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## HISTORY OF THE UNITED NETHERLANDS

From the Death of William the Silent to the Twelve Year's Truce--1609

By John Lothrop Motley

MOTLEY'S HISTORY OF THE NETHERLANDS, Project Gutenberg Edition, Vol. 49

History of the United Netherlands, 1586

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The brief period of sunshine had been swiftly followed by storms. The Governor Absolute had, from the outset, been placed in a false position. Before he came to the Netherlands the Queen had refused the sovereignty. Perhaps it was wise in her to decline so magnificent an offer; yet certainly her acceptance would have been perfectly honourable. The constituted authorities of the Provinces formally made the proposition. There is no doubt whatever that the whole population ardently desired to become her subjects. So far as the Netherlands were concerned, then, she would have been fully justified in extending her sceptre over a free people, who, under no compulsion and without any, diplomatic chicane, had selected her for their hereditary chief. So far as regarded England, the annexation to that country of a continental cluster of states, inhabited by a race closely allied to it by blood, religion, and the instinct for political freedom, seemed, on the whole, desirable.

In a financial point of view, England would certainly lose nothing by the union. The resources of the Provinces were at least equal to her own. We have seen the astonishment which the wealth and strength of the Netherlands excited in their English visitors. They were amazed by the evidences of commercial and manufacturing prosperity, by the spectacle of luxury and advanced culture, which met them on every side. Had the

Queen--as it had been generally supposed--desired to learn whether the Provinces were able and willing to pay the expenses of their own defence before she should definitely decide on, their offer of sovereignty, she was soon thoroughly enlightened upon the subject. Her confidential agents all--held one language. If she would only, accept the sovereignty, the amount which the Provinces would pay was in a manner boundless. She was assured that the revenue of her own hereditary realm was much inferior to that of the possessions thus offered to her sway.

In regard to constitutional polity, the condition of the Netherlands was at least, as satisfactory as that of England. The great amount of civil freedom enjoyed by those countries--although perhaps an objection--in the eyes of Elizabeth Tudor--should certainly have been a recommendation to her liberty-loving subjects. The question of defence had been satisfactorily answered. The Provinces, if an integral part of the English empire, could protect themselves, and would become an additional element of strength--not a troublesome encumbrance.

The difference of language was far, less than that which already existed between the English and their Irish fellow-subjects, while it was counterbalanced by sympathy, instead of being aggravated by mutual hostility in the matter of religion.

With regard to the great question of abstract sovereignty, it was certainly impolitic for an absolute monarch to recognize the right of a nation to repudiate its natural allegiance. But Elizabeth had already countenanced that step by assisting the rebellion against Philip. To allow the rebels to transfer their obedience from the King of Spain to herself was only another step in the same direction. The Queen, should she annex the Provinces, would certainly be accused by the world of ambition; but the ambition was a noble one, if, by thus consenting to the urgent solicitations of a free people, she extended the region of civil and religious liberty, and raised up a permanent bulwark against sacerdotal and royal absolutism.

A war between herself and Spain was inevitable if she accepted the sovereignty, but peace had been already rendered impossible by the treaty of alliance. It is true that the Queen imagined the possibility of combining her engagements towards the States with a conciliatory attitude towards their ancient master, but it was here that she committed the gravest error. The negotiations of Parma and his sovereign with the English court were a masterpiece of deceit on the part of Spain. We have shown, by the secret correspondence, and we shall in the sequel make it still clearer, that Philip only intended to amuse his antagonists; that he had already prepared his plan for the conquest of England, down to the minutest details; that the idea of tolerating religious liberty had never entered his mind; and that his fixed purpose was not only thoroughly to chastise the Dutch rebels, but to deprive the heretic Queen who had fostered their rebellion both of throne and life. So far as regarded the Spanish King, then, the quarrel between him and Elizabeth was already mortal; while in a religious, moral, political, and financial point of view, it would be difficult to show that it was wrong, or imprudent for England to accept the sovereignty over his ancient subjects. The cause

of human, freedom seemed likely to gain by the step, for the States did not consider themselves strong enough to maintain the independent republic which had already risen.

It might be a question whether, on the whole, Elizabeth made a mistake in declining the sovereignty. She was certainly wrong, however, in wishing the lieutenant-general of her six thousand auxiliary troops to be clothed, as such, with vice-regal powers. The States-General, in a moment of enthusiasm, appointed him governor absolute, and placed in his hands, not only the command of the forces, but the entire control of their revenues, imposts, and customs, together with the appointment of civil and military officers. Such an amount of power could only be delegated by the sovereign. Elizabeth had refused the sovereignty: it then rested with the States. They only, therefore, were competent to confer the power which Elizabeth wished her favourite to exercise simply as her lieutenant-general.

Her wrathful and vituperative language damaged her cause and that of the Netherlands more severely than can now be accurately estimated. The Earl was placed at once in a false, a humiliating, almost a ridiculous position. The authority which the States had thus a second time offered to England was a second time and most scornfully thrust back upon them. Elizabeth was indignant that "her own man" should clothe himself in the supreme attributes which she had refused. The States were forced by the violence of the Queen to take the authority into their own hands again, and Leicester was looked upon as a disgraced man.

Then came the neglect with which the Earl was treated by her Majesty and her ill-timed parsimony towards the cause. No letters to him in four months, no remittances for the English troops, not a penny of salary for him. The whole expense of the war was thrown for the time upon their hands, and the English soldiers seemed only a few thousand starving, naked, dying vagrants, an incumbrance instead of an aid.

The States, in their turn, drew the purse-strings. The two hundred thousand florins monthly were paid. The four hundred thousand florins which had been voted as an additional supply were for a time held back, as Leicester expressly stated, because of the discredit which had been thrown upon him from home.

[Strangely enough, Elizabeth was under the impression that the extra grant of 400,000 florins (L40,000) for four months was four hundred thousand pounds sterling. "The rest that was granted by the States, as extraordinary to levy an army, which was 400,000 florins, not pounds, as I hear your Majesty taketh it. It is forty thousand pounds, and to be paid In March, April, May, and June last," &c. Leicester to the Queen, 11 Oct. 1586. (S. P. Office MS.)]

