

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 Whittman Twain
Darwin Zola Lawrence Dickens Plato Scott
Potter Freud Jowett Stevenson Andersen Burton Harte
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**Life and Death of John of
Barneveld, Advocate of Holland :
with a view of the primary causes
and movements of the Thirty
Years' War —Complete (1609-15)**

John Lothrop Motley

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

**WITH A VIEW OF THE PRIMARY CAUSES AND MOVE-
MENTS OF THE THIRTY YEARS' WAR**

VOLUME I.

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

1880

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THE LIFE AND DEATH OF JOHN OF BARNEVELD

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PREFACE:

These volumes make a separate work in themselves. They form also the natural sequel to the other histories already published by the Author, as well as the necessary introduction to that concluding portion of his labours which he has always desired to lay before the public; a History of the Thirty Years' War.

For the two great wars which successively established the independence of Holland and the disintegration of Germany are in reality but one; a prolonged Tragedy of Eighty Years. The brief pause, which in the Netherlands was known as the Twelve Years' Truce with Spain, was precisely the epoch in which the elements were slowly and certainly gathering for the renewal over nearly the whole surface of civilized Europe of that immense conflict which for more than forty years had been raging within the narrow precincts of the Netherlands.

The causes and character of the two wars were essentially the same. There were many changes of persons and of scenery during a struggle which lasted for nearly three generations of mankind; yet a natural succession both of actors, motives, and events will be observed from the beginning to the close.

The designs of Charles V. to establish universal monarchy, which he had passionately followed for a lifetime through a series of colossal crimes against humanity and of private misdeeds against individuals, such as it has rarely been permitted to a single despot to perpetrate, had been baffled at last. Disappointed, broken, but even to our own generation never completely unveiled, the tyrant had withdrawn from the stage of human affairs, leaving his son to carry on the great conspiracy against Human Right, independence of nations, liberty of thought, and equality of religions, with the additional vigour which sprang from intensity of conviction.

For Philip possessed at least that superiority over his father that he was a sincere bigot. In the narrow and gloomy depths of his soul he had doubtless persuaded himself that it was necessary for the redemption of the human species that the empire of the world should be vested in his hands, that Protestantism in all its forms should be extirpated as a malignant disease, and that to behead, torture, burn alive, and bury alive all heretics who opposed the

decree of himself and the Holy Church was the highest virtue by which he could merit Heaven.

The father would have permitted Protestantism if Protestantism would have submitted to universal monarchy. There would have been small difficulty in the early part of his reign in effecting a compromise between Rome and Augsburg, had the gigantic secular ambition of Charles not preferred to weaken the Church and to convert conscientious religious reform into political mutiny; a crime against him who claimed the sovereignty of Christendom.

The materials for the true history of that reign lie in the Archives of Spain, Austria, Rome, Venice, and the Netherlands, and in many other places. When out of them one day a complete and authentic narrative shall have been constructed, it will be seen how completely the policy of Charles foreshadowed and necessitated that of Philip, how logically, under the successors of Philip, the Austrian dream of universal empire ended in the shattering, in the minute subdivision, and the reduction to a long impotence of that Germanic Empire which had really belonged to Charles.

Unfortunately the great Republic which, notwithstanding the aid of England on the one side and of France on the other, had withstood almost single-handed the onslaughts of Spain, now allowed the demon of religious hatred to enter into its body at the first epoch of peace, although it had successfully exorcised the evil spirit during the long and terrible war.

There can be no doubt whatever that the discords within the interior of the Dutch Republic during the period of the Truce, and their tragic catastrophe, had weakened her purpose and partially paralysed her arm. When the noble Commonwealth went forward to the renewed and general conflict which succeeded the concentrated one in which it had been the chief actor, the effect of those misspent twelve years became apparent.

Indeed the real continuity of the war was scarcely broken by the fitful, armistice. The death of John of Cleve, an event almost simultaneous with the conclusion of the Truce, seemed to those gifted with political vision the necessary precursor of a new and more general war.

The secret correspondence of Barneveld shows the almost prophetic accuracy with which he indicated the course of events and the approach of an almost universal conflict, while that tragedy was still in the future, and was to be enacted after he had been laid in his bloody grave. No man then living was so accustomed as he was to sweep the political horizon, and to estimate the signs and portents of the times. No statesman was left in Europe during the epoch of the Twelve Years' Truce to compare with him in experience, breadth of vision, political tact, or administrative sagacity.

