. There must be one church—the Church of Geneva and Heidelberg—if that theocracy which the Gomarites meant to establish was not to vanish as a dream. It was founded on Divine Right, and knew no chief magistrate but the Holy Ghost. A few years before the States-General had agreed to a National Synod, but with a condition that there should be revision of the Netherland Confession and the Heidelberg Catechism.

Against this the orthodox infallibilists had protested and thundered, because it was an admission that the vile Arminian heresy might perhaps be declared correct. It was now however a matter of certainty that the States-General would cease to oppose the unconditional Synod, because the majority sided with the priesthood.

The magistrates of Leyden had not long before opposed the demand for a Synod on the ground that the war against Spain was not undertaken to maintain one sect; that men of various sects and creeds had fought with equal valour against the common foe; that religious compulsion was hateful, and that no synod had a right to claim Netherlanders as slaves.

To thoughtful politicians like Barneveld, Hugo Grotius, and men who acted with them, fraught with danger to the state, that seemed a doctrine by which mankind were not regarded as saved or doomed according to belief or deeds, but as individuals divided from all eternity into two classes which could never be united, but must ever mutually regard each other as enemies.

And like enemies Netherlanders were indeed beginning to regard each other. The man who, banded like brothers, had so heroically fought for two generations long for liberty against an almost superhuman despotism, now howling and jeering against each other like demons, seemed determined to bring the very name of liberty into contempt.

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Where the Remonstrants were in the ascendant, they excited the hatred and disgust of the orthodox by their overbearing determination to carry their Five Points. A broker in Rotterdam of the Contra-Remonstrant persuasion, being about to take a wife, swore he had rather be married by a pig than a parson. For this sparkling epigram he was punished by the Remonstrant magistracy with loss of his citizenship for a year and the right to practise his trade for life. A casuistical tinker, expressing himself violently in the same city against the Five Points, and disrespectfully towards the magistrates for tolerating them, was banished from the town. A printer in the neighbourhood, disgusted with these and similar efforts of tyranny on the part of the dominant party, thrust a couple of lines of doggrel into the lottery:

“In name of the Prince of Orange, I ask once and again,
What difference between the Inquisition of Rotterdam and Spain?”

For this poetical effort the printer was sentenced to forfeit the prize that he had drawn in the lottery, and to be kept in prison on bread and water for a fortnight.

Certainly such punishments were hardly as severe as being beheaded or burned or buried alive, as would have been the lot of tinkers and printers and brokers who opposed the established church in the days of Alva, but the demon of intolerance, although its fangs were drawn, still survived, and had taken possession of both parties in the Reformed Church. For it was the Remonstrants who had possession of the churches at Rotterdam, and the printer's distich is valuable as pointing out that the name of Orange was beginning to identify itself with the Contra-Remonstrant faction. At this time, on the other hand, the gabble that Barneveld had been bought by Spanish gold, and was about to sell his country to Spain, became louder than a whisper. Men were not ashamed, from theological hatred, to utter such senseless calumnies against a venerable statesman whose long life had been devoted to the cause of his country's independence and to the death struggle with Spain.

As if because a man admitted the possibility of all his fellow-creatures being saved from damnation through repentance and the grace of God, he must inevitably be a traitor to his country and a pensionary of her deadliest foe.

And where the Contra-Remonstrants held possession of the churches and the city governments, acts of tyranny which did not then seem ridiculous were of everyday occurrence. Clergymen, suspected of the Five Points, were driven out of the pulpits with bludgeons or assailed with brickbats at the church door. At Amsterdam, Simon Goulart, for preaching the doctrine of universal salvation and for disputing the eternal damnation of young children, was forbidden thenceforth to preach at all.

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But it was at the Hague that the schism in religion and politics first fatally widened itself. Henry Rosaeus, an eloquent divine, disgusted with his colleague Uytenbogaert, refused all communion with him, and was in consequence suspended. Excluded from the Great Church, where he had formerly ministered, he preached every Sunday at Ryswyk, two or three miles distant. Seven hundred Contra-Remonstrants of the Hague followed their beloved pastor, and, as the roads to Ryswyk were muddy and sloppy in winter, acquired the unsavoury nickname of the “Mud Beggars.” The vulgarity of heart which suggested the appellation does not inspire to-day great sympathy with the Remonstrant party, even if one were inclined to admit, what is not the fact, that they represented the cause of religious equality. For even the illustrious Grotius was at that very moment repudiating the notion that there could be two religions in one state. “Difference in public worship,” he said, “was in kingdoms pernicious, but in free commonwealths in the highest degree destructive.”