The military operations were crippled for want of funds, but more fatal than everything else were the secret negotiations for peace. Subordinate individuals, like Grafigni and De Loo, went up and down, bringing presents out of England for Alexander Farnese, and bragging that Parma and themselves could have peace whenever they liked to make it, and

affirming that Leicester's opinions were of no account whatever. Elizabeth's coldness to the Earl and to the Netherlands was affirmed to be the Prince of Parma's sheet-anchor; while meantime a house was ostentatiously prepared in Brussels by their direction for the reception of an English ambassador, who was every moment expected to arrive. Under such circumstances it was in vain for the governor-general to protest that the accounts of secret negotiations were false, and quite natural that the States should lose their confidence in the Queen. An unfriendly and suspicious attitude towards her representative was a necessary result, and the demonstrations against the common enemy became still more languid. But for these underhand dealings, Grave, Venlo, and Neusz, might have been saved, and the current 'of the Meuse and Rhine have remained in the hands of the patriots.

The Earl was industrious, generous, and desirous of playing well his part. His personal courage was undoubted, and, in the opinion of his admirers--themselves, some of them, men of large military experience--his ability as a commander was of a high order. The valour displayed by the English nobles and gentlemen who accompanied him was magnificent, worthy the descendants of the victors at Crecy, Poitiers, and Agincourt; and the good behaviour of their followers--with a few rare exceptions--had been equally signal. But now the army was dwindling to a ghastly array of scarecrows, and the recruits, as they came from England, were appalled by the spectacle presented by their predecessors. "Our old ragged rogues here have so discouraged our new men," said Leicester; "as I protest to you they look like dead men." Out of eleven hundred freshly-arrived Englishmen, five hundred ran away in two days. Some were caught and hanged, and all seemed to prefer hanging to remaining in the service, while the Earl declared that he would be hanged as well rather than again undertake such a charge without being assured payment for his troops beforehand!

The valour of Sidney and Essex, Willoughby and Pelham, Roger Williams and Martin Schenk, was set at nought by such untoward circumstances. Had not Philip also left his army to starve and Alexander Farnese to work miracles, it would have fared still worse with Holland and England, and with the cause of civil and religious liberty in the year 1586.

The States having resumed, as much as possible; their former authority, were on very unsatisfactory terms with the governor-general. Before long, it was impossible for the, twenty or thirty individuals called the States to be in the same town with the man whom, at the commencement of the, year, they had greeted so warmly. The hatred between the Leicester faction and the municipalities became intense, for the foundation of the two great parties which were long to divide the Netherland commonwealth was already laid. The mercantile patrician interest, embodied in the states of Holland and Zeeland and inclined to a large toleration in the matter of religion, which afterwards took the form of Arminianism, was opposed by a strict Calvinist party, which desired to subject the political commonwealth to the reformed church; which nevertheless indulged in very democratic views of the social compact; and which was controlled by a few refugees from Flanders and Brabant, who had succeeded in obtaining the confidence of Leicester.

Thus the Earl was the nominal head of the Calvinist democratic party; while young Maurice of Nassau; stadholder of Holland and Zeeland, and guided by Barneveld, Buys, and other leading statesmen of these Provinces; was in an attitude precisely the reverse of the one which he was destined at a later and equally memorable epoch to assume. The chiefs of the faction which had now succeeded in gaining the confidence of Leicester were Reingault, Burgrave, and Deventer, all refugees.

The laws of Holland and of the other United States were very strict on the subject of citizenship, and no one but a native was competent to hold office in each Province. Doubtless, such regulations were narrow-spirited; but to fly in the face of them was the act of a despot, and this is what Leicester did. Reingault was a Fleming. He was a bankrupt merchant, who had been taken into the protection of Lamoral Egmont, and by that nobleman recommended to Granvelle for an office under the Cardinal's government. The refusal of this favour was one of the original causes of Egmont's hostility to Granvelle. Reingault subsequently entered the service of the Cardinal, however, and rewarded the kindness of his former benefactor by great exertions in finding, or inventing, evidence to justify the execution of that unfortunate nobleman. He was afterwards much employed by the Duke of Alva and by the Grand Commander Requesens; but after the pacification of Ghent he had been completely thrown out of service. He had recently, in a subordinate capacity, accompanied the legations of the States to France and to England, and had now contrived to ingratiate himself with the Earl of Leicester. He affected great zeal for the Calvinistic religion--an exhibition which, in the old servant of Granvelle and Alva, was far from edifying--and would employ no man or maid-servant in his household until their religious principles had been thoroughly examined by one or two clergymen. In brief, he was one of those, who, according to a homely Flemish proverb, are wont to hang their piety on the bell-rope; but, with the exception of this brief interlude in his career, he lived and died a Papist.

Gerard Proninck, called Deventer, was a respectable inhabitant of Bois-le-Duc, who had left that city after it had again become subject to the authority of Spain. He was of decent life and conversation, but a restless and ambitious demagogue. As a Brabantine, he was unfit for office; and yet, through Leicester's influence and the intrigues of the democratic party, he obtained the appointment of burgomaster in the city of Utrecht. The States-General, however, always refused to allow him to appear at their sessions as representative of that city.

Daniel de Burgrave was a Flemish mechanic, who, by the exertion of much energy and talent, had risen to the post of procureur-general of Flanders. After the conquest of the principal portion of that Province by Parma, he had made himself useful to the English governor-general in various ways, and particularly as a linguist. He spoke English--a tongue with which few Netherlanders of that day were familiar--and as the Earl knew no other, except (very imperfectly) Italian, he found his services in speaking and writing a variety of languages very convenient. He was the governor's private secretary, and, of course, had no entrance to the

council of state, but he was accused of frequently thrusting himself into their hall of sessions, where, under pretence of arranging the Earl's table, or portfolio, or papers, he was much addicted to whispering into his master's ear, listening to conversation,--to eaves-dropping; in short, and general intrusiveness.

"A most faithful, honest servant is Burgrave," said Leicester; "a substantial, wise man. 'Tis as sufficient a man as ever I met withal of any nation; very well learned, exceeding wise, and sincere in religion. I cannot commend the man too much. He is the only comfort I have had of any of this nation."

These three personages were the leaders of the Leicester faction. They had much influence with all the refugees from Flanders, Brabant, and the Walloon Provinces. In Utrecht, especially, where the Earl mainly resided, their intrigues were very successful. Deventer was appointed, as already stated, to the important post of burgomaster; many, of the influential citizens were banished, without cause or trial; the upper branch of the municipal government, consisting of the clerical delegates of the colleges, was in an arbitrary manner abolished; and, finally, the absolute sovereignty of the Province, without condition, was offered to the Queen, of England.

