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MOTLEY'S HISTORY OF THE NETHERLANDS, PG EDITION, VOLUME 10.

THE RISE OF THE DUTCH REPUBLIC

JOHN LOTHROP MOTLEY, D.C.L., LL.D.

1855

1566 [CHAPTER VI.]

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The most remarkable occurrence in the earlier part of the year 1556 was

the famous Compromise. This document, by which the signers pledged themselves to oppose the inquisition, and to defend each other against all consequences of such a resistance, was probably the work of Philip de Marnix, Lord of Sainte Aldegonde. Much obscurity, however, rests upon the origin of this league. Its foundations had already been laid in the latter part of the preceding year. The nuptials of Parma with the Portuguese princess had been the cause of much festivity, not only in Brussels, but at Antwerp. The great commercial metropolis had celebrated the occasion by a magnificent banquet. There had been triumphal arches, wreaths of flowers, loyal speeches, generous sentiments, in the usual profusion. The chief ornament of the dinner-table had been a magnificent piece of confectionary, netting elaborately forth the mission of Count Mansfeld with the fleet to Portugal to fetch the bride from her home, with exquisitely finished figures in sugar--portraits, it is to be presumed--of the principal personages as they appeared during the most striking scenes of the history. At the very moment, however, of these delectations, a meeting was held at Brussels of men whose minds were occupied with sterner stuff than sugar-work. On the wedding-day of Parma, Francis Junius, a dissenting minister then residing at Antwerp, was invited to Brussels to preach a sermon in the house of Count Culemburg, on the horse-market (now called Little Sablon), before a small assembly of some twenty gentlemen.

This Francis Junius, born of a noble family in Bourges, was the pastor of the secret French congregation of Huguenots at Antwerp. He was very young, having arrived from Geneva, where he had been educated, to take charge of the secret church, when but just turned of twenty years. He was, however, already celebrated for his learning, his eloquence, and his courage. Towards the end of 1565, it had already become known that Junius was in secret understanding with Louis of Nassau, to prepare an address to government on the subject of the inquisition and edicts. Orders were given for his arrest.

A certain painter of Brussels affected conversion to the new religion, that he might gain admission to the congregation, and afterwards earn the reward of the informer. He played his part so well that he was permitted to attend many meetings, in the course of which he sketched the portrait of the preacher, and delivered it to the Duchess Regent, together with minute statements as to his residence and daily habits. Nevertheless, with all this assistance, the government could not succeed in laying hands on him. He escaped to Breda, and continued his labors in spite of persecution. The man's courage may be estimated from the fact that he preached on one occasion a sermon, advocating the doctrines of the reformed Church with his usual eloquence, in a room overlooking the market-place, where, at the very, instant, the execution by fire of several heretics was taking place, while the light from the flames in which the brethren of their Faith were burning, was flickering through the glass windows of the conventicle. Such was the man who preached a sermon in Culemburg Palace on Parma's wedding-day. The nobles who listened to him were occupied with grave discourse after conclusion of the religious exercises. Junius took no part in their conversation, but in his presence it was resolved that a league against the "barbarous and violent inquisition" should be formed, and, that the confederates

should mutually bind themselves both within and without the Netherlands to this great purpose. Junius, in giving this explicit statement; has not mentioned the names of the nobles before whom he preached. It may be inferred that some of them were the more ardent and the more respectable among the somewhat miscellaneous band by whom the Compromise was afterwards signed.

At about the same epoch, Louis of Nassau, Nicolas de Hammes, and certain other gentlemen met at the baths of Spa. At this secret assembly, the foundations of the Compromise were definitely laid. A document was afterwards drawn up, which was circulated for signatures in the early part of 1566. It is, therefore, a mistake to suppose that this memorable paper was simultaneously signed and sworn to at any solemn scene like that of the declaration of American Independence, or like some of the subsequent transactions in the Netherland revolt, arranged purposely for dramatic effect. Several copies of the Compromise were passed secretly from hand to hand, and in the course of two months some two thousand signatures had been obtained. The original copy bore but three names, those of Brederode, Charles de Mansfeld, and Louis of Nassau.

The composition of the paper is usually ascribed to Sainte Aldegonde, although the fact is not indisputable. At any rate, it is very certain that he was one of the originators and main supporters of the famous league. Sainte Aldegonde was one of the most accomplished men of his age. He was of ancient nobility, as he proved by an abundance of historical and heraldic evidence, in answer to a scurrilous pamphlet in which he had been accused, among other delinquencies, of having sprung from plebeian blood. Having established his "extraction from true and ancient gentlemen of Savoy, paternally and maternally," he rebuked his assailants in manly strain. "Even had it been that I was without nobility of birth," said he, "I should be none the less or more a virtuous or honest man; nor can any one reproach me with having failed in the point of honor or duty. What greater folly than to boast of the virtue or gallantry of others, as do many nobles who, having neither a grain of virtue in their souls nor a drop of wisdom in their brains, are entirely useless to their country! Yet there are such men, who, because their ancestors have done some valorous deed, think themselves fit to direct the machinery of a whole country, having from their youth learned nothing but to dance and to spin like weathercocks with their heads as well as their heels." Certainly Sainte Aldegonde had learned other lessons than these. He was one of the many-sided men who recalled the symmetry of antique patriots. He was a poet of much vigor and imagination; a prose writer whose style was surpassed by that of none of his contemporaries, a diplomatist in whose tact and delicacy William of Orange afterwards reposed in the most difficult and important negotiations, an orator whose discourses on many great public occasions attracted the attention of Europe, a soldier whose bravery was to be attested afterwards on many a well-fought field, a theologian so skilful in the polemics of divinity, that, as it will hereafter appear, he was more than a match for a bench of bishops upon their own ground, and a scholar so accomplished, that, besides speaking and writing the classical and several modern languages with facility, he had also translated for popular use the Psalms of David into vernacular verse, and at a very late period of his life was requested by the states-general of the republic

to translate all the Scriptures, a work, the fulfilment of which was prevented by his death. A passionate foe to the inquisition and to all the abuses of the ancient Church, an ardent defender of civil liberty, it must be admitted that he partook also of the tyrannical spirit of Calvinism. He never rose to the lofty heights to which the spirit of the great founder of the commonwealth was destined to soar, but denounced the great principle of religious liberty for all consciences as godless. He was now twenty-eight years of age, having been born in the same year with his friend Louis of Nassau. His device, "Repos ailleurs," finely typified the restless, agitated and laborious life to which he was destined.

That other distinguished leader of the newly-formed league, Count Louis, was a true knight of the olden time, the very mirror of chivalry. Gentle, generous, pious; making use, in his tent before the battle, of the prayers which his mother sent him from the home of his childhood, --yet fiery in the field as an ancient crusader--doing the work of general and soldier with desperate valor and against any numbers--cheerful and steadfast under all reverses, witty and jocund in social intercourse, animating with his unceasing spirits the graver and more foreboding soul of his brother; he was the man to whom the eyes of the most ardent among the Netherland Reformers were turned at this early epoch, the trusty staff upon which the great Prince of Orange was to lean till it was broken. As gay as Brederode, he was unstained by his vices, and exercised a boundless influence over that reckless personage, who often protested that he would "die a poor soldier at his feet." The career of Louis was destined to be short, if reckoned by years, but if by events, it was to attain almost a patriarchal length. At the age of nineteen he had taken part in the battle of St. Quentin, and when once the war of freedom opened, his sword was never to be sheathed. His days were filled with life, and when he fell into his bloody but unknown grave, he was to leave a name as distinguished for heroic valor and untiring energy as for spotless integrity. He was small of stature, but well formed; athletic in all knightly exercises, with agreeable features, a dark laughing eye, close-clipped brown hair, and a peaked beard.

"Golden Fleece," as Nicholas de Hammes was universally denominated, was the illegitimate scion of a noble house. He was one of the most active of the early adherents to the league, kept the lists of signers in his possession, and scoured the country daily to procure new confederates. At the public preachings of the reformed religion, which soon after this epoch broke forth throughout the Netherlands as by a common impulse, he made himself conspicuous. He was accused of wearing, on such occasions, the ensigns of the Fleece about his neck, in order to induce ignorant people to believe that they might themselves legally follow, when they perceived a member of that illustrious fraternity to be leading the way. As De Hammer was only an official or servant of that Order, but not a companion, the seduction of the lieges by such false pretenses was reckoned among the most heinous of his offences. He was fierce in his hostility to the government, and one of those fiery spirits whose premature zeal was prejudicial to the cause of liberty, and disheartening to the cautious patriotism of Orange. He was for smiting at once the gigantic atrocity of the Spanish dominion, without waiting for the

forging of the weapons by which the blows were to be dealt. He forgot that men and money were as necessary as wrath, in a contest with the most tremendous despotism of the world. "They wish," he wrote to Count Louis, "that we should meet these hungry wolves with remonstrances, using gentle words, while they are burning and cutting off heads.--Be it so then. Let us take the pen let them take the sword. For them deeds, for us words. We shall weep, they will laugh. The Lord be praised for all; but I can not write this without tears." This nervous language painted the situation and the character of the writer.

As for Charles Mansfeld, he soon fell away from the league which he had embraced originally with excessive ardor.

By the influence of the leaders many signatures were obtained during the first two months of the year. The language of the document was such that patriotic Catholics could sign it as honestly as Protestants. It inveighed bitterly against the tyranny of "a heap of strangers," who, influenced only by private avarice and ambition, were making use of an affected zeal for the Catholic religion, to persuade the King into a violation of his oaths. It denounced the refusal to mitigate the severity of the edicts. It declared the inquisition, which it seemed the intention of government to fix permanently upon them, as "iniquitous, contrary to all laws, human and divine, surpassing the greatest barbarism which was ever practised by tyrants, and as redounding to the dishonor of God and to the total desolation of the country." The signers protested, therefore, that "having a due regard to their duties as faithful vassals of his Majesty, and especially, as noblemen--and in order not to be deprived of their estates and their lives by those who, under pretext of religion, wished to enrich themselves by plunder and murder," they had bound themselves to each other by holy covenant and solemn oath to resist the inquisition. They mutually promised to oppose it in every shape, open or covert, under whatever mask, it might assume, whether bearing the name of inquisition, placard, or edict, "and to extirpate and eradicate the thing in any form, as the mother of all iniquity and disorder." They protested before God and man, that they would attempt nothing to the dishonor of the Lord or to the diminution of the King's grandeur, majesty, or dominion. They declared, on the contrary, an honest purpose to "maintain the monarch in his estate, and to suppress all seditious, tumults, monopolies, and factions." They engaged to preserve their confederation, thus formed, forever inviolable, and to permit none of its members to be persecuted in any manner, in body or goods, by any proceeding founded on the inquisition, the edicts, or the present league.

It will be seen therefore, that the Compromise was in its origin, a covenant of nobles. It was directed against the foreign influence by which the Netherlands were exclusively governed, and against the inquisition, whether papal, episcopal, or by edict. There is no doubt that the country was controlled entirely by Spanish masters, and that the intention was to reduce the ancient liberty of the Netherlands into subjection to a junta of foreigners sitting at Madrid. Nothing more legitimate could be imagined than a constitutional resistance to such a policy.

The Prince of Orange had not been consulted as to the formation of the league. It was sufficiently obvious to its founders that his cautious mind would find much to censure in the movement. His sentiments with regard to the inquisition and the edicts were certainly known to all men. In the beginning of this year, too, he had addressed a remarkable letter to the Duchess, in answer to her written commands to cause the Council of Trent, the inquisition, and the edicts, in accordance with the recent commands of the King, to be published and enforced throughout his government. Although his advice on the subject had not been asked, he expressed his sense of obligation to speak his mind on the subject, preferring the hazard of being censured for his remonstrance, to that of incurring the suspicion of connivance at the desolation of the land by his silence. He left the question of reformation in ecclesiastical morals untouched, as not belonging to his vocation: As to the inquisition, he most distinctly informed her highness that the hope which still lingered in the popular mind of escaping the permanent establishment of that institution, had alone prevented the utter depopulation of the country, with entire subversion of its commercial and manufacturing industry. With regard to the edicts, he temperately but forcibly expressed the opinion that it was very hard to enforce those placards now in their rigor, when the people were exasperated, and the misery universal, inasmuch as they had frequently been modified on former occasions. The King, he said, could gain nothing but difficulty for himself, and would be sure to lose the affection of his subjects by renewing the edicts, strengthening the inquisition, and proceeding to fresh executions, at a time when the people, moved by the example of their neighbors, were naturally inclined to novelty. Moreover, when by reason of the daily increasing prices of grain a famine was impending over the land, no worse moment could be chosen to enforce such a policy. In conclusion, he observed that he was at all times desirous to obey the commands of his Majesty and her Highness, and to discharge the duties of "a good Christian." The use of the latter term is remarkable, as marking an epoch in the history of the Prince's mind. A year before he would have said a good Catholic, but it was during this year that his mind began to be thoroughly pervaded by religious doubt, and that the great question of the Reformation forced itself, not only as a political, but as a moral problem upon him, which he felt that he could not much longer neglect instead of solving.

Such were the opinions of Orange. He could not, however, safely entrust the sacred interests of a commonwealth to such hands as those of Brederode--however deeply that enthusiastic personage might drink the health of "Yunker William," as he affectionately denominated the Prince--or to "Golden Fleece," or to Charles Mansfeld, or to that younger wild boar of Ardennes, Robert de la Marck. In his brother and in Sainte Aldegonde he had confidence, but he did not exercise over them that control which he afterwards acquired. His conduct towards the confederacy was imitated in the main by the other great nobles. The covenanters never expected to obtain the signatures of such men as Orange, Egmont, Horn, Meghen, Berghen, or Montigny, nor were those eminent personages ever accused of having signed the Compromise, although some of them were afterwards charged with having protected those who did affix their names to the document. The confederates were originally

found among the lesser nobles. Of these some were sincere Catholics, who loved the ancient Church but hated the inquisition; some were fierce Calvinists or determined Lutherans; some were troublous and adventurous spirits, men of broken fortunes, extravagant habits, and boundless desires, who no doubt thought that the broad lands of the Church, with their stately abbeys; would furnish much more fitting homes and revenues for gallant gentlemen than for lazy monks. All were young, few had any prudence or conduct, and the history of the league more than justified the disapprobation of Orange. The nobles thus banded together, achieved little by their confederacy. They disgraced a great cause by their orgies, almost ruined it by their inefficiency, and when the rope of sand which they had twisted fell asunder, the people had gained nothing and the gentry had almost lost the confidence of the nation. These remarks apply to the mass of the confederates and to some of the leaders. Louis of Nassau and Sainte Aldegonde were ever honored and trusted as they deserved.

Although the language of the Compromise spoke of the leaguers as nobles, yet the document was circulated among burghers and merchants also, many of whom, according to the satirical remark of a Netherland Catholic, may, have been influenced by the desire of writing their names in such aristocratic company, and some of whom were destined to expiate such vainglory upon the scaffold.