It was the struggle between Church and State for supremacy over the whole body politic. “The Reformation,” said Grotius, “was not brought about by synods, but by kings, princes, and magistrates.” It was the same eternal story, the same terrible two-edged weapon, “Cujus reggio ejus religio,” found in the arsenal of the first Reformers, and in every politico-religious arsenal of history.

“By an eternal decree of God,” said Gomarus in accordance with Calvin, “it has been fixed who are to be saved and who damned. By His decree some are drawn to faith and godliness, and, being drawn, can never fall away. God leaves all the rest in the general corruption of human nature and their own misdeeds.”

“God has from eternity made this distinction in the fallen human race,” said Arminius, “that He pardons those who desist from their sins and put their faith in Christ, and will give them eternal life, but will punish those who remain impenitent. Moreover, it is pleasanter to God that all men should repent, and, coming to knowledge of truth, remain therein, but He compels none.”

This was the vital difference of dogma. And it was because they could hold no communion with those who believed in the efficacy of repentance that Rosaeus and his followers had seceded to Ryswyk, and the Reformed Church had been torn into two very unequal parts. But it is difficult to believe that out of this arid field of controversy so plentiful a harvest of hatred and civil convulsion could have ripened. More practical than the insoluble problems, whether repentance could effect salvation, and whether dead infants were hopelessly damned, was the question who should rule both Church and State.

There could be but one church. On that Remonstrants and Contra-Remonstrants were agreed. But should the five Points or the Seven Points obtain the mastery? Should that framework of hammered iron, the Confession and Catechism, be maintained in all its

rigidity around the sheepfold, or should the disciples of the arch-heretic Arminius, the salvation-mongers, be permitted to prowl within it?

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Was Barneveld, who hated the Reformed religion (so men told each other), and who believed in nothing, to continue dictator of the whole Republic through his influence over one province, prescribing its religious dogmas and laying down its laws; or had not the time come for the States-General to vindicate the rights of the Church, and to crush for ever the pernicious principle of State sovereignty and burgher oligarchy?

The abyss was wide and deep, and the wild waves were raging more madly every hour. The Advocate, anxious and troubled, but undismayed, did his best in the terrible emergency. He conferred with Prince Maurice on the subject of the Ryswyk secession, and men said that he sought to impress upon him, as chief of the military forces, the necessity of putting down religious schism with the armed hand.

The Prince had not yet taken a decided position. He was still under the influence of John Uytenbogaert, who with Arminius and the Advocate made up the fateful three from whom deadly disasters were deemed to have come upon the Commonwealth. He wished to remain neutral. But no man can be neutral in civil contentions threatening the life of the body politic any more than the heart can be indifferent if the human frame is sawn in two.

"I am a soldier," said Maurice, "not a divine. These are matters of theology which I don't understand, and about which I don't trouble myself."

On another occasion he is reported to have said, "I know nothing of predestination, whether it is green or whether it is blue; but I do know that the Advocate's pipe and mine will never play the same tune."

It was not long before he fully comprehended the part which he must necessarily play. To say that he was indifferent to religious matters was as ridiculous as to make a like charge against Barneveld. Both were religious men. It would have been almost impossible to find an irreligious character in that country, certainly not among its highest-placed and leading minds. Maurice had strong intellectual powers. He was a regular attendant on divine worship, and was accustomed to hear daily religious discussions. To avoid them indeed, he would have been obliged not only to fly his country, but to leave Europe. He had a profound reverence for the memory of his father, Calbo y Calbanista, as William the Silent had called himself. But the great prince had died before these fierce disputes had torn the bosom of the Reformed Church, and while Reformers still were brethren. But if Maurice were a religious man, he was also a keen politician; a less capable politician, however, than a soldier, for he was confessedly the first captain of his age. He was not rapid in his conceptions, but he was sure in the end to comprehend his opportunity.

The Church, the people, the Union—the sacerdotal, the democratic, and the national element—united under a name so potent to conjure with as the name of Orange-Nassau, was stronger than any other possible combination. Instinctively and logically

therefore the Stadholder found himself the chieftain of the Contra-Remonstrant party, and without the necessity of an apostasy such as had been required of his great contemporary to make himself master of France.