Leicester was now determined to carry out one of the great objects which the Queen had in view when she sent him to the Netherlands. She desired thoroughly to ascertain the financial resources of the Provinces, and their capacity to defend themselves. It was supposed by the States, and hoped by the Earl and by a majority of the Netherland people, that she would, in case the results were satisfactory, accept, after all, the sovereignty. She certainly was not to be blamed that she wished to make this most important investigation, but it was her own fault that any new machinery had been rendered necessary. The whole control of the finances had, in the beginning of the year, been placed in the Earl's hands, and it was only by her violently depriving him of his credit and of the confidence of the country that he had not retained it. He now established a finance-chamber, under the chief control of Reingault, who promised him mountains of money, and who was to be chief treasurer. Paul Buys was appointed by Leicester to fill a subordinate position in the new council. He spurned the offer with great indignation, saying that Reingault was not fit to be his clerk, and that he was not likely himself, therefore, to accept a humble post under the administration of such an individual. This scornful refusal filled to the full the hatred of Leicester against the ex-Advocate of Holland.

The mercantile interest at once took the alarm, because it was supposed that the finance-chamber, was intended to crush the merchants. Early in April an Act had been passed by the state-council, prohibiting commerce with the Spanish possessions. The embargo was intended to injure the obedient Provinces and their sovereign, but it was shown that its effect would be to blast the commerce of Holland. It forbade the exportation from the republic not only of all provisions and munitions of war, but of all goods and merchandize whatever, to Spain, Portugal, the Spanish Netherlands, or any other of Philip's territories, either in Dutch or

neutral vessel. It would certainly seem, at first sight, that such an act was reasonable, although the result would really be, not to deprive the enemy of supplies, but to throw the whole Baltic trade into the hands of the Bremen, Hamburg, and "Osterling" merchants. Leicester expected to derive a considerable revenue by granting passports and licenses to such neutral traders, but the edict became so unpopular that it was never thoroughly enforced, and was before long rescinded.

The odium of the measure was thrown upon the governor-general, yet he had in truth opposed it in the state-council, and was influential in procuring its repeal.

Another important Act had been directed against the mercantile interest, and excited much general discontent. The Netherlands wished the staple of the English cloth manufacture to be removed from Emden--the petty, sovereign of which place was the humble servant of Spain--to Amsterdam or Delft. The desire was certainly, natural, and the Dutch merchants sent a committee to confer with Leicester. He was much impressed with their views, and with the sagacity of their chairman, one Mylward, "a wise fellow and well languaged, an ancient man and very, religious," as the Earl pronounced him to be.

Notwithstanding the wisdom however, of this well-languaged fellow, the Queen, for some strange reason, could not be induced to change the staple from Emden, although it was shown that the public revenue of the Netherlands would gain twenty thousand pounds a year by the measure. "All Holland will cry out for it," said Leicester; "but I had rather they cried than that England should weep."

Thus the mercantile community, and especially the patrician families of Holland and Zeeland, all engaged in trade, became more and more hostile to the governor-general and to his financial trio, who were soon almost as unpopular as the famous Consults of Cardinal Granvelle had been. It was the custom of the States to consider the men who surrounded the Earl as needy and unprincipled renegades and adventurers. It was the policy of his advisers to represent the merchants and the States--which mainly consisted of, or were controlled by merchants--as a body of corrupt, selfish, greedy money-getters.

The calumnies put in circulation against the States by Reingault and his associates grew at last so outrageous, and the prejudice created in the mind of Leicester and his immediate English adherents so intense, that it was rendered necessary for the States, of Holland and Zeeland to write to their agent Ortell in London, that he might forestall the effect of these perpetual misrepresentations on her Majesty's government. Leicester, on the other hand, under the inspiration; of his artful advisers, was vehement in his entreaties that Ortell should be sent away from England.

The ablest and busiest of the opposition-party, the "nimblest head" in the States-General was the ex-Advocate of Holland; Paul Buys. This man was then the foremost statesman in, the Netherlands. He had been the firmest friend to the English alliance; he had resigned his office when the States were-offering the sovereignty to France, and had been on the



point of taking service in Denmark. He had afterwards been prominent in the legation which offered the sovereignty to Elizabeth, and, for a long time, had been the most firm, earnest, and eloquent advocate of the English policy. Leicester had originally courted him, caressed him, especially recommended him to the Queen's favour, given him money--as he said, "two hundred pounds sterling thick at a time"--and openly pronounced him to be "in ability above all men." "No man hath ever sought a man," he said, "as I have sought P. B."

The period of their friendship was, however, very brief. Before many weeks had passed there was no vituperative epithet that Leicester was not in the daily habit of bestowing upon Paul. The Earl's vocabulary of abuse was not a limited one, but he exhausted it on the head of the Advocate. He lacked at last words and breath to utter what was like him. He pronounced his former friend "a very dangerous man, altogether hated of the people and the States;"--"a lewd sinner, nursled in revolutions; a most covetous, bribing fellow, caring for nothing but to bear the sway and grow rich;"--"a man who had played many parts, both lewd and audacious;"--"a very knave, a traitor to his country;"--"the most ungrateful wretch alive, a hater of the Queen and of all the English; a most unthankful man to her Majesty; a practiser to make himself rich and great, and nobody else;"--"among all villains the greatest;"--"a bolsterer of all papists and ill men, a dissembler, a devil, an atheist," a "most naughty man, and a most notorious drunkard in the worst degree."

Where the Earl hated, his hatred was apt to be deadly, and he was determined, if possible, to have the life of the detested Paul. "You shall see I will do well enough with him, and that shortly," he said. "I will course him as he was not so this twenty year. I will warrant him hanged and one or two of his fellows, but you must not tell your shirt of this yet;" and when he was congratulating the government on his having at length procured the execution of Captain Hemart, the surrenderer of Grave, he added, pithily, "and you shall hear that Mr. P. B. shall follow."

Yet the Earl's real griefs against Buys may be easily summed up. The lewd sinner, nursled in revolutions, had detected the secret policy of the Queen's government, and was therefore perpetually denouncing the intrigues going on with Spain. He complained that her Majesty was tired of having engaged in the Netherland enterprise; he declared that she would be glad to get fairly out of it; that her reluctance to spend a farthing more in the cause than she was obliged to do was hourly increasing upon her; that she was deceiving and misleading the States-General; and that she was hankering after a peace. He said that the Earl had a secret intention to possess himself of certain towns in Holland, in which case the whole question of peace and war would be in the hands of the Queen, who would also have it thus in her power to reimburse herself at once for all expenses that she had incurred.

