

Marx Hardy Machiavelli Joyce Austen
Defoe Abbot Melville Montaigne Cooper Emerson Hugo
Stoker Wilde Christie Maupassant Haggard Chesterton Molière Eliot Grimm
Garnett Engels Schiller Byron Maupassant Schiller
Goethe Hawthorne Smith Kafka
Cotton Dostoyevsky Kipling Doyle Willis
Baum Henry Nietzsche Hall
Leslie Dumas Flaubert Turgenev Balzac Willis
Stockton Vatsyayana Crane
Burroughs Verne
Curtis Tocqueville Gogol Busch
Homer Tolstoy Whitman Twain
Darwin Zola Lawrence Plato
Potter Freud Jowett Stevenson Dickens Scott
Kant Andersen London Descartes Cervantes Burton Harte
Poe Aristotle Wells Voltaire Hesse
Hale James Hastings Cooke
Bunner Shakespeare Chambers Irving
Richter Chekhov da Shaw Wodehouse
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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, 1618**

John Lothrop Motley

Imprint

This book is part of TREDITION CLASSICS

Author: John Lothrop Motley

Cover design: Buchgut, Berlin - Germany

Publisher: tredition GmbH, Hamburg - Germany

ISBN: 978-3-8424-5745-4

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CHAPTER XVI.

Maurice revolutionizes the Provinces—
Danckaert's libellous Pamphlet—Barneveld's Ap-
peal to the Prince—Barneveld's Remonstrance to
the States—The Stadholder at Amsterdam—The
Treaty of Truce nearly expired—King of Spain and
Archduke Albert—Scheme for recovering the
Provinces—Secret Plot to make Maurice Sovereign.

Early in the year (1618) Maurice set himself about revolutionizing the provinces on which he could not yet thoroughly rely. The town of Nymegen since its recovery from the Spaniards near the close of the preceding century had held its municipal government, as it were, at the option of the Prince. During the war he had been, by the terms of surrender, empowered to appoint and to change its magistracy at will. No change had occurred for many years, but as the government had of late fallen into the hands of the Barneveldians, and as Maurice considered the Truce to be a continuance of the war, he appeared suddenly, in the city at the head of a body of troops and surrounded by his lifeguard. Summoning the whole board of magistrates into the townhouse, he gave them all notice to quit, disbanding them like a company of mutinous soldiery, and immediately afterwards appointed a fresh list of functionaries in their stead.

This done, he proceeded to Arnhem, where the States of Gelderland were in session, appeared before that body, and made a brief announcement of the revolution which he had so succinctly effected in the most considerable town of their province. The Assembly, which seems, like many other assemblies at precisely this epoch, to have had an extraordinary capacity for yielding to gentle violence, made but little resistance to the extreme measures now undertaken by the Stadholder, and not only highly applauded the subjugation of Nymegen, but listened with sympathy to his arguments against the Waartgelders and in favour of the Synod.

Having accomplished so much by a very brief visit to Gelderland, the Prince proceeded, to Overyssel, and had as little difficulty in

bringing over the wavering minds of that province into orthodoxy and obedience. Thus there remained but two provinces out of seven that were still "waartgeldered" and refused to be "synodized."

It was rebellion against rebellion. Maurice and his adherents accused the States' right party of mutiny against himself and the States-General. The States' right party accused the Contra-Remonstrants in the cities of mutiny against the lawful sovereignty of each province.

The oath of the soldiery, since the foundation of the Republic, had been to maintain obedience and fidelity to the States-General, the Stadholder, and the province in which they were garrisoned, and at whose expense they were paid. It was impossible to harmonize such conflicting duties and doctrines. Theory had done its best and its worst. The time was fast approaching, as it always must approach, when fact with its violent besom would brush away the fine-spun cobwebs which had been so long undisturbed.

"I will grind the Advocate and all his party into fine meal," said the Prince on one occasion.

A clever caricature of the time represented a pair of scales hung up in a great hall. In the one was a heap of parchments, gold chains, and magisterial robes; the whole bundle being marked the "holy right of each city." In the other lay a big square, solid, ironclashed volume, marked "Institutes of Calvin." Each scale was respectively watched by Gomarus and by Arminius. The judges, gowned, furred, and ruffed, were looking decorously on, when suddenly the Stadholder, in full military attire, was seen rushing into the apartment and flinging his sword into the scale with the Institutes.