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The power of Barneveld and his partisans was now put to a severe strain. His efforts to bring back the Hague seceders were powerless. The influence of Uytenbogaert over the Stadholder steadily diminished. He prayed to be relieved from his post in the Great Church of the Hague, especially objecting to serve with a Contra-Remonstrant preacher whom Maurice wished to officiate there in place of the seceding Rosaeus. But the Stadholder refused to let him go, fearing his influence in other places. "There is stuff in him," said Maurice, "to outweigh half a dozen Contra-Remonstrant preachers." Everywhere in Holland the opponents of the Five Points refused to go to the churches, and set up tabernacles for themselves in barns, outhouses, canal-boats. And the authorities in town and village nailed up the barn-doors, and dispersed the canal boat congregations, while the populace pelted them with stones. The seceders appealed to the Stadholder, pleading that at least they ought to be allowed to hear the word of God as they understood it without being forced into churches where they were obliged to hear Arminian blasphemy. At least their barns might be left them. "Barns," said Maurice, "barns and outhouses! Are we to preach in barns? The churches belong to us, and we mean to have them too."

Not long afterwards the Stadholder, clapping his hand on his sword hilt, observed that these differences could only be settled by force of arms. An ominous remark and a dreary comment on the forty years' war against the Inquisition.

And the same scenes that were enacting in Holland were going on in Overijssel and Friesland and Groningen; but with a difference. Here it was the Five Points men who were driven into secession, whose barns were nailed up, and whose preachers were mobbed. A lugubrious spectacle, but less painful certainly than the hangings and drownings and burnings alive in the previous century to prevent secession from the indivisible church.

It is certain that stadholders and all other magistrates ever since the establishment of independence were sworn to maintain the Reformed religion and to prevent a public divine worship under any other form. It is equally certain that by the 13th Article of the Act of Union—the organic law of the confederation made at Utrecht in 1579—each province reserved for itself full control of religious questions. It would indeed seem almost unimaginable in a country where not only every province, but every city, every municipal board, was so jealous of its local privileges and traditional rights that the absolute disposition over the highest, gravest, and most difficult questions that can inspire and perplex humanity should be left to a general government, and one moreover which had scarcely come into existence.

Yet into this entirely illogical position the Commonwealth was steadily drifting. The cause was simple enough. The States of Holland, as already observed, were Remonstrant by a large majority. The States-General were Contra-Remonstrant by a still greater majority. The Church, rigidly attached to the Confession and Catechism, and refusing all change except through decree of a synod to be called by the general

government which it controlled, represented the national idea. It thus identified itself with the Republic, and was in sympathy with a large majority of the population.

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Logic, law, historical tradition were on the side of the Advocate and the States' right party. The instinct of national self-preservation, repudiating the narrow and destructive doctrine of provincial sovereignty, were on the side of the States-General and the Church.

Meantime James of Great Britain had written letters both to the States of Holland and the States-General expressing his satisfaction with the Five Points, and deciding that there was nothing objectionable in the doctrine of predestination therein set forth. He had recommended unity and peace in Church and Assembly, and urged especially that these controverted points should not be discussed in the pulpit to the irritation and perplexity of the common people.

The King's letters had produced much satisfaction in the moderate party. Barneveld and his followers were then still in the ascendant, and it seemed possible that the Commonwealth might enjoy a few moments of tranquillity. That James had given a new exhibition of his astounding inconsistency was a matter very indifferent to all but himself, and he was the last man to trouble himself for that reproach.

It might happen, when he should come to realize how absolutely he had obeyed the tuition of the Advocate and favoured the party which he had been so vehemently opposing, that he might regret and prove willing to retract. But for the time being the course of politics had seemed running smoother. The acrimony of the relations between the English government and dominant party at the Hague was sensibly diminished. The King seemed for an instant to have obtained a true insight into the nature of the struggle in the States. That it was after all less a theological than a political question which divided parties had at last dawned upon him.

"If you have occasion to write on the subject," said Barneveld, "it is above all necessary to make it clear that ecclesiastical persons and their affairs must stand under the direction of the sovereign authority, for our preachers understand that the disposal of ecclesiastical persons and affairs belongs to them, so that they alone are to appoint preachers, elders, deacons, and other clerical persons, and to regulate the whole ecclesiastical administration according to their pleasure or by a popular government which they call the community."