It would be difficult to show that there was anything very calumnious in these charges, which, no doubt, Paul was in the habit of making. As to the economical tendencies of her Majesty, sufficient evidence has been

given already from Leicester's private letters. "Rather than spend one hundred pounds," said Walsingham, "she can be content to be deceived of five thousand." That she had been concealing from the Staten, from Walsingham, from Leicester, during the whole summer, her secret negotiations with Spain, has also been made apparent. That she was disgusted with the enterprise in which she had embarked, Walsingham, Burghley, Hatton, and all the other statesmen of England, most abundantly testified. Whether Leicester had really an intention to possess himself of certain cities in Holland--a charge made by Paul Buys, and denounced as especially slanderous by the Earl--may better appear from his own private statements.

"This I will do," he wrote to the Queen, "and I hope not to fail of it, to get into my hands three or four most principal places in North Holland; which will be such a strength and assurance for your Majesty, as you shall see you shall both rule these men and make war or peace as you list, always provided--whatsoever you hear, or is--part not with the Brill; and having these places in your hands, whatsoever should chance to these countries, your Majesty, I will warrant sure enough to make what peace you will in an hour, and to have your debts and charges readily answered." At a somewhat later moment it will be seen what came of these secret designs. For the present, Leicester was very angry with Paul for daring to suspect him of such treachery.

The Earl complained, too, that the influence of Buys with Hohenlo and young Maurice of Nassau was most pernicious. Hohenlo had formerly stood high in Leicester's opinion. He was a "plain, faithful soldier, a most valiant gentleman," and he was still more important, because about to marry Mary of Nassau; eldest daughter, of William the Silent, and coheirress with Philip William, to the Buren property. But he had been tampered with by the intriguing Paul Buys, and had then wished to resign his office under Leicester. Being pressed for reasons, he had "grown solemn," and withdrawn himself almost entirely.

Maurice; with his "solemn, sly wit," also gave the Earl much trouble, saying little; but thinking much, and listening to the insidious Paul. He "stood much on making or marring," so Leicester thought, "as he met with good counsel." He had formerly been on intimate terms with the governor-general, who affected to call him his son; but he had subsequently kept aloof, and in three months had not come near him. The Earl thought that money might do much, and was anxious for Sir Francis Drake to come home from the Indies with millions of gold, that the Queen might make both Hohenlo and Maurice a handsome present before it should be too late.

Meantime he did what he could with Elector Truchsess to lure them back again. That forlorn little prelate was now poorer and more wretched than ever. He was becoming paralytic, though young, and his heart was broken through want. Leicester, always generous as the sun, gave him money, four thousand florins at a time, and was most earnest that the Queen should put him on her pension list. "His wisdom, his behaviour, his languages, his person," said the Earl, "all would like her well. He is in great melancholy for his town of Neusz, and for his poverty, having a

very noble mind. If, he be lost, her Majesty had better lose a hundred thousand pounds."

The melancholy Truchsess now became a spy and a go-between. He insinuated himself into the confidence of Paul Buys, wormed his secrets from him, and then communicated them to Hohenlo and to Leicester; "but he did it very wisely," said the Earl, "so that he was not mistrusted." The governor always affected, in order to screen the elector from suspicion, to obtain his information from persons in Utrecht; and he had indeed many spies in that city; who diligently reported Paul's table-talk. Nevertheless, that "noble gentleman, the elector," said Leicester, "hath dealt most deeply with him, to seek out the bottom." As the ex-Advocate of Holland was very communicative in his cups, and very bitter against the governor-general, there was soon such a fund of information collected on the subject by various eaves-droppers, that Leicester was in hopes of very soon hanging Mr. Paul Buys, as we have already seen.

The burthen of the charges against the culprit was his statement that the Provinces would be gone if her Majesty did not declare herself, vigorously and generously, in their favour; but, as this was the perpetual cry of Leicester himself, there seemed hardly hanging matter in that. That noble gentleman, the elector, however, had nearly saved the hangman his trouble, having so dealt with Hohenlo as to "bring him into as good a mind as ever he was;" and the first fruits of this good mind were, that the honest Count--a man of prompt dealings--walked straight to Paul's house in order to kill him on the spot. Something fortunately prevented the execution of this plan; but for a time at least the energetic Count continued to be "governed greatly" by the ex-archbishop, and "did impart wholly unto him his most secret heart."

Thus the "deep wise Truxy," as Leicester called him, continued to earn golden opinions, and followed up his conversion of Hohenlo by undertaking to "bring Maurice into tune again also," and the young Prince was soon on better terms with his "affectionate father" than he had ever been before. Paul Buys was not so easily put down, however, nor the two magnates so thoroughly gained over. Before the end of the season Maurice stood in his old position, the nominal head of the Holland or patrician party, chief of the opposition to Leicester, while Hohenlo had become more bitter than ever against the Earl. The quarrel between himself and Edward Norris, to which allusion will soon be made, tended to increase the dissatisfaction, although he singularly misunderstood Leicester's sentiments throughout the whole affair. Hohenlo recovered of his wound before Zutphen; but, on his recovery, was more malcontent than ever. The Earl was obliged at last to confess that "he was a very dangerous man, inconstant, envious; and hateful to all our nation, and a very traitor to the cause. There is no dealing to win him," he added, "I have sought it to my cost. His best friends tell me he is not to be trusted."

Meantime that lewd sinner, the indefatigable Paul, was plotting desperately--so Leicester said and believed--to transfer the sovereignty of the Provinces to the King of Denmark. Buys, who was privately of opinion that the States required an absolute head, "though it were but an onion's head," and that they would thankfully continue under Leicester as

governor absolute if Elizabeth would accept the sovereignty, had made up his mind that the Queen would never take that step. He was therefore disposed to offer the crown to the King of Denmark, and was believed to have brought Maurice--who was to espouse that King's daughter--to the same way of thinking. Young Count Rantzau, son of a distinguished Danish statesman, made a visit to the Netherlands in order to confer with Buys. Paul was also anxious to be appointed envoy to Denmark, ostensibly to arrange for the two thousand cavalry, which the King had long before promised for the assistance of the Provinces, but in reality, to examine the details of this new project; and Leicester represented to the Queen very earnestly how powerful the Danish monarch would become, thus rendered master of the narrow seas, and how formidable to England.

