

Marx Hardy Machiavelli Joyce Austen
Defoe Abbot Melville Montaigne Cooper Emerson Hugo
Stoker Wilde Christie Maupassant Haggard Chesterton Molière Eliot Grimm
Garnett Engels Byron Schiller
Goethe Hawthorne Smith Kafka
Cotton Dostoyevsky Hall
Baum Henry Kipling Doyle Willis
Leslie Dumas Flaubert Nietzsche Turgenev Balzac
Stockton Vatsyayana Crane
Burroughs Verne
Curtis Tocqueville Gogol Busch
Homer Tolstoy Whitman
Darwin Thoreau Twain
Potter Zola Lawrence Dickens Plato Scott
Kant Freud Jowett Stevenson Andersen Burton Harte
London Descartes Cervantes Wells Hesse
Poe Aristotle Wells Voltaire Cooke
Hale James Hastings Shakespeare Chambers Irving
Bunner Richter Chekhov da Shaw Wodehouse
Doré Dante Swift Pushkin Alcott
Newton



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**History of the United Netherlands
from the Death of William the
Silent to the Twelve Year's Truce,
1608b**

John Lothrop Motley

Imprint

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CHAPTER LI.

Designs of Henry IV.—New marriage project between France and Spain—Formal proposition of negotiating for a truce between the States and Spain—Exertions of Prince Maurice to counteract the designs of Barneveld—Strife between the two parties in the republic—Animosity of the people against Barneveld—Return of the Spanish commissioners—Further trifling—Dismissal of the commissioners—Close of the negotiations—Accidental discovery of the secret instructions of the archdukes to the commissioners—Opposing factions in the republic—Oration of President Jeannin before the States-General—Comparison between the Dutch and Swiss republics—Calumnies against the Advocate—Ambassador Lambert in France—Henry's letter to Prince Maurice—Reconciliation of Maurice and Barneveld—Agreement of the States to accept a truce.

President Jeannin had long been prepared for this result. It was also by no means distasteful to him. A peace would not have accorded with the ulterior and secretly cherished schemes of his sovereign, and during his visit to Paris, he had succeeded in persuading Henry that a truce would be far the most advantageous solution of the question, so far as his interests were concerned.

For it had been precisely during that midsummer vacation of the President at Paris that Henry had completed his plot against the liberty of the republic, of which he professed himself the only friend. Another phase of Spanish marriage-making had excited his ever scheming and insidious brain. It had been proposed that the second son of the Spanish king should espouse one of Henry's daughters.

The papal Nuncius asked what benefit the King of Spain would receive for his share, in case of the marriage. The French king replied by plainly declaring to the Nuncius that the United States should abstain from and renounce all navigation to and commerce with the Indies, and should permit public exercise of the Catholic religion. If they refused, would incontinently abandon them to their fate. More than this, he said, could not honestly be expected of him.

Surely this was enough. Honestly or dishonestly, what more could Spain expect of the republic's best ally, than that he should use all his efforts to bring her back into Spanish subjection, should deprive her of commerce with three-quarters of the world, and compel her to re-establish the religion which she believed, at that period, to be incompatible with her constitutional liberties? It is difficult to imagine a more profligate or heartless course than the one pursued at this juncture by Henry. Secretly, he was intriguing, upon the very soil of the Netherlands, to filch from them that splendid commerce which was the wonder of the age, which had been invented and created by Dutch navigators and men of science, which was the very foundation of their State, and without which they could not exist, in order that he might appropriate it to himself, and transfer the East India Company to France; while at Paris he was solemnly engaging himself in a partnership with their ancient and deadly enemy to rob them of their precious and nobly gained liberty. Was better proof ever afforded that God alone can protect us against those whom we trust? Who was most dangerous to the United Provinces during those memorable peace negotiations, Spain the avowed enemy, or France the friend?

The little republic had but her own sword, her own brain, and her own purse to rely upon. Elizabeth was dead, and James loved Spain better than he did the Netherlands, and quiet better than Spain. "I have told you often," said Caron, "and I say it once more, the Spaniard is lucky that he has such a peaceable king as this to deal with in England."