"The Counts of Holland from all ancient times were never willing under the Papacy to surrender their right of presentation to the churches and control of all spiritual and ecclesiastical benefices. The Emperor Charles and King Philip even, as Counts of Holland, kept these rights to themselves, save that they in enfeoffing more than a hundred gentlemen, of noble and ancient families with seigniorial manors, enfeoffed them also with the right of presentation to churches and benefices on their respective estates. Our preachers pretend to have won this right against the Countship, the gentlemen, nobles, and others, and that it belongs to them."

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It is easy to see that this was a grave, constitutional, legal, and historical problem not to be solved offhand by vehement citations from Scripture, nor by pragmatical dissertations from the lips of foreign ambassadors.

"I believe this point," continued Barneveld, "to be the most difficult question of all, importing far more than subtle searchings and conflicting sentiments as to passages of Holy Writ, or disputations concerning God's eternal predestination and other points thereupon depending. Of these doctrines the Archbishop of Canterbury well observed in the Conference of 1604 that one ought to teach them ascendendo and not descendendo."

The letters of the King had been very favourably received both in the States-General and in the Assembly of Holland. "You will present the replies," wrote Barneveld to the ambassador in London, "at the best opportunity and with becoming compliments. You may be assured and assure his Majesty that they have been very agreeable to both assemblies. Our commissioners over there on the East Indian matter ought to know nothing of these letters."

This statement is worthy of notice, as Grotius was one of those commissioners, and, as will subsequently appear, was accused of being the author of the letters.

"I understand from others," continued the Advocate, "that the gentleman well known to you—[Obviously Francis Aerssens]—is not well pleased that through other agency than his these letters have been written and presented. I think too that the other business is much against his grain, but on the whole since your departure he has accommodated himself to the situation."

But if Aerssens for the moment seemed quiet, the orthodox clergy were restive.

"I know," said Barneveld, "that some of our ministers are so audacious that of themselves, or through others, they mean to work by direct or indirect means against these letters. They mean to show likewise that there are other and greater differences of doctrine than those already discussed. You will keep a sharp eye on the sails and provide against the effect of counter-currents. To maintain the authority of their Great Mightinesses over ecclesiastical matters is more than necessary for the conservation of the country's welfare and of the true Christian religion. As his Majesty would not allow this principle to be controverted in his own realms, as his books clearly prove, so we trust that he will not find it good that it should be controverted in our state as sure to lead to a very disastrous and inequitable sequel."

And a few weeks later the Advocate and the whole party of toleration found themselves, as is so apt to be the case, between two fires. The Catholics became as turbulent as the extreme Calvinists, and already hopes were entertained by Spanish emissaries and spies that this rapidly growing schism in the Reformed Church might be dexterously

made use of to bring the Provinces, when they should become fairly distracted, back to the dominion of Spain.

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“Our precise zealots in the Reformed religion, on the one side,” wrote Barneveld, “and the Jesuits on the other, are vigorously kindling the fire of discord. Keep a good lookout for the countermines which are now working against the good advice of his Majesty for mutual toleration. The publication of the letters was done without order, but I believe with good intent, in the hope that the vehemence and exorbitance of some precise Puritans in our State should thereby be checked. That which is now doing against us in printed libels is the work of the aforesaid Puritans and a few Jesuits. The pretence in those libels, that there are other differences in the matter of doctrine, is mere fiction designed to make trouble and confusion.”

In the course of the autumn, Sir Ralph Winwood departed from the Hague, to assume soon afterwards in England the position of secretary of state for foreign affairs. He did not take personal farewell of Barneveld, the Advocate being absent in North Holland at the moment, and detained there by indisposition. The leave-taking was therefore by letter. He had done much to injure the cause which the Dutch statesman held vital to the Republic, and in so doing he had faithfully carried out the instructions of his master. Now that James had written these conciliatory letters to the States, recommending toleration, letters destined to be famous, Barneveld was anxious that the retiring ambassador should foster the spirit of moderation, which for a moment prevailed at the British court. But he was not very hopeful in the matter.