In the midst of these plottings, real or supposed, a party of armed men, one fine summer's morning, suddenly entered Paul's bedroom as he lay asleep at the house of the burgomaster, seized his papers, and threw him: into prison in the wine-cellar of the town-house. "Oh my papers, oh my papers!" cried the unfortunate politician, according to Leicester's statement, "the Queen of England will for ever hate me." The Earl disavowed all, participation in the arrest; but he was not believed. He declared himself not sorry that the measure had been taken, and promised that he would not "be hasty to release him," not doubting that "he would be found faulty enough." Leicester maintained that there was stuff enough discovered to cost Paul his head; but he never lost his head, nor was anything treasonable or criminal ever found against him. The intrigue with Denmark--never proved--and commenced, if undertaken at all, in utter despair of Elizabeth's accepting the sovereignty, was the gravest charge. He remained, however, six months in prison, and at the beginning of 1587 was released, without trial or accusation, at the request of the English Queen.

The States could hardly be blamed for their opposition to the Earl's administration, for he had thrown himself completely into the arms of a faction, whose object was to vilipend and traduce them, and it was now difficult for him to recover the functions of which the Queen had deprived him. "The government they had given from themselves to me stuck in their stomachs always," he said. Thus on the one side, the States were, "growing more stately than ever," and were-always "jumbling underhand," while the aristocratic Earl, on, his part, was resolute not to be put down by "churls and tinkers." He was sure that the people were with him, and that, "having always been governed by some prince, they, never did nor could consent to be ruled by bakers, brewers, and hired advocates. I know they hate them," said this high-born tribune of the people. He was much disgusted with the many-headed chimaera, the monstrous republic, with which he found himself in such unceasing conflict, and was disposed to take a manful stand. "I have been fain of late," he said, "to set the better leg foremost, to handle some of my masters somewhat plainly; for they thought I would droop; and whatsoever becomes of me, you shall hear I will keep my reputation, or die for it."

But one great accusation, made against the churls and tinkers, and bakers and hired advocates, and Mr. Paul Buys at their head, was that they were liberal towards the Papists. They were willing that Catholics should

remain in the country and exercise the rights of citizens, provided they, conducted themselves like good citizens. For this toleration--a lesson which statesmen like Buys and Barneveld had learned in the school of William the Silent--the opposition-party were denounced as bolsterers of Papists, and Papists themselves at heart, and "worshippers of idolatrous idols."

From words, too, the government of Leicester passed to acts. Seventy papists were banished from the city of Utrecht at the time of the arrest of Buys. The Queen had constantly enforced upon Leicester the importance of dealing justly with the Catholics in the Netherlands, on the ground that they might be as good patriots and were as much interested in the welfare of their country as were the Protestants; and he was especially enjoined "not to meddle in matters of religion." This wholesome advice it would have been quite impossible for the Earl, under the guidance of Reingault, Burgrave, and Stephen Perret, to carry out. He protested that he should have liked to treat Papists and Calvinists "with indifference," but that it had proved impossible; that the Catholics were perpetually plotting with the Spanish faction, and that no towns were safe except those in which Papists had been excluded from office. "They love the Pope above all," he said, "and the Prince of Parma hath continual intelligence with them." Nor was it Catholics alone who gave the governor trouble. He was likewise very busy in putting down other denominations that differed from the Calvinists. "Your Majesty will not believe," he said, "the number of sects that are in most towns; especially Anabaptists, Families of Love, Georgians; and I know not what. The godly and good ministers were molested by them in many places, and ready to give over; and even such diversities grew among magistrates in towns, being caused by some sedition-sowers here." It is however, satisfactory to reflect that the anabaptists and families of love, although discouraged and frowned upon, were not burned alive, buried alive, drowned in dungeons, and roasted at slow fires, as had been the case with them and with every other species of Protestants, by thousands and tens of thousands, so long as Charles V. and Philip II. had ruled the territory of that commonwealth. Humanity had acquired something by the war which the Netherlanders had been waging for twenty years, and no man or woman was ever put to death for religious causes after the establishment of the republic.

With his hands thus full of business, it was difficult for the Earl to obey the Queen's command not to meddle in religious matters; for he was not of the stature of William the Silent, and could not comprehend that the great lesson taught by the sixteenth century was that men were not to meddle with men in matters of religion.

But besides his especial nightmare--Mr. Paul Buys--the governor-general had a whole set of incubi in the Norris family. Probably no two persons ever detested each other more cordially than did Leicester and Sir John Norris. Sir John had been commander of the forces in the Netherlands before Leicester's arrival, and was unquestionably a man of larger experience than the Earl. He had, however, as Walsingham complained, acquired by his services in "countries where neither discipline military nor religion carried any sway," a very rude and licentious kind of

government. "Would to God," said the secretary, "that, with his value and courage, he carried the mind and reputation of a religious soldier." But that was past praying for. Sir John was proud, untractable, turbulent, very difficult to manage. He hated Leicester, and was furious with Sir William Pelham, whom Leicester had made marshal of the camp. He complained, not unjustly, that from the first place in the army, which he had occupied in the Netherlands, he had been reduced to the fifth. The governor-general--who chose to call Sir John the son of his ancient enemy, the Earl of Sussex--often denounced him in good set terms. "His brother Edward is as ill as he," he said, "but John is right the late Earl of Sussex' son; he will so dissemble and crouch, and so cunningly carry his doings, as no man living would imagine that there were half the malice or vindictive mind that plainly his words prove to be." Leicester accused him of constant insubordination, insolence, and malice, complained of being traduced by him everywhere in the Netherlands and in England, and declared that he was followed about by "a pack of lewd audacious fellows," whom the Earl vowed he would hang, one and all, before he had done with them. He swore openly, in presence of all his camp, that he would hang Sir John likewise; so that both the brothers, who had never been afraid of anything since they had been born into the world, affected to be in danger of their lives.