The civic and legal trumpery was of course made to kick the beam.

Maurice had organized his campaign this year against the Advocate and his party as deliberately as he had ever arranged the details of a series of battles and sieges against the Spaniard. And he was proving himself as consummate master in political strife as in the great science of war.

He no longer made any secret of his conviction that Barneveld was a traitor to his country, bought with Spanish gold. There was not the slightest proof for these suspicions, but he asserted them roundly. "The Advocate is travelling straight to Spain," he said to Count Cuylenborg. "But we will see who has got the longest purse."

And as if it had been a part of the campaign, a prearranged diversion to the more direct and general assault on the entrenchments of the States' right party, a horrible personal onslaught was now made from many quarters upon the Advocate. It was an age of pamphleteering, of venomous, virulent, unscrupulous libels. And never even in that age had there been anything to equal the savage attacks upon this great statesman. It moves the gall of an honest man, even after the lapse of two centuries and a half, to turn over those long forgotten pages and mark the depths to which political and theological party spirit could descend. That human creatures can assimilate themselves so closely to the reptile, and to the subtle devil within the reptile, when a party end is to be gained is enough to make the very name of man a term of reproach.

Day by day appeared pamphlets, each one more poisonous than its predecessor. There was hardly a crime that was not laid at the door of Barneveld and all his kindred. The man who had borne a matchlock in early youth against the foreign tyrant in days when unsuccessful rebellion meant martyrdom and torture; who had successfully guided the councils of the infant commonwealth at a period when most of his accusers were in their cradles, and when mistake was ruin to the republic; he on whose strong arm the father of his country had leaned for support; the man who had organized a political system out of chaos; who had laid down the internal laws, negotiated the great indispensable alliances, directed the complicated foreign policy, established the system of national defence, presided over the successful financial administration of a state struggling out of mutiny into national existence; who had rocked the Republic in its cradle and ever borne her in his heart; who had made her name beloved at home and honoured and dreaded abroad; who had been the first, when the great Taciturn had at last fallen a victim to the murderous tyrant of Spain, to place the youthful Maurice in his father's place, and to inspire the whole country with sublime courage to persist rather than falter in pur-

pose after so deadly a blow; who was as truly the founder of the Republic as William had been the author of its independence,— was now denounced as a traitor, a pope, a tyrant, a venal hucksterer of his country's liberties. His family name, which had long been an ancient and knightly one, was defiled and its nobility disputed; his father and mother, sons and daughters, sisters and brothers, accused of every imaginable and unimaginable crime, of murder, incest, robbery, bastardy, fraud, forgery, blasphemy. He had received waggon-loads of Spanish pistoles; he had been paid 120,000 ducats by Spain for negotiating the Truce; he was in secret treaty with Archduke Albert to bring 18,000 Spanish mercenaries across the border to defeat the machinations of Prince Maurice, destroy his life, or drive him from the country; all these foul and bitter charges and a thousand similar ones were rained almost daily upon that grey head.

One day the loose sheets of a more than commonly libellous pamphlet were picked up in the streets of the Hague and placed in the Advocate's hands. It was the work of the drunken notary Danckaerts already mentioned, then resident in Amsterdam, and among the papers thus found was a list of wealthy merchants of that city who had contributed to the expense of its publication. The opposition of Barneveld to the West India Corporation could never be forgiven. The Advocate was notified in this production that he was soon to be summoned to answer for his crimes. The country was weary of him, he was told, and his life was forfeited.

Stung at last beyond endurance by the persistent malice of his enemies, he came before the States of Holland for redress. Upon his remonstrance the author of this vile libel was summoned to answer before the upper tribunal at the Hague for his crime. The city of Amsterdam covered him with the shield '*de non evocando*,' which had so often in cases of less consequence proved of no protective value, and the notary was never punished, but on the contrary after a brief lapse of time rewarded as for a meritorious action.

Meantime, the States of Holland, by formal act, took the name and honour of Barneveld under their immediate protection as a treasure belonging specially to themselves. Heavy penalties were denounced upon the authors and printers of these libellous attacks,

and large rewards offered for their detection. Nothing came, however, of such measures.