Imbued with the grand traditions and familiar with the great personages of a most heroic epoch; the trusted friend or respected counsellor of William the Silent, Henry IV., Elizabeth, and the sages and soldiers on whom they leaned; having been employed during an already long lifetime in the administration of greatest affairs, he stood alone after the deaths of Henry of France and the second Cecil, and the retirement of Sully, among the natural leaders of mankind.

To the England of Elizabeth, of Walsingham, Raleigh, and the Cecils, had succeeded the Great Britain of James, with his Carrs and Carletons, Nauntons, Lakes, and Winwoods. France, widowed of Henry and waiting for Richelieu, lay in the clutches of Concini's, Eperons, and Bouillons, bound hand and foot to Spain. Germany, falling from Rudolph to Matthias, saw Styrian Ferdinand in the background ready to shatter the fabric of a hundred years of attempted Reformation. In the Republic of the Netherlands were the great soldier and the only remaining statesman of the age. At a moment when the breathing space had been agreed upon before the conflict should be renewed; on a wider field than ever, between Spanish-Austrian world-empire and independence of the nations; between the ancient and only Church and the spirit of religious Equality; between popular Right and royal and sacerdotal Despotism; it would have been desirable that the soldier and the statesman should stand side by side, and that the fortunate Confederacy, gifted with two such champions and placed by its own achievements at the very head of the great party of resistance, should be true to herself.

These volumes contain a slight and rapid sketch of Barneveld's career up to the point at which the Twelve Years' Truce with Spain was signed in the year 1609. In previous works the Author has attempted to assign the great Advocate's place as part and parcel of history during the continuance of the War for Independence. During the period of the Truce he will be found the central figure. The history of Europe, especially of the Netherlands, Britain, France, and Germany, cannot be thoroughly appreciated without a knowledge of the designs, the labours, and the fate of Barneveld.

The materials for estimating his character and judging his judges lie in the national archives of the land of which he was so long the foremost citizen. But they have not long been accessible. The letters, state papers, and other documents remain unprinted, and have rarely been read. M. van Deventer has published three most interesting volumes of the Advocate's correspondence, but they reach only to the beginning of 1609. He has suspended his labours exactly at the moment when these volumes begin. I have carefully studied however nearly the whole of that correspondence, besides a mass of other papers. The labour is not light, for the handwriting of the great Advocate is perhaps the worst that ever existed, and the papers, although kept in the admirable order which distinguishes the Archives of the Hague, have passed through many hands at former epochs before reaching their natural destination in the treasure-house of the nation. Especially the documents connected with the famous trial were for a long time hidden from mortal view, for Barneveld's judges had bound themselves by oath to bury the proceedings out of sight. And the concealment lasted for centuries. Very recently a small portion of those papers has been published by the Historical Society of Utrecht. The "Verhooren," or Interrogatories of the Judges, and the replies of Barneveld, have thus been laid before the reading public of Holland, while within the last two years the distinguished and learned historian, Professor Fruin, has edited the "Verhooren" of Hugo Grotius.

But papers like these, important as they are, make but a slender portion of the material out of which a judgment concerning these grave events can be constructed. I do not therefore offer an apology for the somewhat copious extracts which I have translated and given in these volumes from the correspondence of Barneveld and

from other manuscripts of great value—most of them in the Royal Archives of Holland and Belgium—which are unknown to the public.

I have avoided as much as possible any dealings with the theological controversies so closely connected with the events which I have attempted to describe. This work aims at being a political study. The subject is full of lessons, examples, and warnings for the inhabitants of all free states. Especially now that the republican system of government is undergoing a series of experiments with more or less success in one hemisphere—while in our own land it is consolidated, powerful, and unchallenged—will the conflicts between the spirits of national centralization and of provincial sovereignty, and the struggle between the church, the sword, and the magistracy for supremacy in a free commonwealth, as revealed in the first considerable republic of modern history, be found suggestive of deep reflection.

Those who look in this work for a history of the Synod of Dordrecht will look in vain. The Author has neither wish nor power to grapple with the mysteries and passions which at that epoch possessed so many souls. The Assembly marks a political period. Its political aspects have been anxiously examined, but beyond the ecclesiastical threshold there has been no attempt to penetrate.

It was necessary for my purpose to describe in some detail the relations of Henry IV. with the Dutch Republic during the last and most pregnant year of his life, which makes the first of the present history. These relations are of European importance, and the materials for appreciating them are of unexpected richness, in the Dutch and Belgian Archives.