The Norrises were on bad terms with many officers--with Sir William Pelham of course, with "old Reade," Lord North, Roger Williams, Hohenlo, Essex, and other nobles--but with Sir Philip Sidney, the gentle and chivalrous, they were friends. Sir John had quarrelled in former times--according to Leicester--with Hohenlo and even with the "good and brave" La None, of the iron arm; "for his pride," said the Earl, "was the spirit of the devil." The governor complained every day of his malignity, and vowed that he "neither regarded the cause of God, nor of his prince, nor country."

He consorted chiefly with Sir Thomas Cecil, governor of Brill, son of Lord Burghley, and therefore no friend to Leicester; but the Earl protested that "Master Thomas should bear small rule," so long as he was himself governor-general. "Now I have Pelham and Stanley, we shall do well enough," he said, "though my young master would countenance him. I will be master while I remain here, will they, nill they."

Edward Norris, brother of Sir John, gave the governor almost as much trouble as he; but the treasurer Norris, uncle to them both, was, if possible, more odious to him than all. He was--if half Leicester's accusations are to be believed--a most infamous peculator. One-third of the money sent by the Queen for the soldiers stuck in his fingers. He paid them their wretched four-pence a-day in depreciated coin, so that for their "naughty money they could get but naughty ware." Never was such "fleecing of poor soldiers," said Leicester.

On the other hand, Sir John maintained that his uncle's accounts were always ready for examination, and earnestly begged the home-government not to condemn that functionary without a hearing. For himself, he complained that he was uniformly kept in the background, left in ignorance of important enterprises, and sent on difficult duty with

inadequate forces. It was believed that Leicester's course was inspired by envy, lest any military triumph that might be gained should redound to the glory of Sir John, one of the first commanders of the age, rather than to that of the governor-general. He was perpetually thwarted, crossed, calumniated, subjected to coarse and indecent insults, even from such brave men as Lord North and Roger Williams, and in the very presence of the commander-in-chief, so that his talents were of no avail, and he was most anxious to be gone from the country.

Thus with the tremendous opposition formed to his government in the States-General, the incessant bickerings with the Norrises, the peculations of the treasurer, the secret negotiations with Spain, and the impossibility of obtaining money from home for himself or for his starving little army, the Earl was in anything but a comfortable position. He was severely censured in England; but he doubted, with much reason, whether there were many who would take his office, and spend twenty thousand pounds sterling out of their own pockets, as he had done. The Earl was generous and brave as man could be, full of wit, quick of apprehension; but inordinately vain, arrogant, and withal easily led by designing persons. He stood up manfully for the cause in which he was embarked, and was most strenuous in his demands for money. "Personally he cared," he said, "not sixpence for his post; but would give five thousand sixpences, and six thousand shillings beside, to be rid of it;" but it was contrary to his dignity to "stand bucking with the States" for his salary. "Is it reason," he asked, "that I, being sent from so great a prince as our sovereign is, must come to strangers to beg my entertainment: If they are to pay me, why is there no remembrance made of it by her Majesty's letters, or some of the lords?"

The Earl and those around him perpetually and vehemently urged upon the Queen to reconsider her decision, and accept the sovereignty of the Provinces at once. There was no other remedy for the distracted state of the country--no other safeguard for England. The Netherland people anxiously, eagerly desired it. Her Majesty was adored by all the inhabitants, who would gladly hang the fellows called the States. Lord North was of this opinion--so was Cavendish. Leicester had always held it. "Sure I am," he said, "there is but one way for our safety, and that is, that her Majesty may take that upon her which I fear she will not." Thomas Wilkes, who now made his appearance on the scene, held the same language. This distinguished civilian had been sent by the Queen, early in August, to look into the state of Netherland affairs. Leicester having expressly urged the importance of selecting as wise a politician as could be found--because the best man in England would hardly be found a match for the dullards and drunkards, as it was the fashion there to call the Dutch statesmen--had selected Wilkes. After fulfilling this important special mission, he was immediately afterwards to return to the Netherlands as English member of the state-council, at forty shillings a-day, in the place of "little Hal Killigrew," whom Leicester pronounced a "quicker and stouter fellow" than he had at first taken him for, although he had always thought well of him. The other English counsellor, Dr. Bartholomew Clerk, was to remain, and the Earl declared that he too, whom he had formerly undervalued, and thought to have "little stuff in him," was now "increasing greatly in understanding."

But notwithstanding this intellectual progress, poor Bartholomew, who was no beginner, was most anxious to retire. He was a man of peace, a professor, a doctor of laws, fonder of the learned leisure and the trim gardens of England than of the scenes which now surrounded him. "I beseech your good Lordship to consider," he dismally observed to Burghley, "what a hard case it is for a man that these fifteen years hath had vitam sedentariam, unworthily in a place judicial, always in his long robe, and who, twenty-four years since, was a public reader in the University (and therefore cannot be young), to come now among guns and drums, tumbling up and down, day and night, over waters and banks, dykes and ditches, upon every occasion that falleth out; hearing many insolences with silence, bearing many hard measures with patience-- a course most different from my nature, and most unmeet for him that hath ever professed learning."

Wilkes was of sterner stuff. Always ready to follow the camp and to face the guns and drums with equanimity, and endowed beside with keen political insight, he was more competent than most men to unravel the confused skein of Netherland politics. He soon found that the Queen's secret negotiations with Spain, and the general distrust of her intentions in regard to the Provinces, were like to have fatal consequences. Both he and Leicester painted the anxiety of the Netherland people as to the intention of her Majesty in vivid colours.

The Queen could not make up her mind--in the very midst of the Greenwich secret conferences, already described--to accept the Netherland sovereignty. "She gathereth from your letter," wrote Walsingham, "that the only salve for this sore is to make herself proprietary of the country, and to put in such an army as may be able to make head to the enemy. These two things being so contrary to her Majesty's disposition-- the one, for that it breedeth a doubt of a perpetual war, the other, for that it requireth an increase of charges--do marvellously distract her, and make her repent that ever she entered into the action."