On the 24th April the Advocate addressed a frank, dignified, and conciliatory letter to the Prince. The rapid progress of calumny against him had at last alarmed even his steadfast soul, and he thought it best to make a last appeal to the justice and to the clear intellect of William the Silent's son.

"Gracious Prince," he said, "I observe to my greatest sorrow an entire estrangement of your Excellency from me, and I fear lest what was said six months since by certain clerical persons and afterwards by some politicians concerning your dissatisfaction with me, which until now I have not been able to believe, must be true. I declare nevertheless with a sincere heart to have never willingly given cause for any such feeling; having always been your very faithful servant and with God's help hoping as such to die. Ten years ago during the negotiations for the Truce I clearly observed the beginning of this estrangement, but your Excellency will be graciously pleased to remember that I declared to you at that time my upright and sincere intention in these negotiations to promote the service of the country and the interests of your Excellency, and that I nevertheless offered at the time not only to resign all my functions but to leave the country rather than remain in office and in the country to the dissatisfaction of your Excellency."

He then rapidly reviewed the causes which had produced the alienation of which he complained and the melancholy divisions caused by the want of mutual religious toleration in the Provinces; spoke of his efforts to foster a spirit of conciliation on the dread subject of predestination, and referred to the letter of the King of Great Britain deprecating discussion and schism on this subject, and urging that those favourable to the views of the Remonstrants ought not to be persecuted. Referring to the intimate relations which Uytendogaert had so long enjoyed with the Prince, the Advocate alluded to the difficulty he had in believing that his Excellency intended to act in opposition to the efforts of the States of Holland in the cause of mutual toleration, to the manifest detriment of the country and of many of its best and truest patriots and the greater number of the magistrates in all the cities.

He reminded the Prince that all attempts to accommodate these fearful quarrels had been frustrated, and that on his departure the previous year to Utrecht on account of his health he had again offered to resign all his offices and to leave Holland altogether rather than find himself in perpetual opposition to his Excellency.

"I begged you in such case," he said, "to lend your hand to the procuring for me an honourable discharge from My Lords the States, but your Excellency declared that you could in no wise approve such a step and gave me hope that some means of accommodating the dissensions would yet be proposed."

"I went then to Vianen, being much indisposed; thence I repaired to Utrecht to consult my old friend Doctor Saulo Saul, in whose hands I remained six weeks, not being able, as I hoped, to pass my seventieth birthday on the 24th September last in my birthplace, the city of Amersfoort. All this time I heard not one single word or proposal of accommodation. On the contrary it was determined that by a majority vote, a thing never heard of before, it was intended against the solemn resolves of the States of Holland, of Utrecht, and of Overyssel to bring these religious differences before the Assembly of My Lords the States-General, a proceeding directly in the teeth of the Act of Union and other treaties, and before a Synod which people called National, and that meantime every effort was making to discredit all those who stood up for the laws of these Provinces and to make them odious and despicable in the eyes of the common people.

"Especially it was I that was thus made the object of hatred and contempt in their eyes. Hundreds of lies and calumnies, circulated in the form of libels, seditious pamphlets, and lampoons, compelled me to return from Utrecht to the Hague. Since that time I have repeatedly offered my services to your Excellency for the promotion of mutual accommodation and reconciliation of differences, but without success."

He then alluded to the publication with which the country was ringing, 'The Necessary and Living Discourse of a Spanish Counsellor', and which was attributed to his former confidential friend, now become his deadliest foe, ex-Ambassador Francis Aerssens, and warned the Prince that if he chose, which God forbid, to follow the

advice of that seditious libel, nothing but ruin to the beloved Fatherland and its lovers, to the princely house of Orange-Nassau and to the Christian religion could be the issue. "The Spanish government could desire no better counsel," he said, "than this which these fellows give you; to encourage distrust and estrangement between your Excellency and the nobles, the cities, and the magistrates of the land and to propose high and haughty imaginings which are easy enough to write, but most difficult to practise, and which can only enure to the advantage of Spain. Therefore most respectfully I beg your Excellency not to believe these fellows, but to reject their counsels Among them are many malignant hypocrites and ambitious men who are seeking their own profit in these changes of government—many utterly ragged and beggarly fellows and many infamous traitors coming from the provinces which have remained under the dominion of the Spaniard, and who are filled with revenge, envy, and jealousy at the greater prosperity and bloom of these independent States than they find at home.