Especially the secret correspondence, now at the Hague, of that very able diplomatist Francis Aerssens with Barneveld during the years 1609, 1610, and 1611, together with many papers at Brussels, are full of vital importance.

They throw much light both on the vast designs which filled the brain of Henry at this fatal epoch and on his extraordinary infatuation for the young Princess of Conde by which they were traversed, and which was productive of such widespread political and tragical

results. This episode forms a necessary portion of my theme, and has therefore been set forth from original sources.

I am under renewed obligations to my friend M. Gachard, the eminent publicist and archivist of Belgium, for his constant and friendly offices to me (which I have so often experienced before), while studying the documents under his charge relating to this epoch; especially the secret correspondence of Archduke Albert with Philip III, and his ministers, and with Pecquius, the Archduke's agent at Paris.

It is also a great pleasure to acknowledge the unceasing courtesy and zealous aid rendered me during my renewed studies in the Archives at the Hague—lasting through nearly two years—by the Chief Archivist, M. van den Berg, and the gentlemen connected with that institution, especially M. de Jonghe and M. Hingman, without whose aid it would have been difficult for me to decipher and to procure copies of the almost illegible holographs of Barneveld.

I must also thank M. van Deventer for communicating copies of some curious manuscripts relating to my subject, some from private archives in Holland, and others from those of Simancas.

A single word only remains to be said in regard to the name of the statesman whose career I have undertaken to describe.

His proper appellation and that by which he has always been known in his own country is Oldenbarneveld, but in his lifetime and always in history from that time to this he has been called Barneveld in English as well as French, and this transformation, as it were, of the name has become so settled a matter that after some hesitation it has been adopted in the present work.

The Author would take this opportunity of expressing his gratitude for the indulgence with which his former attempts to illustrate an important period of European history have been received by the public, and his anxious hope that the present volumes may be thought worthy of attention. They are the result at least of severe and conscientious labour at the original sources of history, but the subject is so complicated and difficult that it may well be feared that

the ability to depict and unravel is unequal to the earnestness with which the attempt has been made.

LONDON, 1873.

THE LIFE AND DEATH OF JOHN OF BARNEVELD

CHAPTER I.

John of Barneveld the Founder of the Commonwealth of the United Provinces – Maurice of Orange Stadholder, but Servant to the States-General – The Union of Utrecht maintained – Barneveld makes a Compromise between Civil Functionaries and Church Officials – Embassies to France, England, and to Venice – the Appointment of Arminius to be Professor of Theology at Leyden creates Dissension – The Catholic League opposed by the Great Protestant Union – Death of the Duke of Cleve and Struggle for his Succession – The Elector of Brandenburg and Palatine of Neuburg hold the Duchies at Barneveld's Advice against the Emperor, though having Rival Claims themselves – Negotiations with the King of France – He becomes the Ally of the States-General to Protect the Possessory Princes, and prepares for war.

I propose to retrace the history of a great statesman's career. That statesman's name, but for the dark and tragic scenes with which it was ultimately associated, might after the lapse of two centuries and a half have faded into comparative oblivion, so impersonal and shadowy his presence would have seemed upon the great European theatre where he was so long a chief actor, and where his efforts and his achievements were foremost among those productive of long enduring and widespread results.

There is no doubt whatever that John of Barneveld, Advocate and Seal Keeper of the little province of Holland during forty years of as troubled and fertile an epoch as any in human history, was second to none of his contemporary statesmen. Yet the singular constitution and historical position of the republic whose destinies he guided and the peculiar and abnormal office which he held combined to cast a veil over his individuality. The ever-teeming brain, the rest-

less almost omnipresent hand, the fertile pen, the eloquent and ready tongue, were seen, heard, and obeyed by the great European public, by the monarchs, statesmen, and warriors of the time, at many critical moments of history, but it was not John of Barneveld that spoke to the world. Those "high and puissant Lords my masters the States-General" personified the young but already majestic republic. Dignified, draped, and concealed by that overshadowing title the informing and master spirit performed its never ending task.

Those who study the enormous masses of original papers in the archives of the country will be amazed to find how the penmanship, most difficult to decipher, of the Advocate meets them at every turn. Letters to monarchs, generals, ambassadors, resolutions of councils, of sovereign assemblies, of trading corporations, of great Indian companies, legal and historical disquisitions of great depth and length on questions agitating Europe, constitutional arguments, drafts of treaties among the leading powers of the world, instructions to great commissions, plans for European campaigns, vast combinations covering the world, alliances of empire, scientific expeditions and discoveries—papers such as these covered now with the satirical dust of centuries, written in the small, crabbed, exasperating characters which make Barneveld's handwriting almost cryptographic, were once, when fairly engrossed and sealed with the great seal of the haughty burgher-aristocracy, the documents which occupied the close attention of the cabinets of Christendom.