With such associates, therefore, the profound and anxious mind of Orange could have little in common. Confidence expanding as the numbers increased, their audacity and turbulence grew with the growth of the league. The language at their wild banquets was as hot as the wine which confused their heads; yet the Prince knew that there was rarely a festival in which there did not sit some calm, temperate Spaniard, watching with quiet eye and cool brain the extravagant demeanor, and listening with composure to the dangerous avowals or bravados of these revellers, with the purpose of transmitting a record of their language or demonstrations, to the inmost sanctuary of Philip's cabinet at Madrid. The Prince knew, too, that the King was very sincere in his determination to maintain the inquisition, however dilatory his proceedings might appear. He was well aware that an armed force might be expected ere long to support the royal edicts. Already the Prince had organized that system of espionage upon Philip, by which the champion of his country was so long able to circumvent its despot. The King left letters carefully locked in his desk at night, and unseen hands had forwarded copies of them to William of Orange before the morning. He left memoranda in his pockets on retiring to bed, and exact transcripts of those papers found their way, likewise, ere he rose, to the same watchman in the Netherlands. No doubt that an inclination for political intrigue was a prominent characteristic of the Prince, and a blemish upon the purity of his moral nature. Yet the dissimulating policy of his age he had mastered only that he might accomplish the noblest purposes to which a great and good man can devote his life-the protection of the liberty and the religion of a whole people against foreign tyranny. His intrigue served his country, not a narrow personal ambition, and it was only by such arts that he became Philip's master, instead of falling at once, like so many great personages, a blind and infatuated victim. No doubt



his purveyors of secret information were often destined fearfully to atone for their contraband commerce, but they who trade in treason must expect to pay the penalty of their traffic.

Although, therefore, the great nobles held themselves aloof from the confederacy, yet many of them gave unequivocal signs of their dissent from the policy adopted by government. Marquis Berghen wrote to the Duchess; resigning his posts, on the ground of his inability to execute the intention of the King in the matter of religion. Meghen replied to the same summons by a similar letter. Egmont assured her that he would have placed his offices in the King's hands in Spain, could he have foreseen that his Majesty would form such resolutions as had now been proclaimed. The sentiments of Orange were avowed in the letter to which we have already alluded. His opinions were shared by Montigny, Culemburg, and many others. The Duchess was almost reduced to desperation. The condition of the country was frightful. The most determined loyalists, such as Berlaymont, Viglius and Hopper, advised her not to mention the name of inquisition in a conference which she was obliged to hold with a deputation from Antwerp. She feared, all feared, to pronounce the hated word. She wrote despairing letters to Philip, describing the condition of the land and her own agony in the gloomiest colors. Since the arrival of the royal orders, she said, things had gone from bad to worse. The King had been ill advised. It was useless to tell the people that the inquisition had always existed in the provinces. They maintained that it was a novelty; that the institution was a more rigorous one than the Spanish Inquisition, which, said Margaret, "was most odious, as the King knew." It was utterly impossible to carry the edicts into execution. Nearly all the governors of provinces had told her plainly that they would not help to burn fifty or sixty thousand Netherlanders. Thus bitterly did Margaret of Parma bewail the royal decree; not that she had any sympathy for the victims, but because she felt the increasing danger to the executioner. One of two things it was now necessary to decide upon, concession or armed compulsion. Meantime, while Philip was slowly and secretly making his levies, his sister, as well as his people, was on the rack. Of all the seigniors, not one was placed in so painful a position as Egmont. His military reputation and his popularity made him too important a personage to be slighted, yet he was deeply mortified at the lamentable mistake which he had committed. He now averred that he would never take arms against the King, but that he would go where man should never see him more.

Such was the condition of the nobles, greater and less. That of the people could not well be worse. Famine reigned in the land. Emigration, caused not by over population, but by persecution, was fast weakening the country. It was no wonder that not only, foreign merchants should be scared from the great commercial cities by the approaching disorders; but that every industrious artisan who could find the means of escape should seek refuge among strangers, wherever an asylum could be found. That asylum was afforded by Protestant England, who received these intelligent and unfortunate wanderers with cordiality, and learned with eagerness the lessons in mechanical skill which they had to teach. Already thirty thousand emigrant Netherlanders were established in Sandwich, Norwich, and other places, assigned to them by Elizabeth. It had always, however,

been made a condition of the liberty granted to these foreigners for practising their handiwork, that each house should employ at least one English apprentice. "Thus," said a Walloon historian, splenetically, "by this regulation, and by means of heavy duties on foreign manufactures, have the English built up their own fabrics and prohibited those of the Netherlands. Thus have they drawn over to their own country our skilful artisans to practise their industry, not at home but abroad, and our poor people are thus losing the means of earning their livelihood. Thus has clothmaking, silk-making and the art of dyeing declined in this country, and would have been quite extinguished but by our wise countervailing edicts." The writer, who derived most of his materials and his wisdom from the papers of Councillor d'Assonleville, could hardly doubt that the persecution to which these industrious artisans, whose sufferings he affected to deplore, had been subjected, must have had something to do with their expatriation; but he preferred to ascribe it wholly to the protective system adopted by England. In this he followed the opinion of his preceptor. "For a long time," said Assonleville, "the Netherlands have been the Indies to England; and as long as she has them, she needs no other. The French try to surprise our fortresses and cities: the English make war upon our wealth and upon the purses of the people." Whatever the cause, however, the current of trade was already turned. The cloth-making of England was already gaining preponderance over that of the provinces. Vessels now went every week from Sandwich to Antwerp, laden with silk, satin, and cloth, manufactured in England, while as many but a few years before, had borne the Flemish fabrics of the same nature from Antwerp to England.

It might be supposed by disinterested judges that persecution was at the bottom of this change in commerce. The Prince of Orange estimated that up to this period fifty thousand persons in the provinces had been put to death in obedience to the edicts. He was a moderate man, and accustomed to weigh his words. As a new impulse had been given to the system of butchery--as it was now sufficiently plain that "if the father had chastised his people with a scourge the son held a whip of scorpions" as the edicts were to be enforced with renewed vigor--it was natural that commerce and manufactures should make their escape out of a doomed land as soon as possible, whatever system of tariffs might be adopted by neighboring nations.

A new step had been resolved upon early in the month of March by the confederates. A petition, or "Request," was drawn up, which was to be presented to the Duchess Regent in a formal manner by a large number of gentlemen belonging to the league. This movement was so grave, and likely to be followed by such formidable results, that it seemed absolutely necessary for Orange and his friends to take some previous cognizance of it before it was finally arranged. The Prince had no power, nor was there any reason why he should have the inclination, to prevent the measure, but he felt it his duty to do what he could to control the vehemence of the men who were moving so rashly forward, and to take from their manifesto, as much as possible, the character of a menace.

For this end, a meeting ostensibly for social purposes and "good cheer"

was held, in the middle of March, at Breda, and afterwards adjourned to Hoogstraaten. To these conferences Orange invited Egmont, Horn, Hoogstraaten, Berghen, Meghen, Montigny, and other great nobles. Brederode, Thoulouse, Boxtel, and other members of the league, were also present. The object of the Prince in thus assembling his own immediate associates, governors of provinces and knights of the Fleece, as well as some of the leading members of the league, was twofold. It had long been his opinion that a temperate and loyal movement was still possible, by which the impending convulsions might be averted. The line of policy which he had marked out required the assent of the magnates of the land, and looked towards the convocation of the states-general. It was natural that he should indulge in the hope of being seconded by the men who were in the same political and social station with himself. All, although Catholics, hated the inquisition. As Viglius pathetically exclaimed, "Saint Paul himself would have been unable to persuade these men that good fruit was to be gathered from the inquisition in the cause of religion." Saint Paul could hardly be expected to reappear on earth for such a purpose. Meantime the arguments of the learned President had proved powerless, either to convince the nobles that the institution was laudable or to obtain from the Duchess a postponement in the publication of the late decrees. The Prince of Orange, however, was not able to bring his usual associates to his way of thinking. The violent purposes of the leaguers excited the wrath of the more loyal nobles. Their intentions were so dangerous, even in the estimation of the Prince himself, that he felt it his duty to lay the whole subject before the Duchess, although he was not opposed to the presentation of a modest and moderate Request. Meghen was excessively indignant at the plan of the confederates, which he pronounced an insult to the government, a treasonable attempt to overawe the Duchess, by a "few wretched vagabonds." He swore that "he would break every one of their heads, if the King would furnish him with a couple of hundred thousand florins." Orange quietly rebuked this truculent language, by assuring him both that such a process would be more difficult than he thought, and that he would also find many men of great respectability among the vagabonds.

The meeting separated at Hoogstraaten without any useful result, but it was now incumbent upon the Prince, in his own judgment, to watch, and in a measure to superintend, the proceedings of the confederates. By his care the contemplated Request was much altered, and especially made more gentle in its tone. Meghen separated himself thenceforth entirely from Orange, and ranged himself exclusively upon the side of Government. Egmont vacillated, as usual, satisfying neither the Prince nor the Duchess.

Margaret of Parma was seated in her council chamber very soon after these occurrences, attended both by Orange and Egmont, when the Count of Meghen entered the apartment. With much precipitation, he begged that all matters then before the board might be postponed, in order that he might make an important announcement. He then stated that he had received information from a gentleman on whose word he could rely, a very affectionate servant of the King, but whose name he had promised not to reveal, that a very extensive conspiracy of heretics and sectaries had been formed, both within and without the Netherlands, that they had

already a force of thirty-five thousand men, foot and horse, ready for action, that they were about to make a sudden invasion, and to plunder the whole country, unless they immediately received a formal concession of entire liberty of conscience, and that, within six or seven days, fifteen hundred men-at-arms would make their appearance before her Highness. These ridiculous exaggerations of the truth were confirmed by Egmont, who said that he had received similar information from persons whose names he was not at liberty to mention, but from whose statements he could announce that some great tumult might be expected every day. He added that there were among the confederates many who wished to change their sovereign, and that the chieftains and captains of the conspiracy were all appointed. The same nobleman also laid before the council a copy of the Compromise, the terms of which famous document scarcely justified the extravagant language with which it had been heralded. The Duchess was astounded at these communications. She had already received, but probably not yet read, a letter from the Prince of Orange upon the subject, in which a moderate and plain statement of the actual facts was laid down, which was now reiterated by the same personage by word of mouth. An agitated and inconclusive debate followed, in which, however, it sufficiently appeared, as the Duchess informed her brother, that one of two things must be done without further delay. The time had arrived for the government to take up arms, or to make concessions.

In one of the informal meetings of councillors, now held almost daily, on the subject of the impending Request, Aremborg, Meghen, and Berlaymont maintained that the door should be shut in the face of the petitioners without taking any further notice of the petition. Berlaymont suggested also, that if this course were not found advisable, the next best thing would be to allow the confederates to enter the palace with their Request, and then to cut them to pieces to the very last man, by means of troops to be immediately ordered from the frontiers. Such sanguinary projects were indignantly rebuked by Orange. He maintained that the confederates were entitled to be treated with respect. Many of them, he said, were his friends--some of them his relations--and there was no reason for refusing to gentlemen of their rank, a right which belonged to the poorest plebeian in the land. Egmont sustained these views of the Prince as earnestly as he had on a previous occasion appeared to countenance the more violent counsels of Meghen.

Meantime, as it was obvious that the demonstration on the part of the confederacy was soon about to be made, the Duchess convened a grand assembly of notables, in which not only all the state and privy councillors, but all the governors and knights of the Fleece were to take part. On the 28th of March, this assembly was held, at which the whole subject of the Request, together with the proposed modifications of the edicts and abolition of the inquisition, was discussed. The Duchess also requested the advice of the meeting--whether it would not be best for her to retire to some other city, like Mons, which she had selected as her stronghold in case of extremity. The decision was that it would be a high-handed proceeding to refuse the right of petition to a body of gentlemen, many of them related to the greatest nobles in the land; but it was resolved that they should be required to make their appearance without arms. As to the contemplated flight of the Duchess, it was

urged, with much reason, that such a step would cast disgrace upon the government, and that it would be a sufficiently precautionary measure to strengthen the guards at the city gates--not to prevent the entrance of the petitioners, but to see that they were unaccompanied by an armed force. It had been decided that Count Brederode should present the petition to the Duchess at the head of a deputation of about three hundred gentlemen. The character of the nobleman thus placed foremost on such an important occasion has been sufficiently made manifest. He had no qualities whatever but birth and audacity to recommend him as a leader for a political party. It was to be seen that other attributes were necessary to make a man useful in such a position, and the Count's deficiencies soon became lamentably conspicuous. He was the lineal descendant and representative of the old Sovereign Counts of Holland. Five hundred years before his birth; his ancestor Sikko, younger brother of Dirk the Third, had died, leaving two sons, one of whom was the first Baron of Brederode. A descent of five centuries in unbroken male succession from the original sovereigns of Holland, gave him a better genealogical claim to the provinces than any which Philip of Spain could assert through the usurping house of Burgundy. In the approaching tumults he hoped for an opportunity of again asserting the ancient honors of his name. He was a sworn foe to Spaniards and to "water of the fountain." But a short time previously to this epoch he had written to Louis of Nassau, then lying ill of a fever, in order gravely to remonstrate with him on the necessity of substituting wine for water on all occasions, and it will be seen in the sequel that the wine-cup was the great instrument on which he relied for effecting the deliverance of the country. Although "neither bachelor nor chancellor," as he expressed it, he was supposed to be endowed with ready eloquence and mother wit. Even these gifts, however, if he possessed them, were often found wanting on important emergencies. Of his courage there was no question, but he was not destined to the death either of a warrior or a martyr. Headlong, noisy, debauched, but brave, kind-hearted and generous, he was a fitting representative of his ancestors, the hard-fighting, hard-drinking, crusading, free-booting sovereigns of Holland and Friesland, and would himself have been more at home and more useful in the eleventh century than in the sixteenth.

It was about six o'clock in the evening, on the third day of April (1566), that the long-expected cavalcade at last entered Brussels. An immense concourse of citizens of all ranks thronged around the noble confederates as soon as they made their appearance. They were about two hundred in number, all on horseback, with pistols in their holsters, and Brederode, tall, athletic, and martial in his bearing, with handsome features and fair curling locks upon his shoulders, seemed an appropriate chieftain for that band of Batavian chivalry.

The procession was greeted with frequent demonstrations of applause as it wheeled slowly through the city till it reached the mansion of Orange Nassau. Here Brederode and Count Louis alighted, while the rest of the company dispersed to different quarters of the town.

"They thought that I should not come to Brussels," said Brederode, as he dismounted. "Very well, here I am; and perhaps I shall depart in a

different manner." In the Course of the next day, Counts Culemburg and Van den Berg entered the city with one hundred other cavaliers.

On the morning of the fifth of April, the confederates were assembled at the Culemburg mansion, which stood on the square called the Sabon, within a few minutes' walk of the palace. A straight handsome street led from the house along the summit of the hill, to the splendid residence of the ancient Dukes of Brabant, then the abode of Duchess Margaret. At a little before noon, the gentlemen came forth, marching on foot, two by two, to the number of three hundred. Nearly all were young, many of them bore the most ancient historical names of their country, every one was arrayed in magnificent costume. It was regarded as ominous, that the man who led the procession, Philip de Bailleul, was lame. The line was closed by Brederode and Count Louis, who came last, walking arm in arm. An immense crowd was collected in the square in front of the palace, to welcome the men who were looked upon as the deliverers of the land from Spanish tyranny, from the Cardinalists, and from the inquisition. They were received with deafening huzzas and clappings of hands by the assembled populace. As they entered the council chamber, passing through the great hall, where ten years before the Emperor had given away his crowns, they found the Emperor's daughter seated in the chair of state, and surrounded by the highest personages of the country. The emotion of the Duchess was evident, as the procession somewhat abruptly made its appearance; nor was her agitation diminished as she observed among the petitioners many relatives and, retainers of the Orange and Egmont houses, and saw friendly glances of recognition exchanged between them and their chiefs.