Upon the great subject of the sovereignty, therefore, she was unable to adopt the resolution so much desired by Leicester and by the people of the Provinces; but she answered the Earl's communications concerning Maurice and Hohenlo, Sir John Norris and the treasurer, in characteristic but affectionate language. And thus she wrote:

"Rob, I am afraid you will suppose, by my wandering writings, that a midsummer's moon hath taken large possession of my brains this month; but you must needs take things as they come in my head, though order be left behind me. When I remember your request to have a discreet and honest man that may carry my mind, and see how all goes there, I have chosen this bearer (Thomas Wilkes), whom you know and have made good trial of. I have fraught him full of my conceits of those country matters, and imparted what way I mind to take and what is fit for you to use. I am sure you can credit him, and so I will be short with these few notes. First, that Count Maurice and Count Hollock (Hohenlo) find themselves trusted of you, esteemed of me, and to be carefully regarded, if ever peace should happen, and of that assure them on my word, that yet never deceived any. And for Norris and other captains that voluntarily,



without commandment, have many years ventured their lives and won our nation honour and themselves fame, let them not be discouraged by any means, neither by new-come men nor by old trained soldiers elsewhere. If there be fault in using of soldiers, or making of profit by them, let them hear of it without open shame, and doubt not I will well chasten them therefore. It frets me not a little that the poor soldiers that hourly venture life should want their due, that well deserve rather reward; and look, in whom the fault may truly be proved, let them smart therefore. And if the treasurer be found untrue or negligent, according to desert he shall be used. But you know my old wont, that love not to discharge from office without desert. God forbid! I pray you let this bearer know what may be learned herein, and for the treasure I have joined Sir Thomas Shirley to see all this money discharged in due sort, where it needeth and behoveth.

"Now will I end, that do imagine I talk still with you, and therefore loathly say farewell one hundred thousand times; though ever I pray God bless you from all harm, and save you from all foes. With my million and legion of thanks for all your pains and cares,

"As you know ever the same,

"E. R.

"P. S. Let Wilkes see that he is acceptable to you. If anything there be that W. shall desire answer of be such as you would have but me to know, write it to myself. You know I can keep both others' counsel and mine own. Mistrust not that anything you would have kept shall be disclosed by me, for although this bearer ask many things, yet you may answer him such as you shall think meet, and write to me the rest."

Thus, not even her favourite Leicester's misrepresentations could make the Queen forget her ancient friendship for "her own crow;" but meantime the relations between that "bunch of brethren," black Norris and the rest, and Pelham, Hollock, and other high officers in Leicester's army, had grown worse than ever.

One August evening there was a supper-party at Count Hollock's quarters in Gertruydenberg. A military foray into Brabant had just taken place, under the lead of the Count, and of the Lord Marshal, Sir William Pelham. The marshal had requested Lord Willoughby, with his troop of horse and five hundred foot, to join in the enterprise, but, as usual, particular pains had been taken that Sir John Norris should know nothing of the affair. Pelham and Hollock--who was "greatly in love with Mr. Pelham"--had invited several other gentlemen high in Leicester's confidence to accompany the expedition; and, among the rest, Sir Philip Sidney, telling him that he "should see some good service." Sidney came accordingly, in great haste, from Flushing, bringing along with him Edward Norris--that hot-headed young man, who, according to Leicester, "greatly governed his elder brother"--but they arrived at Gertruydenberg too late. The foray was over, and the party--"having burned a village, and killed some boors"--were on their return. Sidney, not perhaps much regretting the loss of his share in this rather inglorious shooting party, went down to the

water-side, accompanied by Captain Norris, to meet Hollock and the other commanders.

As the Count stepped on shore he scowled ominously, and looked very much out of temper.

"What has come to Hollock?" whispered Captain Patton, a Scotchman, to Sidney. "Has he a quarrel with any of the party? Look at his face! He means mischief to somebody."

But Sidney was equally amazed at the sudden change in the German general's countenance, and as unable to explain it.

Soon afterwards, the whole party, Hollock, Lewis William of Nassau, Lord Carew, Lord Essex, Lord Willoughby, both the Sidneys, Roger Williams, Pelham, Edward Norris, and the rest, went to the Count's lodgings, where they supped, and afterwards set themselves seriously to drinking.

Norris soon perceived that he was no welcome guest; for he was not--like Sidney--a stranger to the deep animosity which had long existed between Sir John Norris and Sir William Pelham and his friends. The carouse was a tremendous one, as usually was the case where Hollock was the Amphitryon, and, as the potations grew deeper, an intention became evident on the part of some of the company to behave unhandsomely to Norris.

For a time the young Captain ostentatiously restrained himself, very much after the fashion of those meek individuals who lay their swords on the tavern-table, with "God grant I may have no need of thee!" The custom was then prevalent at banquets for the revellers to pledge each other in rotation, each draining a great cup, and exacting the same feat from his neighbour, who then emptied his goblet as a challenge to his next comrade.

The Lord Marshal took a beaker, and called out to Edward Norris. "I drink to the health of my Lord Norris, and of my lady; your mother." So saying, he emptied his glass.

The young man did not accept the pledge.

"Your Lordship knows," he said somewhat sullenly, "that I am not wont to drink deep. Mr. Sidney there can tell you that, for my health's sake, I have drunk no wine these eight days. If your Lordship desires the pleasure of seeing me drunk, I am not of the same mind. I pray you at least to take a smaller glass."

Sir William insisted on the pledge. Norris then, in no very good humour, emptied his cup to the Earl of Essex.

Essex responded by draining a goblet to Count Hollock.

"A Norris's father," said the young Earl; as he pledged the Count, who was already very drunk, and looking blacker than ever.

"An 'orse's father--an 'orse's father!" growled' Hollock; "I never drink to horses, nor to their fathers either:" and with this wonderful witticism he declined the pledge.

Essex explained that the toast was Lord Norris, father of the Captain; but the Count refused to understand, and held fiercely, and with damnable iteration, to his jest.

The Earl repeated his explanation several times with no better success. Norris meanwhile sat swelling with wrath, but said nothing.

Again the Lord Marshal took the same great glass, and emptied it to the young Captain.

Norris, not knowing exactly what course to take, placed the glass at the side of his plate, and glared grimly at Sir William.

Pelham was furious. Reaching over the table, he shoved the glass towards Norris with an angry gesture.

"Take your glass, Captain Norris," he cried; "and if you have a mind to jest, seek other companions. I am not to be trifled with; therefore, I say, pledge me at once."

"Your Lordship shall not force me to drink more wine than I list," returned the other. "It is your pleasure to take advantage of your military rank. Were we both at home, you would be glad to be my companion."

Norris was hard beset, and although his language was studiously moderate, it was not surprising that his manner should be somewhat insolent. The veteran Lord Marshal, on the other hand, had distinguished himself on many battle-fields, but his deportment at this banqueting-table was not much to his credit. He paused a moment, and Norris, too, held his peace, thinking that his enemy would desist.