"I fear," he said in conclusion, "that I have troubled your Excellency too long, but to the fulfilment of my duty and discharge of my conscience I could not be more brief. It saddens me deeply that in recompense for my long and manifold services I am attacked by so many calumnious, lying, seditious, and fraudulent libels, and that these indecencies find their pretext and their food in the evil disposition of your Excellency towards me. And although for one-and-thirty years long I have been able to live down such things with silence, well-doing, and truth, still do I now find myself compelled in this my advanced old age and infirmity to make some utterances in defence of myself and those belonging to me, however much against my heart and inclinations."

He ended by enclosing a copy of the solemn state paper which he was about to lay before the States of Holland in defence of his honour, and subscribed himself the lifelong and faithful servant of the Prince.

The Remonstrance to the States contained a summary review of the political events of his life, which was indeed nothing more nor less than the history of his country and almost of Europe itself during that period, broadly and vividly sketched with the hand of a

master. It was published at once and strengthened the affection of his friends and the wrath of his enemies. It is not necessary to our purpose to reproduce or even analyse the document, the main facts and opinions contained in it being already familiar to the reader. The frankness however with which, in reply to the charges so profusely brought against him of having grown rich by extortion, treason, and corruption, of having gorged himself with plunder at home and bribery from the enemy, of being the great pensioner of Europe and the Marshal d'Ancre of the Netherlands—he alluded to the exact condition of his private affairs and the growth and sources of his revenue, giving, as it were, a kind of schedule of his property, has in it something half humorous, half touching in its simplicity.

He set forth the very slender salaries attached to his high offices of Advocate of Holland, Keeper of the Seals, and other functions. He answered the charge that he always had at his disposition 120,000 florins to bribe foreign agents withal by saying that his whole allowance for extraordinary expenses and trouble in maintaining his diplomatic and internal correspondence was exactly 500 florins yearly. He alluded to the slanders circulated as to his wealth and its sources by those who envied him for his position and hated him for his services.

"But I beg you to believe, My Lords," he continued, "that my property is neither so great nor so small as some people represent it to be.

"In the year '75 I married my wife," he said. "I was pleased with her person. I was likewise pleased with the dowry which was promptly paid over to me, with firm expectation of increase and betterment I acknowledge that forty-three years ago my wife and myself had got together so much of real and personal property that we could live honourably upon it. I had at that time as good pay and practice as any advocate in the courts which brought me in a good 4000 florins a year; there being but eight advocates practising at the time, of whom I was certainly not the one least employed. In the beginning of the year '77 I came into the service of the city of Rotterdam as Pensionary. Upon my salary from that town I was enabled to support my family, having then but two children. Now I can clearly prove that between the years 1577 and 1616 inclu-

sive I have inherited in my own right or that of my wife, from our relatives, for ourselves and our children by lawful succession, more than 400 Holland morgens of land (about 800 acres), more than 2000 florins yearly of redeemable rents, a good house in the city of Delft, some houses in the open country, and several thousand florins in ready money. I have likewise reclaimed in the course of the past forty years out of the water and swamps by dyking more than an equal number of acres to those inherited, and have bought and sold property during the same period to the value of 800,000 florins; having sometimes bought 100,000 florins' worth and sold 60,000 of it for 160,000, and so on."

It was evident that the thrifty Advocate during his long life had understood how to turn over his money, and it was not necessary to imagine "waggon-loads of Spanish pistoles" and bribes on a gigantic scale from the hereditary enemy in order to account for a reasonable opulence on his part.

"I have had nothing to do with trade," he continued, "it having been the custom of my ancestors to risk no money except where the plough goes. In the great East India Company however, which with four years of hard work, public and private, I have helped establish, in order to inflict damage on the Spaniards and Portuguese, I have adventured somewhat more than 5000 florins Now even if my condition be reasonably good, I think no one has reason to envy me. Nevertheless I have said it in your Lordships' Assembly, and I repeat it solemnly on this occasion, that I have pondered the state of my affairs during my recent illness and found that in order to leave my children unencumbered estates I must sell property to the value of 60,000 or 70,000 florins. This I would rather do than leave the charge to my children. That I should have got thus behindhand through bad management, I beg your Highnesses not to believe. But I have inherited, with the succession of four persons whose only heir I was and with that of others to whom I was co-heir, many burthens as well. I have bought property with encumbrances, and I have dyked and bettered several estates with borrowed money. Now should it please your Lordships to institute a census and valuation of the property of your subjects, I for one should be very well pleased. For I know full well that those who in the estimates of capital in the year 1599 rated themselves at 50,000 or 60,000 florins now

may boast of having twice as much property as I have. Yet in that year out of patriotism I placed myself on the list of those liable for the very highest contributions, being assessed on a property of 200,000 florins."