As soon as all had entered the senate room, Brederode advanced, made a low obeisance, and spoke a brief speech. He said that he had come thither with his colleagues to present a humble petition to her Highness. He alluded to the reports which had been rife, that they had contemplated tumult, sedition, foreign conspiracies, and, what was more abominable than all, a change of sovereign. He denounced such statements as calumnies, begged the Duchess to name the men who had thus aspersed an honorable and loyal company, and called upon her to inflict exemplary punishment upon the slanderers. With these prefatory remarks he presented the petition. The famous document was then read aloud.--Its tone was sufficiently loyal, particularly in the preamble, which was filled with protestations of devotion to both King and Duchess. After this conventional introduction, however, the petitioners proceeded to state, very plainly, that the recent resolutions of his Majesty, with regard to the edict and the inquisition, were likely to produce a general rebellion. They had hoped, they said, that a movement would be made by the seigniors or by the estates, to remedy the evil by striking at its cause, but they had waited in vain. The danger, on the other hand, was augmenting every day, universal sedition was at the gate, and they had therefore felt obliged to delay no longer, but come forward the first and do their duty. They professed to do this with more freedom, because the danger touched them very nearly. They were the most exposed to the calamities which usually spring from civil commotions, for their, houses and lands situate in the open fields, were exposed to the pillage of all the world. Moreover there was not one of them, whatever his condition,

who was not liable at any moment to be executed under the edicts, at the false complaint of the first man who wished to obtain his estate, and who chose to denounce him to the inquisitor, at whose mercy were the lives and property of all. They therefore begged the Duchess Regent to despatch an envoy on their behalf, who should humbly implore his Majesty to abolish the edicts. In the mean time they requested her Highness to order a general surcease of the inquisition, and of all executions, until the King's further pleasure was made known, and until new ordinances, made by his Majesty with advice and consent of the states-general duly assembled, should be established. The petition terminated as it had commenced, with expressions of extreme respect and devoted loyalty.

The agitation of Duchess Margaret increased very perceptibly during the reading of the paper. When it was finished, she remained for a few minutes quite silent, with tears rolling down her cheeks. As soon as she could overcome her excitement, she uttered a few words to the effect that she would advise with her councillors and give the petitioners such answer as should be found suitable. The confederates then passed out from the council chamber into the grand hall; each individual, as he took his departure, advancing towards the Duchess and making what was called the "caracole," in token of reverence. There was thus ample time to contemplate the whole company; and to count the numbers of the deputation.

After this ceremony had been concluded, there was much earnest debate in the council. The Prince of Orange addressed a few words to the Duchess, with the view of calming her irritation. He observed that the confederates were no seditious rebels, but loyal gentlemen, well born, well connected, and of honorable character. They had been influenced, he said, by an honest desire to save their country from impending danger --not by avarice or ambition. Egmont shrugged his shoulders, and observed that it was necessary for him to leave the court for a season, in order to make a visit to the baths of Aix, for an inflammation which he had in the leg. It was then that Berlaymont, according to the account which has been sanctioned by nearly every contemporary writer, whether Catholic or Protestant, uttered the gibe which was destined to become immortal, and to give a popular name to the confederacy. "What, Madam," he is reported to have cried in a passion, "is it possible that your Highness can entertain fears of these beggars? (gueux). Is it not obvious what manner of men they are? They have not had wisdom enough to manage their own estates, and are they now to teach the King and your Highness how to govern the country? By the living God, if my advice were taken, their petition should have a cudgel for a commentary, and we would make them go down the steps of the palace a great deal faster than they mounted them."

The Count of Meghen was equally violent in his language. Aremberg was for ordering "their reverences; the confederates," to quit Brussels without delay. The conversation, carried on in so violent a key, might not unnaturally have been heard by such of the gentlemen as had not yet left the grand hall adjoining the council chamber. The meeting of the council was then adjourned for an hour or two, to meet again in the afternoon, for the purpose of deciding deliberately upon the answer

to be given to the Request. Meanwhile, many of the confederates were swaggering about the streets, talking very bravely of the scene which had just occurred, and it is probable, boasting not a little of the effect which their demonstration would produce. As they passed by the house of Berlaymont, that nobleman, standing at his window in company with Count Aremberg, is said to have repeated his jest. "There go our fine beggars again," said he. "Look, I pray you, with what bravado they are passing before us!"

On the 6th of April, Brederode, attended by a large number of his companions, again made his appearance at the palace. He then received the petition, which was returned to him with an apostille or commentary to this effect:--Her Highness would despatch an envoy for the purpose of inducing his Majesty to grant the Request. Every thing worthy of the King's unaffected (naive) and customary benignity might be expected as to the result. The Duchess had already, with the assistance of the state and privy councillors, Fleece knights and governors, commenced a project for moderating the edicts, to be laid before the King. As her authority did not allow her to suspend the inquisition and placards, she was confident that the petitioners would be satisfied with the special application about to be made to the King. Meantime, she would give orders to all inquisitors, that they should proceed "modestly and discreetly" in their office, so that no one would have cause to complain. Her Highness hoped likewise that the gentlemen on their part would conduct themselves in a loyal and satisfactory manner; thus proving that they had no intention to make innovations in the ancient religion of the country.

Upon the next day but one, Monday, 8th of April, Brederode, attended by a number of the confederates, again made his appearance at the palace, for the purpose of delivering an answer to the Apostille. In this second paper the confederates rendered thanks for the prompt reply which the Duchess had given to their Request, expressed regrets that she did not feel at liberty to suspend the inquisition, and declared their confidence that she would at once give such orders to the inquisitors and magistrates that prosecutions for religious matters should cease, until the King's further pleasure should be declared. They professed themselves desirous of maintaining whatever regulations should be thereafter established by his Majesty, with the advice and consent of the states-general, for the security of the ancient religion, and promised to conduct themselves generally in such wise that her Highness would have every reason to be satisfied with them. They, moreover, requested that the Duchess would cause the Petition to be printed in authentic form by the government printer.

The admission that the confederates would maintain the ancient religion had been obtained, as Margaret informed her brother, through the dexterous management of Hoogstraaten, without suspicion on the part of the petitioners that the proposition for such a declaration came from her.

The Duchess replied by word of mouth to the second address thus made to her by the confederates, that she could not go beyond the Apostille



which she had put on record. She had already caused letters for the inquisitors and magistrates to be drawn up. The minutes for those instructions should be laid before the confederates by Count Hoogstraaten and Secretary Berty. As for the printing of their petition, she was willing to grant their demand, and would give orders to that effect.

The gentlemen having received this answer, retired into the great hall. After a few minutes' consultation, however, they returned to the council chamber, where the Seigneur d'Esqueredes, one of their number, addressed a few parting words, in the name of his associates, to the Regent; concluding with a request that she would declare, the confederates to have done no act, and made no demonstration, inconsistent with their duty and with a perfect respect for his Majesty.

To this demand the Duchess answered somewhat drily that she could not be judge in such a cause. Time and their future deeds, she observed, could only bear witness as to their purposes. As for declarations from her, they must be satisfied with the Apostille which they had already received.

With this response, somewhat more tart than agreeable, the nobles were obliged to content themselves, and they accordingly took their leave.

It must be confessed that they had been disposed to slide rather cavalierly over a good deal of ground towards the great object which they had in view. Certainly the *petitio principii* was a main feature of their logic. They had, in their second address, expressed perfect confidence as to two very considerable concessions. The Duchess was practically to suspend the inquisition, although she had declared herself without authority for that purpose, The King, who claimed, *de jure* and *de facto*, the whole legislative power, was thenceforth to make laws on religious matters by and with the consent of the states-general. Certainly, these ends were very laudable, and if a civil and religious revolution could have been effected by a few gentlemen going to court in fine clothes to present a petition, and by sitting down to a tremendous banquet afterwards, Brederode and his associates were the men to accomplish the task. Unfortunately, a sea of blood and long years of conflict lay between the nation and the promised land, which for a moment seemed so nearly within reach.

Meantime the next important step in Brederode's eyes was a dinner. He accordingly invited the confederates to a magnificent repast which he had ordered to be prepared in the Culemburg mansion. Three hundred guests sat down, upon the 8th of April, to this luxurious banquet, which was destined to become historical.

The board glittered with silver and gold. The wine circulated with more than its usual rapidity among the band of noble Bacchanals, who were never weary of drinking the healths of Brederode, of Orange, and of Egmont. It was thought that the occasion imperiously demanded an extraordinary carouse, and the political events of the past three days lent an additional excitement to the wine. There was an earnest discussion as to an appropriate name to be given to their confederacy.

Should they call themselves the "Society of Concord," the restorers of lost liberty, or by what other attractive title should the league be baptized? Brederode was, however, already prepared to settle the question. He knew the value of a popular and original name; he possessed the instinct by which adroit partisans in every age have been accustomed to convert the reproachful epithets of their opponents into watchwords of honor, and he had already made his preparations for a startling theatrical effect. Suddenly, amid the din of voices, he arose, with all his rhetorical powers at command: He recounted to the company the observations which the Seigneur de Berlaymont was reported to have made to the Duchess, upon the presentation of the Request, and the name which he had thought fit to apply to them collectively. Most of the gentlemen then heard the memorable sarcasm for the first time. Great was the indignation of all that the state councillor should have dared to stigmatize as beggars a band of gentlemen with the best blood of the land in their veins. Brederode, on the contrary, smoothing their anger, assured them with good humor that nothing could be more fortunate. "They call us beggars!" said he; "let us accept the name. We will contend with the inquisition, but remain loyal to the King, even till compelled to wear the beggar's sack."

He then beckoned to one of his pages, who brought him a leathern wallet, such as was worn at that day by professional mendicants, together with a large wooden bowl, which also formed part of their regular appurtenances. Brederode immediately hung the wallet around his neck, filled the bowl with wine, lifted it with both hands, and drained it at a draught. "Long live the beggars!" he cried, as he wiped his beard and set the bowl down. "Vivent les gueulx." Then for the first time, from the lips of those reckless nobles rose the famous cry, which was so often to ring over land and sea, amid blazing cities, on blood-stained decks, through the smoke and carnage of many a stricken field. The humor of Brederode was hailed with deafening shouts of applause. The Count then threw the wallet around the neck of his nearest neighbor, and handed him the wooden bowl. Each guest, in turn, donned the mendicant's knapsack. Pushing aside his golden goblet, each filled the beggars' bowl to the brim, and drained it to the beggars' health. Roars of laughter, and shouts of "Vivent les gueulx" shook the walls of the stately mansion, as they were doomed never to shake again. The shibboleth was invented. The conjuration which they had been anxiously seeking was found. Their enemies had provided them with a spell, which was to prove, in after days, potent enough to start a spirit from palace or hovel, forest or wave, as the deeds of the "wild beggars," the "wood beggars," and the "beggars of the sea" taught Philip at last to understand the nation which he had driven to madness.

When the wallet and bowl had made the circuit of the table, they were suspended to a pillar in the hall. Each of the company in succession then threw some salt into his goblet, and, placing himself under these symbols of the brotherhood, repeated a jingling distich, produced impromptu for the occasion.

By this salt, by this bread, by this wallet we swear,  
These beggars ne'er will change, though all the world should stare.

This ridiculous ceremony completed the rites by which the confederacy received its name; but the banquet was by no means terminated. The uproar became furious. The younger and more reckless nobles abandoned themselves to revelry, which would have shamed heathen Saturnalia. They renewed to each other, every moment, their vociferous oaths of fidelity to the common cause, drained huge beakers to the beggars' health, turned their caps and doublets inside out, danced upon chairs and tables. Several addressed each other as Lord Abbot, or Reverend Prior, of this or that religious institution, thus indicating the means by which some of them hoped to mend their broken fortunes.

While the tumult was at its height, the Prince of Orange with Counts Horn and Egmont entered the apartment. They had been dining quietly with Mansfeld, who was confined to his house with an inflamed eye, and they were on their way to the council chamber, where the sessions were now prolonged nightly to a late hour. Knowing that Hoogstraaten, somewhat against his will, had been induced to be present at the banquet, they had come round by the way of Culemburg House, to induce him to retire. They were also disposed, if possible, to abridge the festivities which their influence would have been powerless to prevent.

These great nobles, as soon as they made their appearance, were surrounded by a crew of "beggars," maddened and dripping with their recent baptism of wine, who compelled them to drink a cup amid shouts of "Vivent le roi et les gueux!" The meaning of this cry they of course could not understand, for even those who had heard Berlaymont's contemptuous remarks, might not remember the exact term which he had used, and certainly could not be aware of the importance to which it had just been elevated. As for Horn, he disliked and had long before quarrelled with Brederode, had prevented many persons from signing the Compromise, and, although a guest at that time of Orange, was in the habit of retiring to bed before supper, to avoid the company of many who frequented the house. Yet his presence for a few moments, with the best intentions, at the conclusion of this famous banquet, was made one of the most deadly charges which were afterwards drawn up against him by the Crown. The three seigniors refused to be seated, and remained but for a moment, "the length of a Miserere," taking with them Hoogstraaten as they retired. They also prevailed upon the whole party to break up at the same time, so that their presence had served at least to put a conclusion to the disgraceful riot. When they arrived at the council chamber they received the thanks of the Duchess for what they had done.

Such was the first movement made by the members of the Compromise. Was it strange that Orange should feel little affinity with such companions? Had he not reason to hesitate, if the sacred cause of civil and religious liberty could only be maintained by these defenders and with such assistance?

The "beggars" did not content themselves with the name alone of the time-honored fraternity of Mendicants in which they had enrolled themselves. Immediately after the Culemburg banquet, a costume for the confederacy was decided upon.

These young gentlemen discarding gold lace and velvet, thought it expedient to array themselves in doublets and hose of ashen grey, with short cloaks of the same color, all of the coarsest materials. They appeared in this guise in the streets, with common felt hats on their heads, and beggars' pouches and bowls at their sides. They caused also medals of lead and copper to be struck, bearing upon one side the head of Philip; upon the reverse, two hands clasped within a wallet, with the motto, "Faithful to the King, even to wearing the beggar's sack." These badges they wore around their necks, or as buttons to their hats. As a further distinction they shaved their beards close, excepting the moustachios, which were left long and pendent in the Turkish fashion, --that custom, as it seemed, being an additional characteristic of Mendicants.

Very soon after these events the nobles of the league dispersed from the capital to their various homes. Brederode rode out of Brussels at the head of a band of cavaliers, who saluted the concourse of applauding spectators with a discharge of their pistols. Forty-three gentlemen accompanied him to Antwerp, where he halted for a night. The Duchess had already sent notice to the magistrates of that city of his intended visit, and warned them to have an eye upon his proceedings. "The great beggar," as Hoogstraaten called him, conducted himself, however, with as much propriety as could be expected. Four or five thousand of the inhabitants thronged about the hotel where he had taken up his quarters. He appeared at a window with his wooden bowl, filled with wine, in his hands, and his wallet at his side. He assured the multitude that he was ready to die to defend the good people of Antwerp and of all the Netherlands against the edicts and the inquisition. Meantime he drank their healths, and begged all who accepted the pledge to hold up their hands. The populace, highly amused, held up and clapped their hands as honest Brederode drained his bowl, and were soon afterwards persuaded to retire in great good humor.

These proceedings were all chronicled and transmitted to Madrid. It was also both publicly reported and secretly registered, that Brederode had eaten capons and other meat at Antwerp, upon Good Friday, which happened to be the, day of his visit to that city. He denied the charge, however; with ludicrous vehemence. "They who have told Madame that we ate meat in Antwerp," he wrote to Count Louis, "have lied wickedly and miserably, twenty-four feet down in their throats." He added that his nephew, Charles Mansfeld, who, notwithstanding the indignant prohibition of his father, had assisted of the presentation of the Request, and was then in his uncle's company at Antwerp, had ordered a capon, which Brederode had countermanded. "They told me afterwards," said he, "that my nephew had broiled a sausage in his chamber. I suppose that he thought himself in Spain, where they allow themselves such dainties."