The details of the new marriage project were arranged at Paris between the Nuncius, the Spanish ambassador, Don Pedro de Toledo, the diplomatic agent of the archdukes, and Henry's ministers, precisely as if there had been no negotiations going on between the

States and Spain. Yet the French king was supposed to be the nearest friend of the States, and was consulted by them on every occasion, while his most intimate and trusted counsellor, the ingenuous Jeannin, whose open brow was stamped with sincerity, was privy to all their most secret deliberations.

But the statesman thus dealing with the Hollanders under such a mask of friendly candour, knew perfectly well the reason why his Government preferred a truce to a peace. During a prolonged truce, the two royal children would grow old enough for the consummation of marriage, and the States—so it was hoped—would be corrupted and cajoled into renouncing their liberty. All the Netherlands would be then formed into a secundogeniture for Spain, and the first sovereign would be the husband of a French princess. Even as an object of ambition, the prize to be secured by so much procrastination and so much treachery was paltry.

When the Spanish commissioners came to the French and English ambassadors accordingly, complaining of the abrupt and peremptory tone of the States' reply, the suggestion of conferences for truce, in place of fruitless peace negotiations, was made at once, and of course favourably received. It was soon afterwards laid before the States-General. To this end, in truth, Richardot and his colleagues had long been secretly tending. Moreover, the subject had been thoroughly but secretly discussed long before between Jeannin and Barneveld.

The French and English ambassadors, accordingly, on the 27th August, came before the States-General, and made a formal proposition for the opening of negotiations for a truce. They advised the adoption of this course in the strongest manner. "Let the truce be made with you," they said, "as with free States, over which the king and the archdukes have no pretensions, with the understanding that, during the time of the truce you are to have free commerce as well to the Indies as to Spain and the obedient Netherlands, and to every part of the Spanish dominions; that you are to retain all that you possess at present, and that such other conditions are to be added as you may find it reasonable to impose. During this period of leisure you will have time to put your affairs in order, to pay

your debts, and to reform your Government, and if you remain united, the truce will change into an absolute peace."

Maurice was more indignant when the new scheme was brought to his notice than he had ever been before, and used more violent language in opposing a truce than he had been used to employ when striving against a peace. To be treated with, as with a free State, and to receive permission to trade with the outside world until the truce should expire, seemed to him a sorry result for the republic to accept.

The state-council declared, by way of answer to the foreign ambassadors, that the principal points and conditions which had been solemnly fixed, before the States had consented to begin the negotiations, had been disputed with infinite effrontery and shamelessness by the enemy. The pure and perfect sovereignty notoriously included religion and navigation to any part of the world; and the republic would never consent to any discussion of truce unless these points were confirmed beforehand with the Spanish king's signature and seal.

This resolution of the council—a body which stood much under the influence of the Nassaus—was adopted next day by the States-General, and duly communicated to the friendly ambassadors.

The foreign commissioners, when apprised of this decision, begged for six weeks' time; in order to be able to hear from Madrid.

Even the peace party was disgusted with this impertinence. Maurice boiled over with wrath. The ambassadors recommended compliance with the proposal. Their advice was discussed in the States-General, eighty members being present, besides Maurice and Lewis William. The stadholder made a violent and indignant speech.

He was justified in his vehemence. Nothing could exceed the perfidy of their great ally.

"I know that the King of France calculates thus"—wrote Aerssens at that moment from Paris—"If the truce lasts seven years, my son will be old enough to accomplish the proposed marriage, and they will be obliged to fulfil their present offers. Otherwise; I would break the truce in the Netherlands, and my own peace with them, in order to take from the Spaniard by force what he led me to hope

from alliance.' Thus it is," continued the States' envoy, "that his Majesty condescends to propose, to us a truce, which may have a double interpretation, according to the disposition of the strongest, and thus our commonwealth will be kept in perpetual disquiet, without knowing whether it is sovereign or not. Nor will it be sovereign unless it shall so please our neighbour, who by this means will always keep his foot upon our throat."