It was but for a moment.

"Captain Norris," cried Pelham, "I bid you pledge me without more ado. Neither you nor your best friends shall use me as you list. I am better born than you and your brother, the colonel-general, and the whole of you."

"I warn you to say nothing disrespectful against my brother," replied the Captain. "As for yourself, I know how to respect your age and superior rank."

"Drink, drink, drink!" roared the old Marshal. "I tell you I am better born than the best of you. I have advanced you all too, and you know it; therefore drink to me."

Sir William was as logical as men in their cups are prone to be.

"Indeed, you have behaved well to my brother Thomas," answered Norris, suddenly becoming very courteous, "and for this I have ever loved your Lordship, and would, do you any service."

"Well, then," said the Marshal, becoming tender in his turn, "forget what hath past this night, and do as you would have done before."

"Very well said, indeed!" cried Sir Philip Sidney, trying to help the natter into the smoother channel towards which it was tending.

Norris, seeing that the eyes of the whole company were upon them; took the glass accordingly, and rose to his feet.

"My Lord Marshal," he said, "you have done me more wrong this night than you can easily make satisfaction for. But I am unwilling that any trouble or offence should grow through me. Therefore once more I pledge you."

He raised the cup to his lips. At that instant Hollock, to whom nothing had been said, and who had spoken no word since his happy remark about the horse's father, suddenly indulged in a more practical jest; and seizing the heavy gilt cover of a silver vase, hurled it at the head of Norris. It struck him full on the forehead, cutting him to the bone. The Captain, stunned for a moment, fell back in his chair, with the blood running down his eyes and face. The Count, always a man of few words, but prompt in action, now drew his dagger, and strode forward, with the intention of despatching him upon the spot. Sir Philip Sidney threw his arms around Hollock, however, and, with the assistance of others in the company, succeeded in dragging him from the room. The affair was over in a few seconds.

Norris, coming back to consciousness, sat for a moment as one amazed, rubbing the blood out of his eyes; then rose from the table to seek his adversary; but he was gone.

Soon afterwards he went to his lodgings. The next morning he was advised to leave the town as speedily as possible; for as it was under the government of Hollock, and filled with his soldiers, he was warned that his life would not be safe there an hour. Accordingly he went to his boat, accompanied only by his man and his page, and so departed with his broken head, breathing vengeance against Hollock, Pelham, Leicester, and the whole crew, by whom he had been thus abused.

The next evening there was another tremendous carouse at the Count's, and, says the reporter of the preceding scene, "they were all on such good terms, that not one of the company had falling band or ruff left about his neck. All were clean torn away, and yet there was no blood drawn."

Edward Norris--so soon as might be afterwards--sent a cartel to the Count, demanding mortal combat with sword and dagger. Sir Philip Sidney bore the message. Sir John Norris, of course warmly and violently

espoused the cause of his brother, and was naturally more incensed against the Lord Marshal than ever, for Sir William Pelham was considered the cause of the whole affray. "Even if the quarrel is to be excused by drink," said an eye-witness, "'tis but a slender defence for my Lord to excuse himself by his cups; and often drink doth bewray men's humours and unmask their malice. Certainly the Count Hollock thought to have done a pleasure to the company in killing him."

Nothing could be more ill-timed than this quarrel, or more vexatious to Leicester. The Count--although considering himself excessively injured at being challenged by a simple captain and an untitled gentleman, whom he had attempted to murder--consented to waive his privilege, and grant the meeting.

Leicester interposed, however, to delay, and, if possible, to patch up the affair. They were on the eve of active military operations, and it was most vexatious for the commander-in-chief to see, as he said, "the quarrel with the enemy changed to private revenge among ourselves." The intended duel did not take place; for various influential personages succeeded in deferring the meeting. Then came the battle of Zutphen.

Sidney fell, and Hollock was dangerously wounded in the attack which was soon afterwards made upon the fort. He was still pressed to afford the promised satisfaction, however, and agreed to do so whenever he should rise from his bed.

Strange to say, the Count considered Leicester, throughout the whole business, to have taken part against him.

Yet there is no doubt whatever that the Earl--who detested the Norrises, and was fonder of Pelham than of any man living--uniformly narrated the story most unjustly, to the discredit of the young Captain. He considered him extremely troublesome, represented him as always quarrelling with some one--with Colonel Morgan, Roger Williams, old Reade, and all the rest--while the Lord Marshal, on the contrary, was depicted as the mildest of men. "This I must say," he observed, "that all present, except my two nephews (the Sidneys), who are not here yet, declare the greatest fault to be in Edward Norris, and that he did most arrogantly use the Marshal."

It is plain, however, that the old Marshal, under the influence of wine, was at least quite as much to blame as the young Captain; and Sir Philip Sidney sufficiently showed his sense of the matter by being the bearer of Edward Norris's cartel. After Sidney's death, Sir John Norris, in his letter of condolence to Walsingham for the death of his illustrious son-in-law, expressed the deeper regret at his loss because Sir Philip's opinion had been that the Norrises were wronged. Hollock had conducted himself like a lunatic, but this he was apt to do whether in his cups or not. He was always for killing some one or another on the slightest provocation, and, while the dog-star of 1586 was raging, it was not his fault if he had not already despatched both Edward Norris and the objectionable "Mr. P. B."

For these energetic demonstrations against Leicester's enemies he considered himself entitled to the Earl's eternal gratitude, and was deeply disgusted at his apparent coldness. The governor was driven almost to despair by these quarrels.

His colonel-general, his lord marshal, his lieutenant-general, were all at daggers drawn. "Would God I were rid of this place!" he exclaimed. "What man living would go to the field and have his officers divided almost into mortal quarrel? One blow but by any of their lackeys brings us altogether by the ears."

It was clear that there was not room enough on the Netherland soil for the Earl of Leicester and the brothers Norris. The queen, while apparently siding with the Earl, intimated to Sir John that she did not disapprove his conduct, that she should probably recall him to England, and that she should send him back to the Provinces after the Earl had left that country.

Such had been the position of the governor-general towards the Queen, towards the States-General, and towards his own countrymen, during the year 1586.

ETEXT EDITOR'S BOOKMARKS:

Are wont to hang their piety on the bell-rope  
Arminianism  
As logical as men in their cups are prone to be  
Tolerating religious liberty had never entered his mind

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