Let it not be thought that these trifles are beneath the dignity of history. Matters like these filled the whole soul of Philip, swelled the bills of indictment for thousands of higher and better men than Brederode, and furnished occupation as well for secret correspondents and spies as for the most dignified functionaries of Government. Capons or

sausages on Good Friday, the Psalms of Clement Marot, the Sermon on the Mount in the vernacular, led to the rack, the gibbet, and the stake, but ushered in a war against the inquisition which was to last for eighty years. Brederode was not to be the hero of that party which he disgraced by his buffoonery. Had he lived, he might, perhaps, like many of his confederates, have redeemed, by his bravery in the field, a character which his orgies had rendered despicable. He now left Antwerp for the north of Holland, where, as he soon afterwards reported to Count Louis, "the beggars were as numerous as the sands on the seashore."

His "nephew Charles," two months afterwards, obeyed his father's injunction, and withdrew formally from the confederacy.

Meantime the rumor had gone abroad that the Request of the nobles had already produced good fruit, that the edicts were to be mitigated, the inquisition abolished, liberty of conscience eventually to prevail.

"Upon these reports," says a contemporary, "all the vermin of exiles and fugitives for religion, as well as those who had kept in concealment, began to lift up their heads and thrust forth their horns." It was known that Margaret of Parma had ordered the inquisitors and magistrates to conduct themselves "modestly and discreetly." It was known that the privy council was hard at work upon the project for "moderating" the edicts. Modestly and discreetly, Margaret of Parma, almost immediately after giving these orders, and while the "moderation" was still in the hands of the lawyers, informed her brother that she had given personal attention to the case of a person who had snatched the holy wafer from the priest's hand at Oudenarde. This "quidam," as she called him--for his name was beneath the cognizance of an Emperor's bastard daughter--had by her orders received rigorous and exemplary justice. And what was the "rigorous and exemplary justice" thus inflicted upon the "quidam?" The procurator of the neighboring city of Tournay has enabled us to answer. The young man, who was a tapestry weaver, Hans Tiskaen by name, had, upon the 30th May, thrown the holy wafer upon the ground. For this crime, which was the same as that committed on Christmas-day of the previous year by Bertrand le Blas, at Tournay, he now met with a similar although not quite so severe a punishment. Having gone quietly home after doing the deed, he was pursued, arrested, and upon the Saturday ensuing taken to the market-place of Oudenarde. Here the right hand with which he had committed the offence was cut off, and he was then fastened to the stake and burned to death over a slow fire. He was fortunately not more than a quarter of an hour in torment, but he persisted in his opinions, and called on God for support to his last breath.

This homely tragedy was enacted at Oudenarde, the birth place of Duchess Margaret. She was the daughter of the puissant Charles the Fifth, but her mother was only the daughter of a citizen of Oudenarde; of a "quidam" like the nameless weaver who had thus been burned by her express order. It was not to be supposed, however, that the circumstance could operate in so great a malefactor's favor. Moreover, at the same moment, she sent orders that a like punishment should be inflicted upon another person then in a Flemish prison, for the crime of anabaptism.

The privy council, assisted by thirteen knights of the Fleece, had been

hard at work, and the result of their wisdom was at last revealed in a "moderation" consisting of fifty-three articles.

What now was the substance of those fifty-three articles, so painfully elaborated by Viglius, so handsomely drawn up into shape by Councillor d'Assonleville? Simply to substitute the halter for the fagot. After elimination of all verbiage, this fact was the only residuum. It was most distinctly laid down that all forms of religion except the Roman Catholic were forbidden; that no public or secret conventicles were to be allowed; that all heretical writings were to be suppressed; that all curious inquiries into the Scriptures were to be prohibited. Persons who infringed these regulations were divided into two classes--the misleaders and the misled. There was an affectation of granting mercy to persons in the second category, while death was denounced upon those composing the first. It was merely an affectation; for the rambling statute was so open in all its clauses, that the Juggernaut car of persecution could be driven through the whole of them, whenever such a course should seem expedient. Every man or woman in the Netherlands might be placed in the list of the misleaders, at the discretion of the officials. The pretended mercy to the misguided was a mere delusion.

The superintendents, preachers, teachers, ministers, sermon-makers, deacons, and other officers, were to be executed with the halter, with confiscation of their whole property. So much was very plain. Other heretics, however, who would abjure their heresy before the bishop, might be pardoned for the first offence, but if obstinate, were to be banished. This seemed an indication of mercy, at least to the repentant criminals. But who were these "other" heretics? All persons who discussed religious matters were to be put to death. All persons, not having studied theology at a "renowned university," who searched and expounded the Scriptures, were to be put to death. All persons in whose houses any act of the perverse religion should be committed, were to be put to death. All persons who harbored or protected ministers and teachers of any sect, were to be put to death. All the criminals thus carefully enumerated were to be executed, whether repentant or not. If, however, they abjured their errors, they were to be beheaded instead of being strangled. Thus it was obvious that almost any heretic might be brought to the halter at a moment's notice.

Strictly speaking, the idea of death by the halter or the axe was less shocking to the imagination than that of being burned or buried alive. In this respect, therefore, the edicts were softened by the proposed "Moderation." It would, however, always be difficult to persuade any considerable slumber of intelligent persons, that the infliction of a violent death, by whatever process, on account of religious opinions, was an act of clemency. The Netherlanders were, however, to be persuaded into this belief. The draft of the new edict was ostentatiously called the "Moderatie," or the "Moderation." It was very natural, therefore, that the common people, by a quibble, which is the same in Flemish as in English, should call the proposed "Moderation" the "Murderation." The rough mother-wit of the people had already characterized and annihilated the project, while dull formalists were carrying it through the preliminary stages.

A vote in favor of the project having been obtained from the estates of Artois, Hainault, and Flanders, the instructions for the envoys; Baron Montigny and Marquis Berghen, were made out in conformity to the scheme. Egmont had declined the mission, not having reason to congratulate himself upon the diplomatic success of his visit to Spain in the preceding year. The two nobles who consented to undertake the office were persuaded into acceptance sorely against their will. They were aware that their political conduct since the King's departure from the country had not always been deemed satisfactory at Madrid, but they were, of course, far from suspecting the true state of the royal mind. They were both as sincere Catholics and as loyal gentlemen as Granvelle, but they were not aware how continuously, during a long course of years, that personage had represented them to Philip as renegades and rebels. They had maintained the constitutional rights of the state, and they had declined to act as executioners for the inquisition, but they were yet to learn that such demonstrations amounted to high treason.

Montigny departed, on the 29th May, from Brussels. He left the bride to whom he had been wedded amid scenes of festivity, the preceding autumn-- the unborn child who was never to behold its father's face. He received warnings in Paris, by which he scorned to profit. The Spanish ambassador in that city informed him that Philip's wrath at the recent transactions in the Netherlands was high. He was most significantly requested, by a leading personage in France, to feign illness, or to take refuge in any expedient by which he might avoid the fulfilment of his mission. Such hints had no effect in turning him from his course, and he proceeded to Madrid, where he arrived on the 17th of June.

His colleague in the mission, Marquis Berghen, had been prevented from setting forth at the same time, by an accident which, under the circumstances, might almost seem ominous. Walking through the palace park, in a place where some gentlemen were playing at pall-mall, he was accidentally struck in the leg by a wooden ball. The injury, although trifling, produced so much irritation and fever that he was confined to his bed for several weeks. It was not until the 1st of July that he was able to take his departure from Brussels. Both these unfortunate nobles thus went forth to fulfil that dark and mysterious destiny from which the veil of three centuries has but recently been removed.

Besides a long historical discourse, in eighteen chapters, delivered by way of instruction to the envoys, Margaret sent a courier beforehand with a variety of intelligence concerning the late events. Alonzo del Canto, one of Philip's spies in the Netherlands, also wrote to inform the King that the two ambassadors were the real authors of all the troubles then existing in the country. Cardinal Granvelle, too, renewed his previous statements in a confidential communication to his Majesty, adding that no persons more appropriate could have been selected than Berghen and Montigny, for they knew better than any one else the state of affairs. in which they had borne the principal part. Nevertheless, Montigny, upon his arrival in Madrid on the 17th of June, was received by Philip with much apparent cordiality, admitted immediately to an audience, and assured in the strongest terms that there was no dissatisfaction

in the royal mind against the seigniors, whatever false reports might be circulated to that effect. In other respects, the result of this and of his succeeding interviews with the monarch was sufficiently meagre.

It could not well be otherwise. The mission of the envoys was an elaborate farce to introduce a terrible tragedy. They were sent to procure from Philip the abolition of the inquisition and the moderation of the edicts. At the very moment, however, of all these legislative and diplomatic arrangements, Margaret of Parma was in possession of secret letters from Philip, which she was charged to deliver to the Archbishop of Sorrento, papal nuncio at the imperial court, then on a special visit to Brussels. This ecclesiastic had come to the Netherlands ostensibly to confer with the Prince of Orange upon the affairs of his principality, to remonstrate with Count Culemburg, and to take measures for the reformation of the clergy. The real object of his mission, however, was to devise means for strengthening the inquisition and suppressing heresy in the provinces. Philip, at whose request he had come, had charged him by no means to divulge the secret, as the King was anxious to have it believed that the ostensible was the only business which the prelate had to perform in the country. Margaret accordingly delivered to him the private letters, in which Philip avowed his determination to maintain the inquisition and the edicts in all their rigor, but enjoined profound secrecy upon the subject. The Duchess, therefore, who knew the face of the cards, must have thought it a superfluous task to continue the game, which to Philip's cruel but procrastinating temperament was perhaps a pleasurable excitement.

The scheme for mitigating the edicts by the substitution of strangling for burning, was not destined therefore far much success either in Spain or in the provinces; but the people by whom the next great movement was made in the drama of the revolt, conducted themselves in a manner to shame the sovereign who oppressed, and the riotous nobles who had undertaken to protect their liberties.

At this very moment, in the early summer of 1566, many thousands of burghers, merchants, peasants, and gentlemen, were seen mustering and marching through the fields of every province, armed with arquebus, javelin, pike and broadsword. For what purpose were these gatherings? Only to hear sermons and to sing hymns in the open air, as it was unlawful to profane the churches with such rites. This was the first great popular phase of the Netherland rebellion. Notwithstanding the edicts and the inquisition with their daily hecatombs, notwithstanding the special publication at this time throughout the country by the Duchess Regent that all the sanguinary statutes concerning religion were in as great vigor as ever, notwithstanding that Margaret offered a reward of seven hundred crowns to the man who would bring her a preacher--dead or alive,--the popular thirst for the exercises of the reformed religion could no longer be slaked at the obscure and hidden fountains where their priests had so long privately ministered.

Partly emboldened by a temporary lull in the persecution, partly encouraged by the presentation of the Request and by the events to which it had given rise, the Reformers now came boldly forth from their lurking



places and held their religious meetings in the light of day. The consciousness of numbers and of right had brought the conviction of strength. The audacity of the Reformers was wonderful to the mind of President Viglius, who could find no language strong enough with which to characterize and to deplore such blasphemous conduct. The field-preaching seemed in the eyes of government to spread with the rapidity of a malignant pestilence. The miasma flew upon the wings of the wind. As early as 1562, there had been public preaching in the neighborhood of Ypres. The executions which followed, however, had for the time suppressed the practice both in that place as well as throughout Flanders and the rest of the provinces. It now broke forth as by one impulse from one end of the country to the other. In the latter part of June, Hermann Stryoker or Modet, a monk who had renounced his vows to become one of the most popular preachers in the Reformed Church, addressed a congregation of seven or eight thousand persons in the neighborhood of Ghent. Peter Dathenus, another unfrocked monk, preached at various places in West Flanders, with great effect. A man endowed with a violent, stormy eloquence, intemperate as most zealots, he was then rendering better services to the cause of the Reformation than he was destined to do at later periods.

But apostate priests were not the only preachers. To the ineffable disgust of the conservatives in Church and State, there were men with little education, utterly devoid of Hebrew, of lowly station--hatters, curriers, tanners, dyers, and the like, who began to preach also; remembering, unseasonably perhaps, that the early disciples, selected by the founder of Christianity, had not all been doctors of theology, with diplomas from a "renowned university." But if the nature of such men were subdued to what it worked in, that charge could not be brought against ministers with the learning and accomplishments of Ambrose Wille, Marnier, Guy de Bray, or Francis Junius, the man whom Scaliger called the "greatest of all theologians since the days of the apostles." An aristocratic sarcasm could not be levelled against Peregrine de la Grange, of a noble family in Provence, with the fiery blood of southern France in his veins, brave as his nation, learned, eloquent, enthusiastic, who galloped to his field-preaching on horseback, and fired a pistol-shot as a signal for his congregation to give attention.

On the 28th of June, 1566, at eleven o'clock at night, there was an assemblage of six thousand people near Tournay, at the bridge of Ernonville, to hear a sermon from Ambrose Wille, a man who had studied theology in Geneva, at the feet of Calvin, and who now, with a special price upon his head,--was preaching the doctrines he had learned. Two days afterwards, ten thousand people assembled at the same spot, to hear Peregrine de la Grange. Governor Moulbais thundered forth a proclamation from the citadel, warning all men that the edicts were as rigorous as ever, and that every man, woman, or child who went to these preachings, was incurring the penalty of death. The people became only the more ardent and excited. Upon Sunday, the seventh of July; twenty thousand persons assembled at the same bridge to hear Ambrose Wille. One man in three was armed. Some had arquebuses, others pistols, pikes, swords, pitchforks, poniards, clubs. The preacher, for whose apprehension a fresh reward had been offered, was escorted to his pulpit by a hundred

mounted troopers. He begged his audience not to be scared from the word of God by menace; assured them that although but a poor preacher himself, he held a divine commission; that he had no fear of death; that, should he fall, there were many better than he to supply his place, and fifty thousand men to avenge his murder.

The Duchess sent forth proclamations by hundreds. She ordered the instant suppression of these armed assemblies and the arrest of the preachers. But of what avail were proclamations against such numbers with weapons in their hands. Why irritate to madness these hordes of enthusiasts, who were now entirely pacific, and who marched back to the city, after conclusion of divine service, with perfect decorum? All classes of the population went eagerly to the sermons. The gentry of the place, the rich merchants, the notables, as well as the humbler artisans and laborers, all had received the infection. The professors of the Reformed religion outnumbered the Catholics by five or six to one. On Sundays and other holidays, during the hours of service, Tournay was literally emptied of its inhabitants. The streets were as silent as if war or pestilence had swept the place. The Duchess sent orders, but she sent no troops. The trained-bands of the city, the cross-bow-men of St. Maurice, the archers of St. Sebastian, the sword-players of St. Christopher, could not be ordered from Tournay to suppress the preaching, for they had all gone to the preaching themselves. How idle, therefore; to send peremptory orders without a matchlock to enforce the command.