“Mr. Winwood is doubtless over there now,” he wrote to Caron. “He has promised in public and private to do all good offices. The States-General made him a present on his departure of the value of £4000. I fear nevertheless that he, especially in religious matters, will not do the best offices. For besides that he is himself very hard and precise, those who in this country are hard and precise have made a dead set at him, and tried to make him devoted to their cause, through many fictitious and untruthful means.”

The Advocate, as so often before, sent assurances to the King that “the States-General, and especially the States of Holland, were resolved to maintain the genuine Reformed religion, and oppose all novelties and impurities conflicting with it,” and the Ambassador was instructed to see that the countermines, worked so industriously against his Majesty’s service and the honour and reputation of the Provinces, did not prove successful.

“To let the good mob play the master,” he said, “and to permit hypocrites and traitors in the Flemish manner to get possession of the government of the provinces and cities, and to cause upright patriots whose faith and truth has so long been proved, to be abandoned, by the blessing of God, shall never be accomplished. Be of good heart, and cause these Flemish tricks to be understood on every occasion, and let men know that we mean to maintain, with unchanging constancy, the authority of the government, the privileges and laws of the country, as well as the true Reformed religion.”

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The statesman was more than ever anxious for moderate counsels in the religious questions, for it was now more important than ever that there should be concord in the Provinces, for the cause of Protestantism, and with it the existence of the Republic, seemed in greater danger than at any moment since the truce. It appeared certain that the alliance between France and Spain had been arranged, and that the Pope, Spain, the Grand-duke of Tuscany, and their various adherents had organized a strong combination, and were enrolling large armies to take the field in the spring, against the Protestant League of the princes and electors in Germany. The great king was dead. The Queen-Regent was in the hand of Spain, or dreamed at least of an impossible neutrality, while the priest who was one day to resume the part of Henry, and to hang upon the sword of France the scales in which the opposing weights of Protestantism and Catholicism in Europe were through so many awful years to be balanced, was still an obscure bishop.

The premonitory signs of the great religious war in Germany were not to be mistaken. In truth, the great conflict had already opened in the duchies, although few men as yet comprehended the full extent of that movement. The superficial imagined that questions of hereditary succession, like those involved in the dispute, were easily to be settled by statutes of descent, expounded by doctors of law, and sustained, if needful, by a couple of comparatively bloodless campaigns. Those who looked more deeply into causes felt that the limitations of Imperial authority, the ambition of a great republic, suddenly starting into existence out of nothing, and the great issues of the religious reformation, were matters not so easily arranged. When the scene shifted, as it was so soon to do, to the heart of Bohemia, when Protestantism had taken the Holy Roman Empire by the beard in its ancient palace, and thrown Imperial stadholders out of window, it would be evident to the blindest that something serious was taking place.

Meantime Barneveld, ever watchful of passing events, knew that great forces of Catholicism were marshalling in the south. Three armies were to take the field against Protestantism at the orders of Spain and the Pope. One at the door of the Republic, and directed especially against the Netherlands, was to resume the campaign in the duchies, and to prevent any aid going to Protestant Germany from Great Britain or from Holland. Another in the Upper Palatinate was to make the chief movement against the Evangelical hosts. A third in Austria was to keep down the Protestant party in Bohemia, Hungary, Austria, Moravia, and Silesia. To sustain this movement, it was understood that all the troops then in Italy were to be kept all the winter on a war footing.'

Was this a time for the great Protestant party in the Netherlands to tear itself in pieces for a theological subtlety, about which good Christians might differ without taking each other by the throat?

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"I do not lightly believe or fear," said the Advocate, in communicating a survey of European affairs at that moment to Carom "but present advices from abroad make me apprehend dangers."

ETEXT EDITOR'S BOOKMARKS:

Aristocracy of God's elect
Determined to bring the very name of liberty into contempt
Disputing the eternal damnation of young children
Fate, free will, or absolute foreknowledge
Louis XIII.
No man can be neutral in civil contentions
No synod had a right to claim Netherlanders as slaves
Philip IV.
Priests shall control the state or the state govern the priests
Schism in the Church had become a public fact
That cynical commerce in human lives
The voice of slanderers
Theological hatred was in full blaze throughout the country
Theology and politics were one
To look down upon their inferior and lost fellow creatures
Whether dead infants were hopelessly damned
Whether repentance could effect salvation
Whose mutual hatred was now artfully inflamed by partisans
Work of the aforesaid Puritans and a few Jesuits

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