"To treat with the States as if they were free," said Henry to the Nuncius soon afterwards, "is not to make them free. This clause does no prejudice to the rights of the King of Spain, except for the time of the truce." Aerssens taxed the king with having said this. His Majesty flatly denied it. The republican envoy bluntly adduced the testimony of the ambassadors of Venice and of Wirtemberg. The king flew into a rage on seeing that his secrets had been divulged, and burst out with these words: "What you demand is not reasonable. You wish the king of Spain to renounce his rights in order to arrive at a truce. You wish to dictate the law to him. If you had just gained four battles over him, you could not demand more. I have always held you for sovereigns, because I am your friend, but if you would judge by equity and justice, you are not sovereigns. It is not reasonable that the king of Spain should quit the sovereignty for always, and you ought to be satisfied with having it so long as the treaty shall last."

Here was playing at sovereignty with a vengeance. Sovereignty was a rattle for the States to amuse themselves with, until the royal infants, French and Spanish, should be grown old enough to take the sovereignty for good. Truly this was indeed keeping the republic under the king's heel to be crushed at his pleasure, as Aerssens, with just bitterness, exclaimed.

Two days were passed at the Hague in vehement debate. The deputies of Zeeland withdrew. The deputies from Holland were divided, but, on the whole, it was agreed to listen to propositions of truce, provided the freedom of the United Provinces—not under conditions nor during a certain period, but simply and for all time—should be recognised beforehand.

It was further decided on the 14th September to wait until the end of the month for the answer from Spain.

After the 1st of October it was distinctly intimated to the Spanish commissioners that they must at once leave the country unless the king had then acknowledged the absolute independence of the provinces.

A suggestion which had been made by these diplomatists to prolong the actually existing armistice into a truce of seven years, a step which they professed themselves willing to take upon their own responsibility, had been scornfully rejected by the States. It was already carrying them far enough away, they said, to take them away from a peace to a truce, which was something far less secure than a peace, but the continuance of this floating, uncertain armistice would be the most dangerous insecurity of all. This would be going from firm land to slippery ice, and from slippery ice into the water. By such a process, they would have neither war nor peace—neither liberty of government nor freedom of commerce—and they unanimously refused to listen to any such schemes.

During the fortnight which followed this provisional consent of the States, the prince redoubled his efforts to counteract the Barneveld party.

He was determined, so far as in him lay, that the United Netherlands should never fall back under the dominion of Spain. He had long maintained the impossibility of effecting their thorough independence except by continuing the war, and had only with reluctance acquiesced in the arguments of the French ambassadors in favour of peace negotiations. As to the truce, he vehemently assured those envoys that it was but a trap. How could the Netherlanders know who their friends might be when the truce should have expired, and under what unfavourable auspices they might not be compelled to resume hostilities?

As if he had been actually present at the council boards in Madrid and Valladolid, or had been reading the secret letters of Friar John to Spinola, he affirmed that the only object of Spain was to recruit her strength and improve her finances, now entirely exhausted. He believed, on the other hand, that the people of the provinces, after they should have once become accustomed to repose; would shrink from exchanging their lucrative pursuits for war, and would prefer to fall back under the yoke of Spain. During the truce they would

object to the furnishing of necessary contributions for garrison expenses, and the result would be that the most important cities and strongholds, especially those on the frontier, which were mainly inhabited by Catholics, would become insecure. Being hostile to a Government which only controlled them by force, they would with difficulty be kept in check by diminished garrisons, unless they should obtain liberty of Catholic worship.

It is a dismal proof of the inability of a leading mind, after half a century's war, to comprehend the true lesson of the war—that toleration of the Roman religion seemed to Maurice an entirely inadmissible idea. The prince could not rise to the height on which his illustrious father had stood; and those about him, who encouraged him in his hostility to Catholicism, denounced Barneveld and Arminius as no better than traitors and atheists. In the eyes of the extreme party, the mighty war had been waged, not to liberate human thought, but to enforce predestination; and heretics to Calvinism were as offensive in their eyes as Jews and Saracens had ever been to Torquemada.