Throughout Flanders similar scenes were enacted. The meetings were encampments, for the Reformers now came to their religious services armed to the teeth, determined, if banished from the churches, to defend their right to the fields. Barricades of upturned wagons, branches, and planks, were thrown up around the camps. Strong guards of mounted men were stationed at every avenue. Outlying scouts gave notice of approaching danger, and guided the faithful into the enclosure. Pedlers and hawkers plied the trade upon which the penalty of death was fixed, and sold the forbidden hymn-books to all who chose to purchase. A strange and contradictory spectacle! An army of criminals doing deeds which could only be expiated at the stake; an entrenched rebellion, bearding the government with pike, matchlock, javelin and barricade, and all for no more deadly purpose than to listen to the precepts of the pacific Jesus.

Thus the preaching spread through the Walloon provinces to the northern Netherlands. Towards the end of July, an apostate monk, of singular eloquence, Peter Gabriel by name, was announced to preach at Overveen near Harlem. This was the first field-meeting which had taken place in Holland. The people were wild with enthusiasm; the authorities beside themselves with apprehension. People from the country flocked into the town by thousands. The other cities were deserted, Harlem was filled to overflowing. Multitudes encamped upon the ground the night before. The magistrates ordered the gates to be kept closed in the morning till long after the usual hour. It was of no avail. Bolts and bars were but small impediments to enthusiasts who had travelled so many miles on foot or horseback to listen to a sermon. They climbed the walls, swam the moat and thronged to the place of meeting long before the doors had been

opened. When these could no longer be kept closed without a conflict, for which the magistrates were not prepared, the whole population poured out of the city with a single impulse. Tens of thousands were assembled upon the field. The bulwarks were erected as usual, the guards were posted, the necessary precautions taken. But upon this occasion, and in that region there was but little danger to be apprehended. The multitude of Reformers made the edicts impossible, so long as no foreign troops were there to enforce them. The congregation was encamped and arranged in an orderly manner. The women, of whom there were many, were placed next the pulpit, which, upon this occasion, was formed of a couple of spears thrust into the earth, sustaining a cross-piece, against which the preacher might lean his back. The services commenced with the singing of a psalm by the whole vast assemblage. Clement Marot's verses, recently translated by Dathenus, were then new and popular. The strains of the monarch minstrel, chanted thus in their homely but nervous mother tongue by a multitude who had but recently learned that all the poetry and rapture of devotion were not irrevocably confined with a buried language, or immured in the precincts of a church, had never produced a more elevating effect. No anthem from the world-renowned organ in that ancient city ever awakened more lofty emotions than did those ten thousand human voices ringing from the grassy meadows in that fervid midsummer noon. When all was silent again, the preacher rose; a little, meagre man, who looked as if he might rather melt away beneath the blazing sunshine of July, than hold the multitude enchained four uninterrupted hours long, by the magic of his tongue. His text was the 8th, 9th, and 10th verses of the second chapter of Ephesians; and as the slender monk spoke to his simple audience of God's grace, and of faith in Jesus, who had descended from above to save the lowliest and the most abandoned, if they would put their trust in Him, his hearers were alternately exalted with fervor or melted into tears. He prayed for all conditions of men--for themselves, their friends, their enemies, for the government which had persecuted them, for the King whose face was turned upon them in anger. At times, according to one who was present, not a dry eye was to be seen in the crowd. When the minister had finished, he left his congregation abruptly, for he had to travel all night in order to reach Alkmaar, where he was to preach upon the following day.

By the middle of July the custom was established outside all the principal cities. Camp-meetings were held in some places; as, for instance, in the neighborhood of Antwerp, where the congregations numbered often fifteen thousand and on some occasions were estimated at between twenty and thirty thousand persons at a time; "very many of them," said an eye-witness, "the best and wealthiest in the town."

The sect to which most of these worshippers belonged was that of Calvin. In Antwerp there were Lutherans, Calvinists, and Anabaptists. The Lutherans were the richest sect, but the Calvinists the most numerous and enthusiastic. The Prince of Orange at this moment was strenuously opposed both to Calvinism and Anabaptism, but inclining to Lutheranism. Political reasons at this epoch doubtless influenced his mind in religious matters. The aid of the Lutheran princes of Germany, who detested the doctrines of Geneva, could hardly be relied upon for the Netherlanders, unless they would adapt the Confession of Augsburg. The

Prince knew that the Emperor, although inclined to the Reformation, was bitterly averse to Calvinism, and he was, therefore, desirous of healing the schism which existed in the general Reformed Church. To accomplish this, however, would be to gain a greater victory over the bigotry which was the prevailing characteristic of the age than perhaps could be expected. The Prince, from the first moment of his abandoning the ancient doctrines, was disposed to make the attempt.

The Duchess ordered the magistrates of Antwerp to put down these mass-meetings by means of the guild-militia. They replied that at an earlier day such a course might have been practicable, but that the sects had become quite too numerous for coercion. If the authorities were able to prevent the exercises of the Reformed religion within the city, it would be as successful a result as could be expected. To prevent the preaching outside the walls, by means of the bourgher force, was an utter impossibility. The dilatoriness of the Sovereign placed the Regent in a frightful dilemma, but it was sufficiently obvious that the struggle could not long be deferred. "There will soon be a hard nut to crack," wrote Count Louis. "The King will never grant the preaching; the people will never give it up, if it cost them their necks. There's a hard puff coming upon the country before long." The Duchess was not yet authorized to levy troops, and she feared that if she commenced such operations, she should perhaps offend the King, while she at the same time might provoke the people into more effective military preparations than her own. She felt that for one company levied by her, the sectaries could raise ten. Moreover, she was entirely without money, even if she should otherwise think it expedient to enrol an army. Meantime she did what she could with "public prayers, processions, fasts, sermons, exhortations," and other ecclesiastical machinery which she ordered the bishops to put in motion. Her situation was indeed sufficiently alarming.

Egmont, whom many of the sectaries hoped to secure as their leader in case of a civil war, showed no disposition to encourage such hopes, but as little to take up arms against the people. He went to Flanders, where the armed assemblages for field-preaching had become so numerous that a force of thirty or forty thousand men might be set on foot almost at a moment's warning, and where the conservatives, in a state of alarm, desired the presence of their renowned governor. The people of Antwerp, on their part, demanded William of Orange. The Prince, who was hereditary burgrave of the city, had at first declined the invitation of the magistracy. The Duchess united her request with the universal prayer of the inhabitants. Events meantime had been thickening, and suspicion increasing. Meghen had been in the city for several days, much to the disgust of the Reformers, by whom he was hated. Aremberg was expected to join him, and it was rumored that measures were secretly in progress under the auspices of these two leading cardinalists, for introducing a garrison, together with great store of ammunition, into the city. On the other hand, the "great beggar," Brederode, had taken up his quarters also in Antwerp; had been daily entertaining a crowd of roystering nobles at his hotel, previously to a second political demonstration, which will soon be described, and was constantly parading the street, followed by a swarm of adherents in the beggar livery. The sincere Reformers were made nearly as uncomfortable by the presence of their avowed friends, as by

that of Meghen and Aremberg, and earnestly desired to be rid of them all. Long and anxious were the ponderings of the magistrates upon all these subjects. It was determined, at last, to send a fresh deputation to Brussels, requesting the Regent to order the departure of Meghen, Aremberg, and Brederode from Antwerp; remonstrating with her against any plan she might be supposed to entertain of sending mercenary troops into the city; pledging the word of the senate to keep the peace, meanwhile, by their regular force; and above all, imploring her once more, in the most urgent terms, to send thither the burgrave, as the only man who was capable of saving the city from the calamities into which it was so likely to fall.

The Prince of Orange being thus urgently besought, both by the government of Antwerp, the inhabitants of that city, and by the Regent herself, at last consented to make the visit so earnestly demanded. On the 13th July, he arrived in Antwerp. The whole city was alive with enthusiasm. Half its population seemed to have come forth from the gates to bid him welcome, lining the road for miles. The gate through which he was to pass, the ramparts, the roofs of the houses were packed close, with expectant and eager faces. At least thirty thousand persons had assembled to welcome their guest. A long cavalcade of eminent citizens had come as far as Berghen to meet him and to escort him into the city. Brederode, attended by some of the noble confederates, rode at the head of the procession. As they encountered the Prince, a discharge of pistol-shots was fired by way of salute, which was the signal for a deafening shout from the assembled multitude. The crowd thronged about the Prince as he advanced, calling him their preserver, their father, their only hope. Wild shouts of welcome rose upon every side, as he rode through the town, mingled with occasional vociferations of "long life to the beggars." These party cries were instantly and sharply rebuked by Orange, who expressed, in Brederode's presence, the determination that he would make men unlearn that mischievous watchword. He had, moreover, little relish at that time for the tumultuous demonstrations of attachment to his person, which were too fervid to be censured, but too unseasonable to be approved. When the crowd had at last been made to understand that their huzzas were distasteful to the Prince, most of the multitude consented to disperse, feeling, however, a relief from impending danger in the presence of the man to whom they instinctively looked as their natural protector.

The senators had come forth in a body to receive the burgrave and escort him to the hotel prepared for him. Arrived there, he lost no time in opening the business which had brought him to Antwerp. He held at once a long consultation with the upper branch of the government. Afterwards, day after day, he honestly, arduously, sagaciously labored to restore the public tranquillity. He held repeated deliberations with every separate portion of the little commonwealth, the senate, the council of ancients, the corporation of ward-masters, the deans of trades. Nor did he confine his communication to these organized political bodies alone. He had frequent interviews with the officers of the military associations, with the foreign merchant companies, with the guilds of "Rhetoric." The chambers of the "Violet" and the "Marigold" were not too frivolous or fantastic to be consulted by one who knew human nature and the

constitution of Netherland society so well as did the Prince. Night and day he labored with all classes of citizens to bring about a better understanding, and to establish mutual confidence. At last by his efforts tranquillity was restored. The broad-council having been assembled, it was decided that the exercise of the Reformed religion should be excluded from the city, but silently tolerated in the suburbs, while an armed force was to be kept constantly in readiness to suppress all attempts at insurrection. The Prince had desired, that twelve hundred men should be enlisted and paid by the city, so that at least a small number of disciplined troops might be ready at a moment's warning; but he found it impossible to carry the point with the council. The magistrates were willing to hold themselves responsible for the peace of the city, but they would have no mercenaries.

Thus, during the remainder of July and the early part of August, was William of Orange strenuously occupied in doing what should have been the Regent's work. He was still regarded both by the Duchess and by the Calvinist party--although having the sympathies of neither,--as the only man in the Netherlands who could control the rising tide of a national revolt. He took care, said his enemies, that his conduct at Antwerp should have every appearance of loyalty; but they insinuated that he was a traitor from the beginning, who was insidiously fomenting the troubles which he appeared to rebuke. No one doubted his genius, and all felt or affected admiration at its display upon this critical occasion.

"The Prince of Orange is doing very great and notable services at Antwerp to the King and to the country," said Assonleville. "That seignior is very skilful in managing great affairs." Margaret of Parma wrote letters to him fixed with the warmest gratitude, expressions of approbation, and of wishes that he could both remain in Antwerp and return to assist her in Brussels. Philip, too, with his own pen, addressed him a letter, in which implicit confidence in the Prince's character was avowed, all suspicion on the part of the Sovereign indignantly repudiated, earnest thanks for his acceptance of the Antwerp mission uttered, and a distinct refusal given to the earnest request made by Orange to resign his offices. The Prince read or listened to all this commendation, and valued it exactly at its proper worth. He knew it to be pure grimace. He was no more deceived by it than if he had read the letter sent by Margaret to Philip, a few weeks later, in which she expressed herself as "thoroughly aware that it was the intention of Orange to take advantage of the impending tumults, for the purpose of conquering the provinces and of dividing the whole territory among himself and friends." Nothing could be more utterly false than so vile and ridiculous a statement.

The course of the Prince had hitherto been, and was still, both consistent and loyal. He was proceeding step by step to place the monarch in the wrong, but the only art which he was using, was to plant himself more firmly upon the right. It was in the monarch's power to convoke the assembly of the states-general, so loudly demanded by the whole nation, to abolish the inquisition, to renounce persecution, to accept the great fact of the Reformation. To do so he must have ceased to be Philip. To have faltered in attempting to bring him into that path, the Prince must have ceased to be William of Orange. Had he succeeded, there would have been no treason and no Republic of Holland.

His conduct at the outbreak of the Antwerp troubles was firm and sagacious. Even had his duty required him to put down the public preaching with peremptory violence, he had been furnished with no means to accomplish the purpose. The rebellion, if it were one, was already full-grown. It could not be taken by the throat and strangled with one hand, however firm.

A report that the High Sheriff of Brabant was collecting troops by command of government, in order to attack the Reformers at their field-preachings, went far to undo the work already accomplished by the Prince. The assemblages swelled again from ten or twelve thousand to twenty-five thousand, the men all providing themselves more thoroughly with weapons than before. Soon afterwards, the intemperate zeal of another individual, armed to the teeth--not, however, like the martial sheriff and his forces, with arquebus and javelin, but with the still more deadly weapons of polemical theology,--was very near causing a general outbreak. A peaceful and not very numerous congregation were listening to one of their preachers in a field outside the town. Suddenly an unknown individual in plain clothes and with a pragmatical demeanor, interrupted the discourse by giving a flat contradiction to some of the doctrines advanced. The minister replied by a rebuke, and a reiteration of the disputed sentiment.--The stranger, evidently versed in ecclesiastical matters, volubly and warmly responded. The preacher, a man of humble condition and moderate abilities, made as good show of argument as he could, but was evidently no match for his antagonist. He was soon vanquished in the wordy warfare. Well he might be, for it appeared that the stranger was no less a personage than Peter Rythovius, a doctor of divinity, a distinguished pedant of Louvain, a relation of a bishop and himself a Church dignitary. This learned professor, quite at home in his subject, was easily triumphant, while the poor dissenter, more accustomed to elevate the hearts of his hearers than to perplex their heads, sank prostrate and breathless under the storm of texts, glosses, and hard Hebrew roots with which he was soon overwhelmed. The professor's triumph was, however, but short-lived, for the simple-minded congregation, who loved their teacher, were enraged that he should be thus confounded. Without more ado, therefore, they laid violent hands upon the Quixotic knight-errant of the Church, and so cudgelled and belabored him bodily that he might perhaps have lost his life in the encounter had he not been protected by the more respectable portion of the assembly. These persons, highly disapproving the whole proceeding, forcibly rescued him from the assailants, and carried him off to town, where the news of the incident at once created an uproar. Here he was thrown into prison as a disturber of the peace, but in reality that he might be personally secure. The next day the Prince of Orange, after administering to him a severe rebuke for his ill-timed exhibition of pedantry, released him from confinement, and had him conveyed out of the city. "This theologian," wrote the Prince to Duchess Margaret, "would have done better, methinks, to stay at home; for I suppose he had no especial orders to perform this piece of work."