It is not unfrequent to find four or five important despatches compressed almost in miniature upon one sheet of gigantic foolscap. It is also curious to find each one of these rough drafts conscientiously beginning in the statesman's own hand with the elaborate phrases of compliment belonging to the epoch such as "Noble, strenuous, severe, highly honourable, very learned, very discreet, and very wise masters," and ending with "May the Lord God Almighty eternally preserve you and hold you in His holy keeping in this world and for ever"—decorations which one might have thought it safe to leave to be filled in by the secretary or copying clerk.

Thus there have been few men at any period whose lives have been more closely identical than his with a national history. There have been few great men in any history whose names have become less familiar to the world, and lived less in the mouths of posterity. Yet there can be no doubt that if William the Silent was the founder of the independence of the United Provinces Barneveld was the founder of the Commonwealth itself. He had never the opportunity, perhaps he might have never had the capacity, to make such prodigious sacrifices in the cause of country as the great prince had done. But he had served his country strenuously from youth to old age with an abiding sense of duty, a steadiness of purpose, a broad vision, a firm grasp, and an opulence of resource such as not one of his compatriots could even pretend to rival.

Had that country of which he was so long the first citizen maintained until our own day the same proportionate position among the empires of Christendom as it held in the seventeenth century, the name of John of Barneveld would have perhaps been as familiar to all men as it is at this moment to nearly every inhabitant of the Netherlands. Even now political passion is almost as ready to flame forth either in ardent affection or enthusiastic hatred as if two centuries and a half had not elapsed since his death. His name is so typical of a party, a polity, and a faith, so indelibly associated with a great historical cataclysm, as to render it difficult even for the grave, the conscientious, the learned, the patriotic of his own compatriots to speak of him with absolute impartiality.

A foreigner who loves and admires all that is great and noble in the history of that famous republic and can have no hereditary bias as to its ecclesiastical or political theories may at least attempt the task with comparative coldness, although conscious of inability to do thorough justice to a most complex subject.

In former publications devoted to Netherland history I have endeavoured to trace the course of events of which the life and works of the Advocate were a vital ingredient down to the period when Spain after more than forty years of hard fighting virtually acknowledged the independence of the Republic and concluded with her a truce of twelve years.

That convention was signed in the spring of 1609. The ten ensuing years in Europe were comparatively tranquil, but they were scarcely to be numbered among the full and fruitful sheaves of a pacific epoch. It was a pause, a breathing spell during which the sulphurous clouds which had made the atmosphere of Christendom poisonous for nearly half a century had sullenly rolled away, while at every point of the horizon they were seen massing themselves anew in portentous and ever accumulating strength. At any moment the faint and sickly sunshine in which poor exhausted Humanity was essaying a feeble twitter of hope as it plumed itself for a peaceful flight might be again obscured. To us of a remote posterity the momentary division of epochs seems hardly discernible. So rapidly did that fight of Demons which we call the Thirty Years' War tread on the heels of the forty years' struggle for Dutch Independence which had just been suspended that we are accustomed to think and speak of the Eighty Years' War as one pure, perfect, sanguinary whole.

And indeed the Tragedy which was soon to sweep solemnly across Europe was foreshadowed in the first fitful years of peace. The throb of the elementary forces already shook the soil of Christendom. The fantastic but most significant conflict in the territories of the dead Duke of Clove reflected the distant and gigantic war as in a mirage. It will be necessary to direct the reader's attention at the proper moment to that episode, for it was one in which the beneficent sagacity of Barneveld was conspicuously exerted in the cause of peace and conservation. Meantime it is not agreeable to reflect that this brief period of nominal and armed peace which the Republic had conquered after nearly two generations of warfare was employed by her in tearing her own flesh. The heroic sword which had achieved such triumphs in the cause of freedom could have been bitter employed than in an attempt at political suicide.

In a picture of the last decade of Barneveld's eventful life his personality may come more distinctly forward perhaps than in previous epochs. It will however be difficult to disentangle a single thread from the great historical tapestry of the Republic and of Europe in which his life and achievements are interwoven. He was a public man in the fullest sense of the word, and without his presence and influence the record of Holland, France, Spain, Britain, and Germany might have been essentially modified.