The reasons were unanswerable for the refusal of the States to bind themselves to a foreign sovereign in regard to the interior administration of their commonwealth; but that diversity of religious worship should be considered incompatible with the health of the young republic—that the men who had so bravely fought the Spanish Inquisition should now claim their own right of inquisition into the human conscience—this was almost enough to create despair as to the possibility of the world's progress. The seed of intellectual advancement is slow in ripening, and it is almost invariably the case that the generation which plants—often but half conscious of the mightiness of its work—is not the generation which reaps the harvest. But all mankind at last inherits what is sown in the blood and tears of a few. That Government, whether regal or democratic, should dare to thrust itself between man and his Maker—that the State, not with interfering in a thousand superfluous ways with the freedom of individual human action in the business of life, should combine with the Church to reduce human thought to slavery in regard to the sacred interests of eternity, was one day to be esteemed a blasphemous presumption in lands which deserved to call themselves free. But that hour had not yet come.

"If the garrisons should be weakened," said the prince, "nothing could be expected from the political fidelity of the town populations in question, unless they should be allowed the exercise of their own religion. But the States could hardly be disposed to grant this voluntarily, for fear of injuring the general insecurity and violating the laws of the commonwealth, built as it is upon a foundation which cannot suffer this diversity in the public exercise of religion. Already," continued Maurice, "there are the seeds of dissension in the provinces and in the cities, sure to ripen in the idleness and repose of peace to an open division. This would give the enemy a means of intriguing with and corrupting those who are already wickedly inclined."

Thus in the year 1608, the head of the Dutch republic, the son of William the Silent, seemed to express himself in favour of continuing a horrible war, not to maintain the political independence of his country, but to prevent Catholics from acquiring the right of publicly worshipping God according to the dictates of their conscience.

Yet it would be unjust to the prince, whose patriotism was as pure and unsullied as his sword, to confound his motives with his end. He was firmly convinced that liberty of religious worship, to be acquired during the truce, would inevitably cause the United Provinces to fall once more under the Spanish yoke. The French ambassador, with whom he conferred every day, never doubted his sincerity. Gelderland, Friesland, Overijssel, Groningen, and Utrecht, five provinces out of the united seven, the prince declared to be chiefly inhabited by Catholics. They had only entered the union, he said, because compelled by force. They could only be kept in the union by force, unless allowed freedom of religion. His inference from such a lamentable state of affairs was, not that the experiment of religious worship should be tried, but that the garrisons throughout the five provinces ought to be redoubled, and the war with Spain indefinitely waged. The President was likewise of opinion that "a revolt of these five provinces against the union might be at any moment expected, ill disposed as they were to recognise a sovereignty which abolished their religion." Being himself a Catholic, however, it was not unnatural that he should make a different deduction from that of the prince, and warmly recommend, not more garrisons, but more liberty of worship.

Thus the very men who were ready to dare all, and to sacrifice all in behalf of their country, really believed themselves providing for the imperishable security of the commonwealth by placing it on the narrow basis of religious intolerance.

Maurice, not satisfied with making these vehement arguments against the truce in his conferences with the envoys of the French and British sovereigns, employed the brief interval yet to elapse before definitely breaking off or resuming the conferences with the Spanish commissioners in making vigorous appeals to the country.

"The weal or woe of the United Provinces for all time," he said, "is depending on the present transactions." Weigh well the reasons we urge, and make use of those which seem to you convincing. You know that the foe, according to his old deceitful manner, laid down very specious conditions at the beginning, in order to induce my lords the States-General to treat.

"If the king and the archdukes sincerely mean to relinquish absolutely their pretensions to these provinces, they can certainly have no difficulty in finding honest and convenient words to express their intention. As they are seeking other phrases than the usual and straightforward ones, they give certain proof that they mean to keep back from us the substance. They are trying to cheat us with dark, dubious, loosely-screwed terms, which secure nothing and bind to nothing. If it be wise to trust the welfare of our State to ambiguous words, you can judge according to your own discretion.

"Recognition of our sovereignty is the foundation-stone of these negotiations.

"Let every man be assured that, with such mighty enemies, we can do nothing by halves. We cannot afford to retract, mutilate, or moderate our original determination. He who swerves from the straight road at the beginning is lost; he who stumbles at the first step is apt to fall down the whole staircase. If, on account of imaginable necessity, we postpone that most vital point, the assurance of our freedom, we shall very easily allow less important points to pass muster, and at last come tamely into the path of reconciliation. That was exactly the danger which our ancestors in similar negotiations always feared, and against which we too have always done our best to guard ourselves.