Thus, so long as this great statesman could remain in the metropolis, his temperate firmness prevented the explosion which had so long been expected. His own government of Holland and Zeland, too, especially

demanded his care. The field-preaching had spread in that region with prodigious rapidity. Armed assemblages, utterly beyond the power of the civil authorities, were taking place daily in the neighborhood of Amsterdam. Yet the Duchess could not allow him to visit his government in the north. If he could be spared from Antwerp for a day, it was necessary that he should aid her in a fresh complication with the confederated nobles in the very midst, therefore, of his Antwerp labors, he had been obliged, by Margaret's orders, to meet a committee at Duffel. For in this same eventful month of July a great meeting was held by the members of the Compromise at St. Trond, in the bishopric of Liege. They came together on the thirteenth of the month, and remained assembled till the beginning of August. It was a wild, tumultuous convention, numbering some fifteen hundred cavaliers, each with his esquires and armed attendants; a larger and more important gathering than had yet been held. Brederode and Count Louis were the chieftains of the assembly, which, as may be supposed from its composition and numbers, was likely to be neither very orderly in its demonstrations nor wholesome in its results. It was an ill-timed movement. The convention was too large for deliberation, too riotous to inspire confidence. The nobles quartered themselves every where in the taverns and the farm-houses of the neighborhood, while large numbers encamped upon the open fields. There was a constant din of revelry and uproar, mingled with wordy warfare, and an occasional crossing of swords. It seemed rather like a congress of ancient, savage Batavians, assembled in Teutonic fashion to choose a king amid hoarse shouting, deep drinking, and the clash of spear and shield, than a meeting for a lofty and earnest purpose, by their civilized descendants. A crowd of spectators, landlopers, mendicants, daily aggregated themselves to the aristocratic assembly, joining, with natural unction, in the incessant shout of "Vivent les gueux!" It was impossible that so soon after their baptism the self-styled beggars should repudiate all connection with the time-honored fraternity in which they had enrolled themselves.

The confederates discussed--if an exchange of vociferations could be called discussion--principally two points: whether, in case they obtained the original objects of their petition, they should pause or move still further onward; and whether they should insist upon receiving some pledge from the government, that no vengeance should be taken upon them for their previous proceedings. Upon both questions, there was much vehemence of argument and great difference of opinion. They, moreover, took two very rash and very grave resolutions--to guarantee the people against all violence on account of their creeds, and to engage a force of German soldiery, four thousand horse and forty companies of infantry by, "wart geld" or retaining wages. It was evident that these gentlemen were disposed to go fast and far. If they had been ready in the spring to receive their baptism of wine, the "beggars" were now eager for the baptism of blood. At the same time it must be observed that the levies which they proposed, not to make, but to have at command, were purely for defence. In case the King, as it was thought probable, should visit the Netherlands with fire and sword, then there would be a nucleus of resistance already formed.

Upon the 18th July, the Prince of Orange, at the earnest request of the



Regent, met a committee of the confederated nobles at Duffel. Count Egmont was associated with him in this duty. The conference was not very satisfactory. The deputies from St. Trend, consisting of Brederode, Culemburg, and others, exchanged with the two seigniors the old arguments. It was urged upon the confederates, that they had made themselves responsible for the public tranquillity so long as the Regent should hold to her promise; that, as the Duchess had sent two distinguished envoys to Madrid, in order to accomplish, if possible, the wishes of the nobles, it was their duty to redeem their own pledges; that armed assemblages ought to be suppressed by their efforts rather than encouraged by their, example; and that, if they now exerted themselves zealously to check, the tumults, the Duchess was ready to declare, in her own-name and that of his Majesty, that the presentation of the Request had been beneficial.

The nobles replied that the pledges had become a farce, that the Regent was playing them false, that persecution was as fierce as ever, that the "Moderation" was a mockery, that the letters recommending "modesty and discretion" to the inquisitors had been mere waste paper, that a price had been set upon the heads of the preachers as if they had been wild beasts, that there were constant threats of invasions from Spain, that the convocation of the states-general had been illegally deferred, that the people had been driven to despair, and that it was the conduct of government, not of the confederates, which had caused the Reformers to throw off previous restraint and to come boldly forth by tens of thousands into the fields, not to defy their King, but to worship their God.

Such, in brief, was the conference of Duffel. In conclusion, a paper was drawn up which Brederode carried back to the convention, and which it was proposed to submit to the Duchess for her approval. At the end of the month, Louis of Nassau was accordingly sent to Brussels, accompanied by twelve associates, who were familiarly called his twelve apostles. Here he laid before her Highness in council a statement, embodying the views of the confederates. In this paper they asserted that they were ever ready to mount and ride against a foreign foe, but that they would never draw a sword against their innocent countrymen. They maintained that their past conduct deserved commendation, and that in requiring letters of safe conduct in the names both of the Duchess and of the Fleece-knights, they were governed not by a disposition to ask for pardon, but by a reluctance without such guarantees to enter into stipulations touching the public tranquillity. If, however, they should be assured that the intentions of the Regent were amicable and that there was no design to take vengeance for the past--if, moreover, she were willing to confide in the counsels of Horn, Egmont, and Orange, and to take no important measure without their concurrence--if, above all, she would convoke the states-general, then, and then only, were the confederates willing to exert their energies to preserve peace, to restrain popular impetuosity and banish universal despair.

So far Louis of Nassau and his twelve apostles. It must be confessed that, whatever might be thought of the justice, there could be but one opinion as to the boldness of these views. The Duchess was furious. If

the language held in April had been considered audacious, certainly this new request was, in her own words, "still more bitter to the taste and more difficult of digestion." She therefore answered in a very unsatisfactory, haughty and ambiguous manner, reserving decision upon their propositions till they had been discussed by the state council, and intimating that they would also be laid before the Knights of the Fleece, who were to hold a meeting upon the 26th of August.

There was some further conversation without any result. Esquerdes complained that the confederates were the mark of constant calumny, and demanded that the slanderers should be confronted with them and punished. "I understand perfectly well," interrupted Margaret, "you wish to take justice into your own hands and to be King yourself." It was further intimated by these reckless gentlemen, that if they should be driven by violence into measures of self-protection, they had already secured friends in a certain country. The Duchess, probably astonished at the frankness of this statement, is said to have demanded further explanations. The confederates replied by observing that they had resources both in the provinces and in Germany. The state council decided that to accept the propositions of the confederates would be to establish a triumvirate at once, and the Duchess wrote to her brother distinctly advising against the acceptance of the proposal. The assembly at St. Trond was then dissolved, having made violent demonstrations which were not followed by beneficial results, and having laid itself open to various suspicions, most of which were ill-founded, while some of them were just.

Before giving the reader a brief account of the open and the secret policy pursued by the government at Brussels and Madrid, in consequence of these transactions, it is now necessary to allude to a startling series of events, which at this point added to the complications of the times, and exercised a fatal influence upon the situation of the commonwealth.

#### 1566 [CHAPTER VII.]

Ecclesiastical architecture in the Netherlands--The image-breaking--Description of Antwerp Cathedral--Ceremony of the Ommegang--Precursory disturbances--Iconoclasts at Antwerp--Incidents of the image-breaking in various cities--Events at Tournay--Preaching of Wille--Disturbance by a little boy--Churches sacked at Tournay--Disinterment of Duke Adolphus of Gueldres--Iconoclasts defeated and massacred at Anchin--Bartholomew's Day at Valenciennes--General characteristics of the image-breaking--Testimony of contemporaries as to the honesty of the rioters--Consternation of the Duchess--Projected flight to Mons--Advice of Horn and other seigniors--Accord of 25th August.

The Netherlands possessed an extraordinary number of churches and monasteries. Their exquisite architecture and elaborate decoration had

been the earliest indication of intellectual culture displayed in the country. In the vast number of cities, towns, and villages which were crowded upon that narrow territory, there had been, from circumstances operating throughout Christendom, a great accumulation of ecclesiastical wealth. The same causes can never exist again which at an early day covered the soil of Europe with those magnificent creations of Christian art. It was in these anonymous but entirely original achievements that Gothic genius; awaking from its long sleep of the dark ages, first expressed itself. The early poetry of the German races was hewn and chiselled in stone. Around the steadfast principle of devotion then so firmly rooted in the soil, clustered the graceful and vigorous emanations of the newly-awakened mind. All that science could invent, all that art could embody, all that mechanical ingenuity could dare, all that wealth could lavish, whatever there was of human energy which was panting for pacific utterance, wherever there stirred the vital principle which instinctively strove to create and to adorn at an epoch when vulgar violence and destructiveness were the general tendencies of humanity, all gathered around these magnificent temples, as their aspiring pinnacles at last pierced the mist which had so long brooded over the world.

There were many hundreds of churches, more or less remarkable, in the Netherlands. Although a severe criticism might regret to find in these particular productions of the great Germanic school a development of that practical tendency which distinguished the Batavian and Flemish branches,--although it might recognize a departure from that mystic principle which, in its efforts to symbolize the strivings of humanity towards the infinite object of worship above, had somewhat disregarded the wants of the worshippers below,--although the spaces might be too wide and the intercolumniations too empty, except for the convenience of congregations; yet there were, nevertheless, many ecclesiastical masterpieces, which could be regarded as very brilliant manifestations of the Batavian and Belgic mind during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Many were filled with paintings from a school which had precedence in time and merit over its sister nurseries of art in Germany. All were peopled with statues. All were filled with profusely-adorned chapels, for the churches had been enriched generation after generation by wealthy penitence, which had thus purchased absolution for crime and smoothed a pathway to heaven.

And now, for the space of only six or seven summer days and nights, there raged a storm by which all these treasures were destroyed. Nearly every one of these temples was entirely rifled of its contents; not for the purpose of plunder, but of destruction. Hardly a province or a town escaped. Art must forever weep over this bereavement; Humanity must regret that the reforming is thus always ready to degenerate into the destructive principle; but it is impossible to censure very severely the spirit which prompted the brutal, but not ferocious deed. Those statues, associated as they were with the remorseless persecution which had so long desolated the provinces, had ceased to be images. They had grown human and hateful, so that the people arose and devoted them to indiscriminate massacre.

No doubt the iconoclastic fury is to be regretted; for such treasures

can scarcely be renewed. The age for building and decorating great cathedrals is past. Certainly, our own age, practical and benevolent, if less poetical, should occupy itself with the present, and project itself into the future. It should render glory to God rather by causing wealth to fertilize the lowest valleys of humanity, than by rearing gorgeous temples where paupers are to kneel. To clothe the naked, redeem the criminal, feed the hungry, less by alms and homilies than by preventive institutions and beneficent legislation; above all, by the diffusion of national education, to lift a race upon a level of culture hardly attained by a class in earlier times, is as lofty a task as to accumulate piles of ecclesiastical splendor.

It would be tedious to recount in detail the events which characterized the remarkable image-breaking in the Netherlands. As Antwerp was the central point in these transactions, and as there was more wealth and magnificence in the great cathedral of that city than in any church of northern Europe, it is necessary to give a rapid outline of the events which occurred there. From its exhibition in that place the spirit every where will best be shown.

The Church of Our Lady, which Philip had so recently converted into a cathedral, dated from the year 1124, although it may be more fairly considered a work of the fourteenth century. Its college of canons had been founded in another locality by Godfrey of Bouillon. The Brabantine hero, who so romantically incarnates the religious poetry of his age, who first mounted the walls of redeemed Jerusalem, and was its first Christian monarch, but who refused to accept a golden diadem on the spot where the Saviour had been crowned with thorns; the Fleming who lived and was the epic which the great Italian, centuries afterwards; translated into immortal verse, is thus fitly associated with the beautiful architectural poem which was to grace his ancestral realms. The body of the church, the interior and graceful perspectives of which were not liable to the reproach brought against many Netherland churches, of assimilating themselves already to the municipal palaces which they were to suggest--was completed in the fourteenth century. The beautiful facade, with its tower, was not completed till the year 1518. The exquisite and daring spire, the gigantic stem upon which the consummate flower of this architectural creation was to be at last unfolded, was a plant of a whole century's growth. Rising to a height of nearly five hundred feet, over a church of as many feet in length, it worthily represented the upward tendency of Gothic architecture. Externally and internally the cathedral was a true expression of the Christian principle of devotion. Amid its vast accumulation of imagery, its endless ornaments, its multiplicity of episodes, its infinite variety of details, the central, maternal principle was ever visible. Every thing pointed upwards, from the spire in the clouds to the arch which enshrined the smallest sculptured saint in the chapels below. It was a sanctuary, not like pagan temples, to enclose a visible deity, but an edifice where mortals might worship an unseen Being in the realms above.

The church, placed in the centre of the city, with the noisy streets of the busiest metropolis in Europe eddying around its walls, was a sacred island in the tumultuous main. Through the perpetual twilight, tall

columnar trunks in thick profusion grew from a floor chequered with prismatic lights and sepulchral shadows. Each shaft of the petrified forest rose to a preternatural height, their many branches intermingling in the space above, to form an impenetrable canopy. Foliage, flowers and fruit of colossal luxuriance, strange birds, beasts, griffins and chimeras in endless multitudes, the rank vegetation and the fantastic zoology of a fresher or fabulous world, seemed to decorate and to animate the serried trunks and pendant branches, while the shattering symphonies or dying murmurs of the organ suggested the rushing of the wind through the forest, now the full diapason of the storm and now the gentle cadence of the evening breeze.

Internally, the whole church was rich beyond expression. All that opulent devotion and inventive ingenuity could devise, in wood, bronze, marble, silver, gold, precious jewelry, or blazing sacramental furniture, had been profusely lavished. The penitential tears of centuries had incrustated the whole interior with their glittering stalactites. Divided into five naves, with external rows of chapels, but separated by no screens or partitions, the great temple forming an imposing whole, the effect was the more impressive, the vistas almost infinite in appearance. The wealthy citizens, the twenty-seven guilds, the six military associations, the rhythmical colleges, besides many other secular or religious sodalities, had each their own chapels and altars. Tombs adorned with the effigies of mailed crusaders and pious dames covered the floor, tattered banners hung in the air, the escutcheons of the Golden Fleece, an order typical of Flemish industry, but of which Emperors and Kings were proud to be the chevaliers, decorated the columns. The vast and beautifully-painted windows glowed with scriptural scenes, antique portraits, homely allegories, painted in those brilliant and forgotten colors which Art has not ceased to deplore. The daylight melting into gloom or colored with fantastic brilliancy, priests in effulgent robes chanting in unknown language, the sublime breathing of choral music, the suffocating odors of myrrh and spikenard, suggestive of the oriental scenery and imagery of Holy Writ, all combined to bewilder and exalt the senses. The highest and humblest seemed to find themselves upon the same level within those sacred precincts, where even the bloodstained criminal was secure, and the arm of secular justice was paralyzed.

But the work of degeneration had commenced. The atmosphere of the cathedral was no longer holy in the eyes of increasing multitudes. Better the sanguinary rites of Belgic Druids, better the yell of slaughtered victims from the "wild wood without mercy" of the pagan forefathers of the nation, than this fantastic intermingling of divine music, glowing colors, gorgeous ceremonies, with all the burning, beheading and strangling work which had characterized the system of human sacrifice for the past half-century.

Such was the church of Notre Dame at Antwerp. Thus indifferent or hostile towards the architectural treasure were the inhabitants of a city, where in a previous age the whole population would have risked their lives to defend what they esteemed the pride and garland of their metropolis.

The Prince of Orange had been anxiously solicited by the Regent to attend the conference at Duffel. After returning to Antwerp, he consented, in consequence of the urgent entreaties of the senate, to delay his departure until the 18th of August should be past. On the 13th of that month he had agreed with the magistrates upon an ordinance, which was accordingly published, and by which the preachings were restricted to the fields. A deputation of merchants and others waited upon him with a request to be permitted the exercises of the Reformed religion in the city. This petition the Prince peremptorily refused, and the deputies, as well as their constituents, acquiesced in the decision, "out of especial regard and respect for his person." He, however, distinctly informed the Duchess that it would be difficult or impossible to maintain such a position long, and that his departure from the city would probably be followed by an outbreak. He warned her that it was very imprudent for him to leave Antwerp at that particular juncture. Nevertheless, the meeting of the Fleece-knights seemed, in Margaret's opinion, imperatively to require his presence in Brussels. She insisted by repeated letters that he should leave Antwerp immediately.