The Advocate alluded with haughty contempt to the notorious lies circulated by his libellers in regard to his lineage, as if the vast services and unquestioned abilities of such a statesman would not have illustrated the obscurest origin. But as he happened to be of ancient and honourable descent, he chose to vindicate his position in that regard.

"I was born in the city of Amersfoort," he said, "by the father's side an Oldenbarneveld; an old and noble race, from generation to generation steadfast and true; who have been duly summoned for many hundred years to the assembly of the nobles of their province as they are to this day. By my mother's side I am sprung from the ancient and knightly family of Amersfoort, which for three or four hundred years has been known as foremost among the nobles of Utrecht in all state affairs and as landed proprietors."

It is only for the sake of opening these domestic and private lights upon an historical character whose life was so pre-eminently and almost exclusively a public one that we have drawn some attention to this stately defence made by the Advocate of his birth, life, and services to the State. The public portions of the state paper belong exclusively to history, and have already been sufficiently detailed.

The letter to Prince Maurice was delivered into his hands by Cornelis van der Myle, son-in-law of Barneveld.

No reply to it was ever sent, but several days afterwards the Stadholder called from his open window to van der Myle, who happened to be passing by. He then informed him that he neither admitted the premises nor the conclusion of the Advocate's letter, saying that many things set down in it were false. He furthermore told him a story of a certain old man who, having in his youth invented many things and told them often for truth, believed them when he came to old age to be actually true and was ever ready to stake his salvation upon them. Whereupon he shut the window and left van der Myle to make such application of the parable as he

thought proper, vouchsafing no further answer to Barneveld's communication.

Dudley Carleton related the anecdote to his government with much glee, but it may be doubted whether this bold way of giving the lie to a venerable statesman through his son-in-law would have been accounted as triumphant argumentation anywhere out of a barrack.

As for the Remonstrance to the States of Holland, although most respectfully received in that assembly except by the five opposition cities, its immediate effect on the public was to bring down a fresh "snow storm"—to use the expression of a contemporary—of pamphlets, libels, caricatures, and broadsheets upon the head of the Advocate. In every bookseller's and print shop window in all the cities of the country, the fallen statesman was represented in all possible ludicrous, contemptible, and hateful shapes, while hags and blind beggars about the streets screeched filthy and cursing ballads against him, even at his very doors.

The effect of energetic, uncompromising calumny has rarely been more strikingly illustrated than in the case of this statesman. Blackened daily all over by a thousand trowels, the purest and noblest character must have been defiled, and it is no wonder that the incrustation upon the Advocate's fame should have lasted for two centuries and a half. It may perhaps endure for as many more: Not even the vile Marshal d'Ancre, who had so recently perished, was more the mark of obloquy in a country which he had dishonoured, flouted, and picked to the bone than was Barneveld in a commonwealth which he had almost created and had served faithfully from youth to old age. It was even the fashion to compare him with Concini in order to heighten the wrath of the public, as if any parallel between the ignoble, foreign paramour of a stupid and sensual queen, and the great statesman, patriot, and jurist of whom civilization will be always proud, could ever enter any but an idiot's brain.

Meantime the Stadholder, who had so successfully handled the Assembly of Gelderland and Overysse, now sailed across the Zuiderzee from Kampen to Amsterdam. On his approach to the stately northern Venice, standing full of life and commercial bustle upon its

vast submerged forest of Norwegian pines, he was met by a fleet of yachts and escorted through the water gates of the into the city.

Here an immense assemblage of vessels of every class, from the humble gondola to the bulky East Indianian and the first-rate ship of war, gaily bannered with the Orange colours and thronged from deck to topmast by enthusiastic multitudes, was waiting to receive their beloved stadholder. A deafening cannonade saluted him on his approach. The Prince was escorted to the Square or Dam, where on a high scaffolding covered with blue velvet in front of the stately mediaeval town-hall the burgomasters and board of magistrates in their robes of office were waiting to receive him. The strains of that most inspiriting and suggestive of national melodies, the 'Wilhelmus van Nassouwen,' rang through the air, and when they were silent, the chief magistrate poured forth a very eloquent and tedious oration, and concluded by presenting him with a large orange in solid gold; Maurice having succeeded to the principality a few months before on the death of his half-brother Philip William.