"Wherefore, if the preservation of our beloved fatherland is dear to you, I exhort you to maintain that great fundamental resolution, at all times and against all men, even if this should cause the departure of the enemy's commissioners. What can you expect from them but evil fruit?"

He then advised all the estates and magistracies which he was addressing to instruct their deputies, at the approaching session of the States-General, to hold on to the first article of the often-cited preliminary resolution without allowing one syllable to be altered. Otherwise nothing could save the commonwealth from dire and notorious confusion. Above all, he entreated them to act in entire harmony and confidence with himself and his cousin, even as they had ever done with his illustrious father.

Certainly the prince fully deserved the confidence of the States, as well for his own signal services and chivalrous self-devotion, as for the unexampled sacrifices and achievements of William the Silent. His words had the true patriotic ring of his father's frequent and eloquent appeals; and I have not hesitated to give these extracts from his discourse, because comparatively few of such utterances of Maurice have been preserved, and because it gives a vivid impression of the condition of the republic and the state of parties at that momentous epoch. It was not merely the fate of the United Netherlands and the question of peace or war between the little republic and its hereditary enemy that were upon the issue. The peace of all Christendom, the most considerable material interests of civilization, and the highest political and moral principles that can influence human action, were involved in those negotiations.

There were not wanting many to impeach the purity of the stadholder's motives. As admiral or captain-general, he received high salaries, besides a tenth part of all prize-money gained at sea by the fleets, or of ransom and blackmail on land by the armies of the republic. His profession, his ambition, his delights, were those of a soldier. As a soldier in a great war, he was more necessary to his countrymen than he could expect to be as a statesman in time of peace. But nothing ever appeared in public or in private, which threw a reasonable suspicion upon his lofty patriotism. Peace he had always believed to be difficult of attainment. It had now been

proved impossible. A truce he honestly considered a pitfall of destruction, and he denounced it, as we have seen, in the language of energetic conviction. He never alluded to his pecuniary losses in case peace should be made. His disinterested patriotism was the frequent subject of comment in the most secret letters of the French ambassadors to the king. He had repeatedly refused enormous offers if he would forsake the cause of the republic. The King of France was ever ready to tempt him with bribes, such as had proved most efficacious with men as highly born and as highly placed as a cadet of the house of Orange-Nassau. But there is no record that Jeannin assailed him at this crisis with such temptations, although it has not been pretended that the prince was obdurate to the influence of Mammon when that deity could be openly approached.

That Maurice loved power, pelf, and war, can hardly be denied. That he had a mounting ambition; that he thought a monarchy founded upon the historical institutions and charters of the provinces might be better than the burgher-aristocracy which, under the lead of Barneveld, was establishing itself in the country; that he knew no candidate so eligible for such a throne as his father's son, all this is highly probable and scarcely surprising. But that such sentiments or aspirations caused him to swerve the ninth part of a hair from what he considered the direct path of duty; that he determined to fight out the great fight with Spain and Rome until the States were free in form, in name, and in fact; only that he might then usurp a sovereignty which would otherwise revert to Philip of Spain or be snatched by Henry of Navarre—of all this there is no proof whatever.

The language of Lewis William to the provinces under his government was quite as vigorous as the appeals of Maurice.

During the brief interval remaining before the commissioners should comply with the demands of the States or take their departure, the press throughout the Netherlands was most active. Pamphlets fell thick as hail. The peace party and the war party contended with each other, over all the territory of the provinces, as vigorously as the troops of Fuentes or Bucquoy had ever battled with the columns of Bax and Meetkerke. The types of Blaauw and Plantin

were as effective during the brief armistice, as pike and arquebus in the field, but unfortunately they were used by Netherlanders against each other. As a matter of course, each party impeached the motives as well as the actions of its antagonist. The adherents of the Advocate accused the stadholder of desiring the continuance of the war for personal aims. They averred that six thousand men for guarding the rivers would be necessary, in addition to the forty-five thousand men, now kept constantly on foot. They placed the requisite monthly expenses, if hostilities were resumed, at 800,000 florins, while they pointed to the 27,000,000 of debt over and above the 8,000,000 due to the British crown, as a burthen under which the republic could scarcely stagger much longer. Such figures seem modest enough, as the price of a war of independence.