Upon the 18th August, the great and time-honored ceremony of the Ommegang occurred. Accordingly, the great procession, the principal object of which was to conduct around the city a colossal image of the Virgin, issued as usual from the door of the cathedral. The image, bedizened and effulgent, was borne aloft upon the shoulders of her adorers, followed by the guilds, the military associations, the rhetoricians, the religious sodalities, all in glittering costume, bearing blazoned banners, and marching triumphantly through the streets with sound of trumpet and beat of drum. The pageant, solemn but noisy, was exactly such a show as was most fitted at that moment to irritate Protestant minds and to lead to mischief. No violent explosion of ill-feeling, however, took place. The procession was followed by a rabble rout of scoffers, but they confined themselves to words and insulting gestures. The image was incessantly saluted, as she was borne along--the streets, with sneers, imprecations, and the rudest, ribaldry. "Mayken! Mayken!" (little Mary) "your hour is come. 'Tis your last promenade. The city is tired of you." Such were the greetings which the representative of the Holy Virgin received from men grown weary of antiquated mummary. A few missiles were thrown occasionally at the procession as it passed through the city, but no damage was inflicted. When the image was at last restored to its place, and the pageant brought to a somewhat hurried conclusion, there seemed cause for congratulation that no tumult had occurred.

On the following morning there was a large crowd collected in front of the cathedral. The image, instead of standing in the centre of the church, where, upon all former occasions, it had been accustomed during the week succeeding the ceremony to receive congratulatory visits, was now ignominiously placed behind an iron railing within the choir. It had been deemed imprudent to leave it exposed to sacrilegious hands. The precaution excited derision. Many vagabonds of dangerous appearance, many idle apprentices and ragged urchins were hanging for a long time about the imprisoned image, peeping through the railings, and indulging in many a brutal jest. "Mayken! Mayken!" they cried; "art thou terrified so soon? Hast flown to thy nest so early? Dost think thyself

beyond the reach of mischief? Beware, Mayken! thine hour is fast approaching!" Others thronged around the balustrade, shouting "Vivent les gueux!" and hoarsely commanding the image to join in the beggars' cry. Then, leaving the spot, the mob roamed idly about the magnificent church, sneering at the idols, execrating the gorgeous ornaments, scoffing at crucifix and altar.

Presently one of the rabble, a ragged fellow of mechanical aspect, in a tattered black doublet and an old straw hat, ascended the pulpit. Opening a sacred volume which he found there, he began to deliver an extemporaneous and coarse caricature of a monkish sermon. Some of the bystanders applauded, some cried shame, some shouted "long live the beggars!" some threw sticks and rubbish at the mountebank, some caught him by the legs and strove to pull him from the place. He, on the other hand, manfully maintained his ground, hurling back every missile, struggling with his assailants, and continuing the while to pour forth a malignant and obscene discourse. At last a young sailor, warm in the Catholic Faith, and impulsive as mariners are prone to be, ascended the pulpit from behind, sprang upon the mechanic, and flung him headlong down the steps. The preacher grappled with his enemy as he fell, and both came rolling to the ground. Neither was much injured, but a tumult ensued. A pistol-shot was fired, and the sailor wounded in the arm. Daggers were drawn, cudgels brandished, the bystanders taking part generally against the sailor, while those who protected him were somewhat bruised and belabored before they could convey him out of the church. Nothing more, however, transpired that day, and the keepers of the cathedral were enabled to expel the crowd and to close the doors for the night.

Information of this tumult was brought to the senate, then assembled in the Hotel de Ville. That body was thrown into a state of great perturbation. In losing the Prince of Orange, they seemed to have lost their own brains, and the first measure which they took was to despatch a messenger to implore his return. In the mean time, it was necessary that they should do something for themselves. It was evident that a storm was brewing. The pest which was sweeping so rapidly through the provinces would soon be among them. Symptoms of the dreaded visitation were already but too manifest. What precaution should they take? Should they issue a proclamation? Such documents had been too common of late, and had lost their virtue. It was the time not to assert but to exercise authority. Should they summon the ward-masters, and order the instant arming and mustering of their respective companies? Should they assemble the captains of the Military associations? Nothing better could have been desired than such measures in cases of invasion or of ordinary tumult, but who should say how deeply the poison had sunk into the body politic; who should say with how much or how little alacrity the burgher militia would obey the mandates of the magistracy? It would be better to issue no proclamation unless they could enforce its provisions; it would be better not to call out the citizen soldiery unless they were likely to prove obedient. Should mercenary troops at this late hour be sent for? Would not their appearance at this crisis rather inflame the rage than intimidate the insolence of the sectaries? Never were magistrates in greater perplexity. They knew not what course was likely to prove the

safest, and in their anxiety to do nothing wrong, the senators did nothing at all. After a long and anxious consultation, the honest burgomaster and his associates all went home to their beds, hoping that the threatening flame of civil tumult would die out of itself, or perhaps that their dreams would supply them with that wisdom which seemed denied to their waking hours.

In the morning, as it was known that no precaution had been taken, the audacity of the Reformers was naturally increased. Within the cathedral a great crowd was at an early hour collected, whose savage looks and ragged appearance denoted that the day and night were not likely to pass away so peacefully as the last. The same taunts and imprecations were hurled at the image of the Virgin; the same howling of the beggars' cry resounded through the lofty arches. For a few hours, no act of violence was committed, but the crowd increased. A few trifles, drifting, as usual, before the event, seemed to indicate the approaching convulsion. A very paltry old woman excited the image-breaking of Antwerp. She had for years been accustomed to sit before the door of the cathedral with wax-tapers and wafers, earning scanty subsistence from the profits of her meagre trade, and by the small coins which she sometimes received in charity. Some of the rabble began to chaffer with this ancient hucksteress. They scoffed at her consecrated wares; they bandied with her ribald jests, of which her public position had furnished her with a supply; they assured her that the hour had come when her idolatrous traffic was to be forever terminated, when she and her patroness, Mary, were to be given over to destruction together. The old woman, enraged, answered threat with threat, and gibe with gibe. Passing from words to deeds, she began to catch from the ground every offensive missile or weapon which she could find, and to lay about her in all directions. Her tormentors defended themselves as they could. Having destroyed her whole stock-in-trade, they provoked others to appear in her defence. The passers-by thronged to the scene; the cathedral was soon filled to overflowing; a furious tumult was already in progress.

Many persons fled in alarm to the town-house, carrying information of this outbreak to the magistrates. John Van Immerzeel, Margrave of Antwerp, was then holding communication with the senate, and awaiting the arrival of the ward-masters, whom it had at last been thought expedient to summon. Upon intelligence of this riot, which the militia, if previously mustered, might have prevented, the senate determined to proceed to the cathedral in a body, with the hope of quelling the mob by the dignity of their presence. The margrave, who was the high executive officer of the little commonwealth, marched down to the cathedral accordingly, attended by the two burgomasters and all the senators. At first their authority, solicitations, and personal influence, produced a good effect. Some of those outside consented to retire, and the tumult partially subsided within. As night, however, was fast approaching, many of the mob insisted upon remaining for evening mass. They were informed that there would be none that night, and that for once the people could certainly dispense with their vespers.

Several persons now manifesting an intention of leaving the cathedral, it was suggested to the senators that if, they should lead the way, the



populace would follow in their train, and so disperse to their homes. The excellent magistrates took the advice, not caring, perhaps, to fulfil any longer the dangerous but not dignified functions of police officers. Before departing, they adopted the precaution of closing all the doors of the church, leaving a single one open, that the rabble still remaining might have an opportunity to depart. It seemed not to occur to the senators that the same gate would as conveniently afford an entrance for those without as an egress for those within. That unlooked-for event happened, however. No sooner had the magistrates retired than the rabble burst through the single door which had been left open, overpowered the margrave, who, with a few attendants, had remained behind, vainly endeavoring by threats and exhortations to appease the tumult, drove him ignominiously from the church, and threw all the other portals wide open. Then the populace flowed in like an angry sea. The whole of the cathedral was at the mercy of the rioters, who were evidently bent on mischief. The wardens and treasurers of the church, after a vain attempt to secure a few of its most precious possessions, retired. They carried the news to the senators, who, accompanied by a few halberdmen, again ventured to approach the spot. It was but for a moment, however, for, appalled by the furious sounds which came from within the church, as if subterranean and invisible forces were preparing a catastrophe which no human power could withstand, the magistrates fled precipitately from the scene. Fearing that the next attack would be upon the town-house, they hastened to concentrate at that point their available forces, and left the stately cathedral to its fate.

And now, as the shadows of night were deepening the perpetual twilight of the church, the work of destruction commenced. Instead of evening mass rose the fierce music of a psalm, yelled by a thousand angry voices. It seemed the preconcerted signal for a general attack. A band of marauders flew upon the image of the Virgin, dragged it forth from its receptacle, plunged daggers into its inanimate body, tore off its jewelled and embroidered garments, broke the whole figure into a thousand pieces, and scattered the fragments along the floor. A wild shout succeeded, and then the work which seemed delegated to a comparatively small number of the assembled crowd, went on with incredible celerity. Some were armed with axes, some with bludgeons, some with sledge-hammers; others brought ladders, pulleys, ropes, and levers. Every statue was hurled from its niche, every picture torn from the wall, every wonderfully-painted window shivered to atoms, every ancient monument shattered, every sculptured decoration, however inaccessible in appearance, hurled to the ground. Indefatigably, audaciously,--endowed, as it seemed, with preternatural strength and nimbleness, these furious iconoclasts clambered up the dizzy heights, shrieking and chattering like malignant apes, as they tore off in triumph the slowly-matured fruit of centuries. In a space of time wonderfully brief, they had accomplished their task.

A colossal and magnificent group of the Saviour crucified between two thieves adorned the principal altar. The statue of Christ was wrenched from its place with ropes and pulleys, while the malefactors, with bitter and blasphemous irony, were left on high, the only representatives of the marble crowd which had been destroyed. A very beautiful piece of architecture decorated the choir,--the "repository," as it was called,

in which the body of Christ was figuratively enshrined. This much-admired work rested upon a single column, but rose, arch upon arch, pillar upon pillar, to the height of three hundred feet, till quite lost in the vault above. "It was now shattered into a million pieces." The statues, images, pictures, ornaments, as they lay upon the ground, were broken with sledge-hammers, hewn with axes, trampled, torn; and beaten into shreds. A troop of harlots, snatching waxen tapers from the altars, stood around the destroyers and lighted them at their work. Nothing escaped their omnivorous rage. They desecrated seventy chapels, forced open all the chests of treasure, covered their own squalid attire with the gorgeous robes of the ecclesiastics, broke the sacred bread, poured out the sacramental wine into golden chalices, quaffing huge draughts to the beggars' health; burned all the splendid missals and manuscripts, and smeared their shoes with the sacred oil, with which kings and prelates had been anointed. It seemed that each of these malicious creatures must have been endowed with the strength of a hundred giants. How else, in the few brief hours of a midsummer night, could such a monstrous desecration have been accomplished by a troop which, according to all accounts, was not more than one hundred in number. There was a multitude of spectators, as upon all such occasions, but the actual spoilers were very few.

The noblest and richest temple of the Netherlands was a wreck, but the fury of the spoilers was excited, not appeased. Each seizing a burning torch, the whole herd rushed from the cathedral, and swept howling through the streets. "Long live the beggars!" resounded through the sultry midnight air, as the ravenous pack flew to and fro, smiting every image of the Virgin, every crucifix, every sculptured saint, every Catholic symbol which they met with upon their path. All night long, they roamed from one sacred edifice to another, thoroughly destroying as they went. Before morning they had sacked thirty churches within the city walls. They entered the monasteries, burned their invaluable libraries, destroyed their altars, statues, pictures, and descending into the cellars, broached every cask which they found there, pouring out in one great flood all the ancient wine and ale with which those holy men had been wont to solace their retirement from generation to generation. They invaded the nunneries, whence the occupants, panic-stricken, fled for refuge to the houses of their friends and kindred. The streets were filled with monks and nuns, running this way and that, shrieking and fluttering, to escape the claws of these fiendish Calvinists. The terror was imaginary, for not the least remarkable feature in these transactions was, that neither insult nor injury was offered to man or woman, and that not a farthing's value of the immense amount of property destroyed, was appropriated. It was a war not against the living, but against graven images, nor was the sentiment which prompted the onslaught in the least commingled with a desire of plunder. The principal citizens of Antwerp, expecting every instant that the storm would be diverted from the ecclesiastical edifices to private dwellings, and that robbery, rape, and murder would follow sacrilege, remained all night expecting the attack, and prepared to defend their hearths, even if the altars were profaned. The precaution was needless. It was asserted by the Catholics that the confederates and other opulent Protestants had organized this company of profligates for the meagre pittance of ten stivers day. On the other

hand, it was believed by many that the Catholics had themselves plotted the whole outrage in order to bring odium upon the Reformers. Both statements were equally unfounded. The task was most thoroughly performed, but it was prompted: by a furious fanaticism, not by baser motives.

Two days and nights longer the havoc raged unchecked through all the churches of Antwerp and the neighboring villages. Hardly a statue or picture escaped destruction. Fortunately, the illustrious artist, whose labors were destined in the next generation to enrich and ennoble the city, Rubens, most profound of colorists, most dramatic--of artists; whose profuse tropical genius seemed to flower the more luxuriantly, as if the destruction wrought by brutal hands were to be compensated by the creative energy of one, divine spirit, had not yet been born. Of the treasures which existed the destruction was complete. Yet the rage was directed exclusively against stocks and stones. Not a man was wounded nor a woman outraged. Prisoners, indeed, who had been languishing hopelessly in dungeons were liberated. A monk, who had been in the prison of the Barefoot Monastery, for twelve years, recovered his freedom. Art was trampled in the dust, but humanity deplored no victims.

These leading features characterized the movement every where. The process was simultaneous and almost universal. It was difficult to say where it began and where it ended. A few days in the midst of August sufficed for the whole work. The number of churches desecrated has never been counted. In the single province of Flanders, four hundred were sacked. In Limburg, Luxemburg, and Namur, there was no image-breaking. In Mechlin, seventy or eighty persons accomplished the work thoroughly, in the very teeth of the grand council, and of an astonished magistracy.

In Tournay, a city distinguished for its ecclesiastical splendor, the reform had been making great progress during the summer. At the same time the hatred between the two religions had been growing more and more intense. Trifles and serious matters alike fed the mutual animosity.

A tremendous outbreak had been nearly occasioned by an insignificant incident. A Jesuit of some notoriety had been preaching a glowing discourse in the pulpit of Notre Dame. He earnestly avowed his wish that he were good enough to die for all his hearers. He proved to demonstration that no man should shrink from torture or martyrdom in order to sustain the ancient faith. As he was thus expatiating, his fervid discourse was suddenly interrupted by three sharp, sudden blows, of a very peculiar character, struck upon the great portal of the Church. The priest, forgetting his love for martyrdom, turned pale and dropped under the pulpit. Hurrying down the steps, he took refuge in the vestry, locking and barring the door. The congregation shared in his panic: "The beggars are coming," was the general cry. There was a horrible tumult, which extended through the city as the congregation poured precipitately out of the Cathedral, to escape a band of destroying and furious Calvinists. Yet when the shock had a little subsided, it was discovered that a small urchin was the cause of the whole tumult. Having been bathing in the Scheldt, he had returned by way of the church with a couple of bladders under his arm. He had struck these against the door

of the Cathedral, partly to dry them, partly from a love of mischief. Thus a great uproar, in the course of which it had been feared that Toumay was to be sacked and drenched in blood, had been caused by a little wanton boy who had been swimming on bladders.