The "Blooming in Love," as one of the Chambers of "Rhetoric " in which the hard-handed but half-artistic mechanics and shopkeepers of the Netherlands loved to disport themselves was called, then exhibited upon an opposite scaffold a magnificent representation of Jupiter astride upon an eagle and banding down to the Stadholder as if from the clouds that same principality. Nothing could be neater or more mythological.

The Prince and his escort, sitting in the windows of the town-hall, the square beneath being covered with 3000 or 4000 burgher militia in full uniform, with orange plumes in their hats and orange scarves on their breasts, saw still other sights. A gorgeous procession set forth by the "Netherlandish Academy," another chamber of rhetoric, and filled with those emblematic impersonations so dear to the hearts of Netherlanders, had been sweeping through all the canals and along the splendid quays of the city. The Maid of Holland, twenty feet high, led the van, followed by the counterfeit presentment of each of her six sisters. An orange tree full of flowers and fruit was conspicuous in one barge, while in another, strangely and lugubriously enough, lay the murdered William the Silent in the

arms of his wife and surrounded by his weeping sons and daughters all attired in white satin.

In the evening the Netherland Academy, to improve the general hilarity, and as if believing exhibitions of murder the most appropriate means of welcoming the Prince, invited him to a scenic representation of the assassination of Count Florence V. of Holland by Gerrit van Velsen and other nobles. There seemed no especial reason for the selection, unless perhaps the local one; one of the perpetrators of this crime against an ancient predecessor of William the Silent in the sovereignty of Holland having been a former lord proprietor of Amsterdam and the adjacent territories, Gysbrecht van Amatel.

Maurice returned to the Hague. Five of the seven provinces were entirely his own. Utrecht too was already wavering, while there could be no doubt of the warm allegiance to himself of the important commercial metropolis of Holland, the only province in which Barneveld's influence was still paramount.

Owing to the watchfulness and distrust of Barneveld, which had never faltered, Spain had not secured the entire control of the disputed duchies, but she had at least secured the head of a venerated saint. "The bargain is completed for the head of the glorious Saint Lawrence, which you know I so much desire," wrote Philip triumphantly to the Archduke Albert. He had, however, not got it for nothing.

The Abbot of Glamart in Julich, then in possession of that treasure, had stipulated before delivering it that if at any time the heretics or other enemies should destroy the monastery his Majesty would establish them in Spanish Flanders and give them the same revenues as they now enjoyed in Julich. Count Herman van den Berg was to give a guarantee to that effect.

Meantime the long controversy in the duchies having tacitly come to a standstill upon the basis of *'uti possidetis'*, the Spanish government had leisure in the midst of their preparation for the general crusade upon European heresy to observe and enjoy the internal religious dissensions in their revolted provinces. Although they had concluded the convention with them as with countries over which they had no pretensions, they had never at heart allowed more vir-

tue to the conjunction "as," which really contained the essence of the treaty, than grammatically belonged to it. Spain still chose to regard the independence of the Seven Provinces as a pleasant fiction to be dispelled when, the truce having expired by its own limitation, she should resume, as she fully meant to do, her sovereignty over all the seventeen Netherlands, the United as well as the obedient. Thus at any rate the question of state rights or central sovereignty would be settled by a very summary process. The Spanish ambassador was wroth, as may well be supposed, when the agent of the rebel provinces received in London the rank, title, and recognition of ambassador. Gondemar at least refused to acknowledge Noel de Caron as his diplomatic equal or even as his colleague, and was vehement in his protestations on the subject. But James, much as he dreaded the Spanish envoy and fawned upon his master, was not besotted enough to comply with these demands at the expense of his most powerful ally, the Republic of the Netherlands. The Spanish king however declared his ambassador's proceedings to be in exact accordance with his instructions. He was sorry, he said, if the affair had caused discontent to the King of Great Britain; he intended in all respects to maintain the Treaty of Truce of which his Majesty had been one of the guarantors, but as that treaty had but a few more years to run, after which he should be reinstated in his former right of sovereignty over all the Netherlands, he entirely justified the conduct of Count Gondemar.