Familiar with the gigantic budgets of our own day, we listen with something like wonder, now that two centuries and a half have passed, to the fierce denunciations by the war party of these figures as wilful fictions. Science has made in that interval such gigantic strides. The awful intellect of man may at last make war impossible for his physical strength. He can forge but cannot wield the hammer of Thor; nor has Science yet discovered the philosopher's stone. Without it, what exchequer can accept chronic warfare and escape bankruptcy? After what has been witnessed in these latest days, the sieges and battles of that distant epoch seem like the fights of pigmies and cranes. Already an eighty years' war, such as once was waged, has become inconceivable. Let two more centuries pass away, and perhaps a three weeks' campaign may exhaust an empire.

Meantime the war of words continued. A proclamation with penalties was issued by the States against the epidemic plague of pamphlets or "blue-books," as those publications were called in Holland, but with little result. It was not deemed consistent with liberty by those republicans to put chains on the press because its utterances might occasionally be distasteful to magistrates. The writers, printers, and sellers of the "blue-books" remained unpunished and snapped their fingers at the placard.

We have seen the strenuous exertions of the Nassaus and their adherents by public appeals and private conversation to defeat all

schemes of truce. The people were stirred by the eloquence of the two stadholders. They were stung to fury against Spain and against Barneveld by the waspish effusions of the daily press. The magistrates remained calm, and took part by considerable majorities with Barneveld. That statesman, while exercising almost autocratic influence in the estates, became more and more odious to the humbler classes, to the Nassaus, and especially to the Calvinist clergy. He was denounced, as a papist, an atheist, a traitor, because striving for an honourable peace with the foe, and because admitting the possibility of more than one road to the kingdom of Heaven. To doubt the infallibility of Calvin was as heinous a crime, in the eyes of his accusers, as to kneel to the host. Peter Titelmann, half a century earlier, dripping with the blood of a thousand martyrs, seemed hardly a more loathsome object to all Netherlanders than the Advocate now appeared to his political enemies, thus daring to preach religious toleration, and boasting of, humble ignorance as the safest creed. Alas! we must always have something to persecute, and individual man is never so convinced of his own wisdom as when dealing with subjects beyond human comprehension.

Unfortunately, however, while the great Advocate was clear in his conscience he had scarcely clean hands. He had very recently accepted a present of twenty thousand florins from the King of France. That this was a bribe by which his services were to be purchased for a cause not in harmony with his own convictions it would be unjust to say. We of a later generation, who have had the advantage of looking through the portfolio of President Jeannin, and of learning the secret intentions of that diplomatist and of his master, can fully understand however that there was more than sufficient cause at the time for suspecting the purity of the great Advocate's conduct. We are perfectly aware that the secret instructions of Henry gave his plenipotentiaries almost unlimited power to buy up as many influential personages in the Netherlands as could be purchased. So they would assist in making the king master of the United Provinces at the proper moment there was scarcely any price that he was not willing to pay.

Especially Prince Maurice, his cousin, and the Advocate of Holland, were to be secured by life pensions, property, offices, and dignities, all which Jeannin might offer to an almost unlimited

amount, if by such means those great personages could possibly be induced to perform the king's work.

There is no record that the president ever held out such baits at this epoch to the prince. There could never be a doubt however in any one's mind that if the political chief of the Orange-Nassau house ever wished to make himself the instrument by which France should supplant Spain in the tyranny of the Netherlands, he might always name his own price. Jeannin never insulted him with any such trading propositions. As for Barneveld, he avowed long years afterwards that he had accepted the twenty thousand florins, and that the king had expressly exacted secrecy in regard to the transaction. He declared however that the money was a reward for public services rendered by him to the French Government ten years before, in the course of his mission to France at the time of the peace of Vervins. The reward had been promised in 1598, and the pledge was fulfilled in 1608. In accepting wages fairly earned, however, he protested that he had bound himself to no dishonourable service, and that he had never exchanged a word with Jeannin or with any man in regard to securing for Henry the sovereignty of the Netherlands.