This comedy preceded by a few days only the actual disaster. On the 22d of August the news reached Tournay that the churches in Antwerp, Ghent, and many other places, had been sacked. There was an instantaneous movement towards imitating the example on the same evening. Pasquier de la Barre, procureur-general of the city, succeeded by much entreaty in tranquillizing the people for the night. The "guard of terror" was set, and hopes were entertained that the storm might blow over. The expectation, was vain. At daybreak next day, the mob swept upon the churches and stripped them to the very walls. Pictures, statues; organs, ornaments, chalices of silver and gold, reliquaries, albs, chasubles, copes, ciboria, crosses, chandeliers, lamps; censers, all of richest material, glittering with pearls, rubies, and other precious stones, were scattered in heaps of ruin upon the ground.

As the Spoilers burrowed among the ancient tombs, they performed, in one or two instances, acts of startling posthumous justice. The embalmed body of Duke Adolphus of Gueldres, last of the Egmonts, who had reigned in that province, was dragged from its sepulchre and recognized. Although it had been there for ninety years, it was as uncorrupted, "Owing to the excellent spices which had preserved it from decay," as upon the day of burial. Thrown upon the marble floor of the church, it lay several days exposed to the execrations of the multitude. The Duke had committed a crime against his father, in consequence of which the province which had been ruled by native races, had passed under the dominion of Charles the Bold. Weary of waiting for the old Duke's inheritance, he had risen against him in open rebellion. Dragging him from his bed at midnight in the depth of winter, he had compelled the old man, with no covering but his night gear, to walk with naked feet twenty-five miles over ice and snow from Grave to Buren, while he himself performed the same journey in his company on horseback. He had then thrown him into a dungeon beneath the tower of Buren castle, and kept him a close prisoner for six months.

[Memoires de Philippe de Comines (Loud. et Paris, 1747), liv. iv. 194-196. In the Royal Gallery at Berlin is a startling picture by Rembrandt, in which the old Duke is represented looking out of the bars of his dungeon at his son, who is threatening him with uplifted hand and savage face. No subject could be imagined better adapted to the gloomy and sarcastic genius of that painter.]

At last, the Duke of Burgundy summoned the two before his council, and proposed that Adolphus should allow his father 6000 florins annually, with the title of Duke till his death. "He told us," said Comines, "that he would sooner throw the old man head-foremost down a well and jump in himself afterwards. His father had been Duke forty-four years, and it was time for him to retire." Adolphus being thus intractable, had been kept in prison till after the death of Charles the Bold. To the memorable insurrection of Ghent, in the time of the Lady Mary, he owed

his liberty. The insurgent citizens took him from prison, and caused him to lead them in their foray against Tournay. Beneath the walls of that city he was slain, and buried under its cathedral. And now as if his offence had not been sufficiently atoned for by the loss of his ancestral honors, his captivity, and his death, the earth, after the lapse of nearly a century, had cast him forth from her bosom. There, once more beneath the sunlight, amid a ribald crew of a later generation which had still preserved the memory of his sin, lay the body of the more than parricide, whom "excellent spices" had thus preserved from corruption, only to be the mark of scorn and demoniac laughter.

A large assemblage of rioters, growing in numbers as they advanced, swept over the province of Tournay, after accomplishing the sack of the city churches. Armed with halberds, hammers, and pitchforks, they carried on the war, day after day, against the images. At the convent of Marchiennes, considered by contemporaries the most beautiful abbey in all the Netherlands, they halted to sing the ten commandments in Marot's verse. Hardly had the vast chorus finished the precept against graven images;

Taiiler ne to feras imaige  
De quelque chose que ce soit,  
Sy bonneur luy fail on hommaige,  
Bon Dieu jalousie en recoit,

when the whole mob seemed seized with sudden madness. Without waiting to complete the Psalm, they fastened upon the company of marble martyrs, as if they had possessed sensibility to feel the blows inflicted. In an hour they had laid the whole in ruins.

Having accomplished this deed, they swept on towards Anchin. Here, however, they were confronted by the Seigneur de la Tour, who, at the head of a small company of peasants, attacked the marauders and gained a complete victory. Five or six hundred of them were slain, others were drowned in the river and adjacent swamps, the rest were dispersed. It was thus proved that a little more spirit upon the part of the orderly portion of the inhabitants, might have brought about a different result than the universal image-breaking.

In Valenciennes, "the tragedy," as an eye-witness calls it, was performed upon Saint Bartholomew's day. It was, however, only a tragedy of statues. Hardly as many senseless stones were victims as there were to be living Huguenots sacrificed in a single city upon a Bartholomew which was fast approaching. In the Valenciennes massacre, not a human being was injured.

Such in general outline and in certain individual details, was the celebrated iconomachy of the Netherlands. The movement was a sudden explosion of popular revenge against the symbols of that Church from which the Reformers had been enduring such terrible persecution. It was also an expression of the general sympathy for the doctrines which had taken possession of the national heart. It was the depravation of that instinct which had in the beginning of the summer drawn Calvinists and

Lutherans forth in armed bodies, twenty thousand strong, to worship God in the open fields. The difference between the two phenomena was, that the field-preaching was a crime committed by the whole mass of the Reformers; men, women, and children confronting the penalties of death, by a general determination, while the imagebreaking was the act of a small portion of the populace. A hundred persons belonging to the lowest order of society sufficed for the desecration of the Antwerp churches. It was, said Orange, "a mere handful of rabble" who did the deed. Sir Richard Clough saw ten or twelve persons entirely sack church after church, while ten thousand spectators looked on, indifferent or horror-struck. The bands of iconoclasts were of the lowest character, and few in number. Perhaps the largest assemblage was that which ravaged the province of Tournay, but this was so weak as to be entirely routed by a small and determined force. The duty of repression devolved upon both Catholics and Protestants. Neither party stirred. All seemed overcome with special wonder as the tempest swept over the land.

The ministers of the Reformed religion, and the chiefs of the liberal party, all denounced the image-breaking. Francis Junius bitterly regretted such excesses. Ambrose Wille, pure of all participation in the crime, stood up before ten thousand Reformers at Tournay--even while the storm was raging in the neighboring cities, and, when many voices around him were hoarsely commanding similar depravities to rebuke the outrages by which a sacred cause was disgraced. The Prince of Orange, in his private letters, deplored the riots, and stigmatized the perpetrators. Even Brederode, while, as Suzerain of his city of Viane, he ordered the images there to be quietly taken from the churches, characterized this popular insurrection as insensate and flagitious. Many of the leading confederates not only were offended with the proceedings, but, in their eagerness to chastise the iconoclasts and to escape from a league of which they were weary, began to take severe measures against the Ministers and Reformers, of whom they had constituted themselves in April the especial protectors.

The next remarkable characteristic of these tumults was the almost entire abstinence of the rioters from personal outrage and from pillage. The testimony of a very bitter, but honest Catholic at Valenciennes, is remarkable upon this point. "Certain chroniclers," said he, "have greatly mistaken the character of this image-breaking. It has been said that the Calvinists killed a hundred priests in this city, cutting some of them into pieces, and burning others over a slow fire. I remember very well every thing which happened upon that abominable day, and I can affirm that not a single priest was injured. The Huguenots took good care not to injure in any way the living images." This was the case every where. Catholic and Protestant writers agree that no deeds of violence were committed against man or woman.

It would be also very easy to accumulate a vast weight of testimony as to their forbearance from robbery. They destroyed for destruction's sake, not for purposes of plunder.

Although belonging to the lowest classes of society, they left heaps of jewellery, of gold and silver plate, of costly embroidery, lying unheeded

upon the ground. They felt instinctively that a great passion would be contaminated by admixture with paltry motives. In Flanders a company of rioters hanged one of their own number for stealing articles to the value of five Shillings. In Valenciennes the iconoclasts were offered large sums if they would refrain from desecrating the churches of that city, but they rejected the proposal with disdain. The honest Catholic burgher who recorded the fact, observed that he did so because of the many misrepresentations on the subject, not because he wished to flatter heresy and rebellion.

At Tournay, the greatest scrupulousness was observed upon this point. The floor of the cathedral was strewn with "pearls and precious stones, with chalices and reliquaries of silver and gold;" but the ministers of the reformed religion, in company with the magistrates, came to the spot, and found no difficulty, although utterly without power to prevent the storm, in taking quiet possession of the wreck. "We had every thing of value," says Procureur-General De la Barre, "carefully inventoried, weighed, locked in chests, and placed under a strict guard in the prison of the Halle, to which one set of keys were given to the ministers, and another to the magistrates." Who will dare to censure in very severe language this havoc among stocks and stones in a land where so many living men and women, of more value than many statues, had been slaughtered by the inquisition, and where Alva's "Blood Tribunal" was so soon to eclipse even that terrible institution in the number of its victims and the amount of its confiscations?

Yet the effect of the riots was destined to be most disastrous for a time to the reforming party. It furnished plausible excuses for many lukewarm friends of their cause to withdraw from all connection with it. Egmont denounced the proceedings as highly flagitious, and busied himself with punishing the criminals in Flanders. The Regent was beside herself with indignation and terror. Philip, when he heard the news, fell into a paroxysm of frenzy. "It shall cost them dear!" he cried, as he tore his beard for rage; "it shall cost them dear! I swear it by the soul of my father!" The Reformation in the Netherlands, by the fury of these fanatics, was thus made apparently to abandon the high ground upon which it had stood in the early summer. The sublime spectacle of the multitudinous field-preaching was sullied by the excesses of the image-breaking. The religious war, before imminent, became inevitable.

Nevertheless, the first effect of the tumults was a temporary advantage to the Reformers. A great concession was extorted from the fears of the Duchess Regent, who was certainly placed in a terrible position. Her conduct was not heroic, although she might be forgiven for trepidation. Her treachery, however, under these trying circumstances was less venial. At three o'clock in the morning of the 22nd of August, Orange, Egmont, Horn, Hoogatraaten, Mansfeld, and others were summoned to the palace. They found her already equipped for flight, surrounded by her waiting-women, chamberlains and lackeys, while the mules and hackneys stood harnessed in the court-yard, and her body-guard were prepared to mount at a moment's notice. She announced her intention of retreating at once to Mons, in which city, owing to Aerschot's care, she hoped to find refuge against the fury of the rebellion then sweeping the country. Her alarm

was almost beyond control. She was certain that the storm was ready to burst upon Brussels, and that every Catholic was about to be massacred before her eyes. Arembert, Berlaymont, and Noircarmes were with the Duchess when the other seigniors arrived.

A part of the Duke of Aerschot's company had been ordered out to escort the projected flight to Mons. Orange, Horn, Egmont, and Hoogstraaten implored her to desist from her fatal resolution. They represented that such a retreat before a mob would be the very means of ruining the country. They denounced all persons who had counselled the scheme, as enemies of his Majesty and herself. They protested their readiness to die at her feet in her defence, but besought her not to abandon the post of duty in the hour of peril. While they were thus anxiously debating, Viglius entered the chamber. With tears streaming down her cheeks, Margaret turned to the aged President, uttering fierce reproaches and desponding lamentations. Viglius brought the news that the citizens had taken possession of the gates, and were resolved not to permit her departure from the city. He reminded her, according to the indispensable practice of all wise counsellors, that he had been constantly predicting this result. He, however, failed in administering much consolation, or in suggesting any remedy. He was, in truth, in as great a panic as herself, and it was, according to the statement of the Duchess, mainly in order to save the President from threatened danger, that she eventually resolved to make concessions. "Viglius," wrote Margaret to Philip, "is so much afraid of being cut to pieces, that his timidity has become incredible." Upon the warm assurance of Count Horn, that he would enable her to escape from the city, should it become necessary, or would perish in the attempt, a promise in which he was seconded by the rest of the seigniors, she consented to remain for the day in her palace.--Mansfeld was appointed captain-general of the city; Egmont, Horn, Orange, and the others agreed to serve under his orders, and all went down together to the townhouse. The magistrates were summoned, a general meeting of the citizens was convened, and the announcement made of Mansfeld's appointment, together with an earnest appeal to all honest men to support the Government. The appeal was answered by a shout of unanimous approbation, an enthusiastic promise to live or die with the Regent, and the expression of a resolution to permit neither reformed preaching nor image-breaking within the city.

Nevertheless, at seven o'clock in the evening, the Duchess again sent for the seigniors. She informed them that she had received fresh and certain information, that the churches were to be sacked that very night; that Viglius, Berlaymont, and Arembert were to be killed, and that herself and Egmont were to be taken prisoners. She repeated many times that she had been ill-advised, expressed bitter regret at having deferred her flight from the city, and called upon those who had obstructed her plan, now to fulfil their promises. Turning fiercely upon Count Horn, she uttered a volley of reproaches upon his share in the transaction. "You are the cause," said she, "that I am now in this position. Why do you not redeem your pledge and enable me to leave the place at once." Horn replied that he was ready to do so if she were resolved to stay no longer. He would at the instant cut his way through the guard at the Caudenberg gate, and bring her out in safety, or die in the effort. At the same time he



assured her that he gave no faith to the idle reports flying about the city, reminded her that nobles, magistrates, and citizens were united in her defence, and in brief used the, same arguments which had before been used to pacify her alarm. The nobles were again successful in enforcing their counsels, the Duchess was spared the ignominy and the disaster of a retreat before an insurrection which was only directed against statues, and the ecclesiastical treasures of Brussels were saved from sacrilege.

On the 25th August came the crowning act of what the Reformers considered their most complete triumph, and the Regent her deepest degradation. It was found necessary under the alarming aspect of affairs, that liberty of worship, in places where it had been already established, should be accorded to the new religion. Articles of agreement to this effect were accordingly drawn up and exchanged between the Government and Lewis of Nassau, attended by fifteen others of the confederacy. A corresponding pledge was signed by them, that so long as the Regent was true to her engagement, they would consider their previously existing league annulled, and would assist cordially in every endeavor to maintain tranquillity and support the authority of his Majesty. The important Accord was then duly signed by the Duchess. It declared that the inquisition was abolished, that his Majesty would soon issue a new general edict, expressly and unequivocally protecting the nobles against all evil consequences from past transactions, that they were to be employed in the royal service, and that public preaching according to the forms of the new religion was to be practised in places where it had already taken place. Letters general were immediately despatched to the senates of all the cities, proclaiming these articles of agreement and ordering their execution. Thus for a fleeting moment there was a thrill of joy throughout the Netherlands. The inquisition was thought forever abolished, the era of religious reformation arrived.

#### ETEXT EDITOR'S BOOKMARKS:

All denounced the image-breaking  
Anxiety to do nothing wrong, the senators did nothing at all  
Before morning they had sacked thirty churches  
Bigotry which was the prevailing characteristic of the age  
Enriched generation after generation by wealthy penitence  
Fifty thousand persons in the provinces (put to death)  
Furious fanaticism  
Lutheran princes of Germany, detested the doctrines of Geneva  
Monasteries, burned their invaluable libraries  
No qualities whatever but birth and audacity to recommend him  
Notre Dame at Antwerp  
Persons who discussed religious matters were to be put to death  
Premature zeal was prejudicial to the cause  
Purchased absolution for crime and smoothed a pathway to heaven  
Rearing gorgeous temples where paupers are to kneel  
Schism which existed in the general Reformed Church  
Storm by which all these treasures were destroyed (in 7 days)

The noblest and richest temple of the Netherlands was a wreck  
Tyrannical spirit of Calvinism  
Would not help to burn fifty or sixty thousand Netherlanders

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