It may well be conceived that, as the years passed by, as the period of the Truce grew nearer and the religious disputes became every day more envenomed, the government at Madrid should look on the tumultuous scene with saturnine satisfaction. There was little doubt now, they thought, that the Provinces, sick of their rebellion and that fancied independence which had led them into a whirlpool of political and religious misery, and convinced of their incompetence to govern themselves, would be only too happy to seek the forgiving arms of their lawful sovereign. Above all they must have learned that their great heresy had carried its chastisement with it, that within something they called a Reformed Church other heresies had been developed which demanded condign punishment at the hands of that new Church, and that there could be neither rest for

them in this world nor salvation in the next except by returning to the bosom of their ancient mother.

Now was the time, so it was thought, to throw forward a strong force of Jesuits as skirmishers into the Provinces by whom the way would be opened for the reconquest of the whole territory.

"By the advices coming to us continually from thence," wrote the King of Spain to Archduke Albert, "we understand that the disquiets and differences continue in Holland on matters relating to their sects, and that from this has resulted the conversion of many to the Catholic religion. So it has been taken into consideration whether it would not be expedient that some fathers of the company of Jesuits be sent secretly from Rome to Holland, who should negotiate concerning the conversion of that people. Before taking a resolution, I have thought best to give an account of this matter to your Highness. I should be glad if you would inform me what priests are going to Holland, what fruits they yield, and what can be done for the continuance of their labours. Please to advise me very particularly together with any suggestions that may occur to you in this matter."

The Archduke, who was nearer the scene, was not so sure that the old religion was making such progress as his royal nephew or those who spoke in his name believed. At any rate, if it were not rapidly gaining ground, it would be neither for want of discord among the Protestants nor for lack of Jesuits to profit by it.

"I do not understand," said he in reply, "nor is it generally considered certain that from the differences and disturbances that the Hollanders are having among themselves there has resulted the conversion of any of them to our blessed Catholic faith, because their disputes are of certain points concerning which there are different opinions within their sect. There has always been a goodly number of priests here, the greater part of whom belong to the Company. They are very diligent and fervent, and the Catholics derive much comfort from them. To send more of them would do more harm than good. It might be found out, and then they would perhaps be driven out of Holland or even chastised. So it seems better to leave things as they are for the present."

The Spanish government was not discouraged however, but was pricking up its ears anew at strange communications it was receiv-

ing from the very bosom of the council of state in the Netherlands. This body, as will be remembered, had been much opposed to Barneveld and to the policy pursued under his leadership by the States of Holland. Some of its members were secretly Catholic and still more secretly disposed to effect a revolution in the government, the object of which should be to fuse the United Provinces with the obedient Netherlands in a single independent monarchy to be placed under the sceptre of the son of Philip III.

A paper containing the outlines of this scheme had been sent to Spain, and the King at once forwarded it in cipher to the Archduke at Brussels for his opinion and co-operation.

"You will see," he said, "the plan which a certain person zealous for the public good has proposed for reducing the Netherlanders to my obedience. . . . You will please advise with Count Frederic van den Berg and let me know with much particularity and profound secrecy what is thought, what is occurring, and the form in which this matter ought to be negotiated, and the proper way to make it march."

Unquestionably the paper was of grave importance. It informed the King of Spain that some principal personages in the United Netherlands, members of the council of state, were of opinion that if his Majesty or Archduke Albert should propose peace, it could be accomplished at that moment more easily than ever before. They had arrived at the conviction that no assistance was to be obtained from the King of France, who was too much weakened by tumults and sedition at home, while nothing good could be expected from the King of England. The greater part of the Province of Gelderland, they said, with all Friesland, Utrecht, Groningen, and Overijssel were inclined to a permanent peace. Being all of them frontier provinces, they were constantly exposed to the brunt of hostilities. Besides this, the war expenses alone would now be more than 3,000,000 florins a year. Thus the people were kept perpetually harassed, and although evil-intentioned persons approved these burthens under the pretence that such heavy taxation served to free them from the tyranny of Spain, those of sense and quality reprovved them and knew the contrary to be true. "Many here know," continued these traitors in the heart of the state council, "how good it