His friends moreover maintained in his defence that there were no laws in the Netherlands forbidding citizens to accept presents or pensions from foreign powers. Such an excuse was as bad as the accusation. Woe to the republic whose citizens require laws to prevent them from becoming stipendiaries of foreign potentates! If public virtue, the only foundation of republican institutions, be so far washed away that laws in this regard are necessary to save it from complete destruction, then already the republic is impossible. Many who bore illustrious names, and occupied the highest social positions at that day in France, England, and the obedient provinces, were as venal as cattle at a fair. Philip and Henry had bought them over and over again, whenever either was rich enough to purchase and strong enough to enforce the terms of sale. Bribes were taken with both hands in overflowing measure; the difficulty was only in obtaining the work for the wage.

But it would have been humiliating beyond expression had the new commonwealth, after passing through the fiery furnace of its

great war, proved no purer than leading monarchies at a most corrupt epoch. It was no wonder therefore that men sought to wipe off the stain from the reputation of Barneveld, and it is at least a solace that there was no proof of his ever rendering, or ever having agreed to render, services inconsistent with his convictions as to the best interests of the commonwealth. It is sufficiently grave that he knew the colour of the king's money, and that in a momentous crisis of history he accepted a reward for former professional services, and that the broker in the transaction, President Jeannin, seriously charged him by Henry's orders to keep the matter secret. It would be still more dismal if Jeannin, in his private letters, had ever intimated to Villeroy or his master that he considered it a mercantile transaction, or if any effort had ever been made by the Advocate to help Henry to the Batavian throne. This however is not the case.

In truth, neither Maurice nor Barneveld was likely to assist the French king in his intrigues against the independence of their fatherland. Both had higher objects of ambition than to become the humble and well-paid servants of a foreign potentate. The stadholder doubtless dreamed of a crown which might have been his father's, and which his own illustrious services might be supposed to have earned for himself. If that tempting prize were more likely to be gained by a continuance of the war, it is none the less certain that he considered peace, and still more truce, as fatal to the independence of the provinces.

The Advocate, on the other hand, loved his country well. Perhaps he loved power even better. To govern the city magistracies of Holland, through them the provincial estates; and through them again the States-General of the whole commonwealth; as first citizen of a republic to wield; the powers of a king; as statesman, diplomatist, and financier, to create a mighty empire out of those slender and but recently emancipated provinces of Spain, was a more flattering prospect for a man of large intellect, iron will, and infinite resources, than to sink into the contemptible position of stipendiary to a foreign master. He foresaw change, growth, transformation in the existing condition of things. Those great corporations the East and West India Companies were already producing a new organism out of the political and commercial chaos which had been so long brooding over civilization. Visions of an imperial zone extending

from the little Batavian island around the earth, a chain of forts and factories dotting the newly-discovered and yet undiscovered points of vantage, on island or promontory, in every sea; a watery, nebulous, yet most substantial empire—not fantastic, but practical—not picturesque and mediaeval, but modern and lucrative—a world-wide commonwealth with a half-submerged metropolis, which should rule the ocean with its own fleets and, like Venice and Florence, job its land wars with mercenary armies—all these dreams were not the cloudy pageant of a poet but the practical schemes of a great creative mind. They were destined to become reality. Had the geographical conditions been originally more favourable than they were, had Nature been less a stepmother to the metropolis of the rising Batavian realm, the creation might have been more durable. Barneveld, and the men who acted with him, comprehended their age, and with slender materials were prepared to do great things. They did not look very far perhaps into futurity, but they saw the vast changes already taking place, and felt the throb of forces actually at work.

The days were gone when the iron-clad man on horseback conquered a kingdom with his single hand. Doubtless there is more of poetry and romance in his deeds than in the achievements of the counting-house aristocracy, the hierarchy of joint-stock corporations that was taking the lead in the world's affairs. Enlarged views of the social compact and of human liberty, as compared with those which later generations ought to take, standing upon the graves, heaped up mountains high, of their predecessors, could hardly be expected of them. But they knew how to do the work before them. They had been able to smite a foreign and sacerdotal tyranny into the dust at the expense of more blood and more treasure, and with sacrifices continued through a longer cycle of years, than had ever been recorded by history.

Thus the Advocate believed that the chief fruits of the war—political independence, religious liberty, commercial expansion—could be now secured by diplomacy, and that a truce could be so handled as to become equivalent to a peace. He required no bribes therefore to labour for that which he believed to be for his own interests and for those of the country.