

of four thousand horse and forty companies of foot, to be at the disposal of the league. This negotiation was conducted under the eye, and, as it seems, partly through the agency, of his brother William.<sup>33</sup> From this moment, therefore, if not before, the prince of Orange may be identified with the party who were prepared to maintain their rights by an appeal to arms.

These movements of the league could not be kept so close but that they came to the knowledge of Margaret. Indeed, she had her secret agents at St. Trond, who put her in possession of whatever was done, or even designed, by the confederates.<sup>34</sup> This was fully exhibited in her correspondence with Philip, while she again called his attention to the forlorn condition of the government, without men, or money, or the means to raise it.<sup>35</sup> "The secretaries go armed," she writes, "and are organizing their forces. The league is with them. There remains nothing but that they should band together, and sack the towns, villages, and churches, of which I am in marvellous great fear."<sup>36</sup>—Her fears had gifted her with the spirit of prophecy. She implores her brother, if he will not come himself to Flanders, to convoke the states-

<sup>33</sup> See the letter of Louis to his brother dated July 26. 1566, *Ibid.*, p. 178.

<sup>34</sup> The person who seems to have principally served her in this respectable office was a "doctor of law," one of the chief counsellors of the confederates. Count Megen, her agent on the occasion, bribed the doctor by the promise of a seat in the council of Brabant. *Correspondance de Philippe II.*, tom. i. p. 435.

<sup>35</sup> "Le tout est en telle désordre,"

she says in one of her letters, "que, en la pluspart du país, l'on est sans loy, foy, ni roy." *Correspondance de Marguerite d'Autriche*, p. 91.

Anarchy could not be better described in so few words.

<sup>36</sup> "Il ne reste plus sinon qu'ils s'assemblent et que, jointcs ensemble, ils se livrent à faire quelque sac d'églises, villes, bourgs, ou país, de quoy je suis en merveilleusement grande crainte." *Correspondance de Marguerite d'Autriche*, p. 121.

general, quoting the words of Egmont, that, unless summoned by the king, they would assemble of themselves, to devise some remedy for the miseries of the land, and prevent its otherwise inevitable ruin.<sup>37</sup> At length came back the royal answer to Margaret's reiterated appeals. It had at least one merit, that of being perfectly explicit.

Montigny, on reaching Madrid, as we have seen, had ready access to Philip. Both he and his companion, the Marquis of Bergen, were allowed to witness, it would seem, the deliberations of the council of state, when the subject of their mission was discussed. Among the members of that body, at this time, may be noticed the Duke of Alva; Ruy Gomez de Silva, Prince of Eboli, who divided with Alva the royal favour; Figueroa, count of Feria, a man of an acute and penetrating intellect, formerly ambassador to England, in Queen Mary's time; and Luis de Quixada, the major-domo of Charles the Fifth. Besides these there were two or three councillors from the Netherlands, among whose names we meet with that of Hopper, the near friend and associate of Viglius. There was great unanimity in the opinions of this loyal body, where none, it will be readily believed, was disposed to lift his voice in favour of reform. The course of events in the Netherlands, they agreed, plainly showed a deliberate and well-concerted scheme of the great nobles to secure to themselves the whole power of the country. The first step was the removal of Granvelle, a formidable obstacle in their path.

<sup>37</sup> Correspondance de Philippe II., tom. i p. 432.

Then came the attempt to concentrate the management of affairs in the hands of the council of state. This was followed by assaults on the Inquisition and the edicts, as the things most obnoxious to the people; by the cry in favour of the states-general; by the league, the Compromise, the petitions, the religious assemblies; and, finally, by the present mission to Spain. All was devised by the great nobles, as part of a regular system of hostility to the crown, the real object of which was to overturn existing institutions, and to build up their own authority on the ruins. While the council regarded these proceedings with the deepest indignation, they admitted the necessity of bending to the storm, and under present circumstances judged it prudent for the monarch to make certain specified concessions to the people of the Netherlands. Above all, they earnestly besought Philip, if he would still remain master of this portion of his empire, to defer no longer his visit to the country.<sup>38</sup>

The discussions occupied many and long-protracted sittings of the council; and Philip deeply pondered, in his own closet, on the results, after the discussions were concluded. Even those most familiar with his habits were amazed at the long delay of his decision in the present critical circumstances.<sup>39</sup> The haughty mind of the monarch found it difficult to bend to the required concessions. At length his answer came.

<sup>38</sup> The fullest account of the doings of the council is given by Hopper, one of its members. *Recueil et Mémorial*, pp. 81-87.

<sup>39</sup> "Ceux du conseil d'Etat sont

étonnés du délai que le Roi met à répondre." Montigny to Margaret, July 21. *Correspondance de Philippe II.*, tom. i. p. 434.

The letter containing it was addressed to his sister, and was dated on the thirty-first of July, 1566, at the Wood of Segovia, — the same place from which he had dictated his memorable despatches the year preceding. Philip began, as usual, with expressing his surprise at the continued troubles of the country. He was not aware that any rigorous procedure could be charged on the tribunals, or that any change had been made in the laws since the days of Charles the Fifth. Still, as it was much more agreeable to his nature to proceed with clemency and love than with severity<sup>40</sup>, he would conform as far as possible to the desires of his vassals.

He was content that the Inquisition should be abolished in the Netherlands, and in its place be substituted the inquisitorial powers vested in the bishops. As to the edicts, he was not pleased with the plan of Moderation devised by Margaret; nor did he believe that any plan would satisfy the people short of perfect toleration. Still, he would have his sister prepare another scheme, having due reference to the maintenance of the Catholic faith and his own authority. This must be submitted to him, and he would do all that he possibly could in the matter.<sup>41</sup> Lastly, in respect to a general pardon, as he abhorred rigor

<sup>40</sup> "Pour l'inclination naturelle que j'ay toujours eu de traicter mes vassaulx et subjects plus par voye d'amour et clémence, que de crainte et de rigeur, je me suis accommodé à tout ce que m'a esté possible." *Correspondance de Marguerite d'Autriche*, p. 100.

<sup>41</sup> "Ay treuvé convenir et nécessaire que l'on conçoive certaine aultre forme de modération de placcart par delà, ayant égard que la sainte foy catholique et mon autorité soyent gardées . . . . et y feray tout ce que possible sera." *Ibid.*, p. 103.



where any other course would answer the end<sup>42</sup>, he was content that it should be extended to whomever Margaret thought deserving of it, — always excepting those already condemned, and under a solemn pledge, moreover, that the nobles would abandon the league, and henceforth give their hearty support to the government.

Four days after the date of these despatches, on the second of August, Philip again wrote to his sister, touching the summoning of the states-general, which she had so much pressed. He had given the subject, he said, a most patient consideration, and was satisfied that she had done right in refusing to call them together. She must not consent to it. He never would consent to it.<sup>43</sup> He knew too well to what it must inevitably lead. Yet he would not have her report his decision in the absolute and peremptory terms in which he had given it to her, but as intended merely for the present occasion; so that the people might believe she was still looking for something of a different tenor, and cherish the hope of obtaining their object at some future day!<sup>44</sup>

The king also wrote, that he should remit a sufficient sum to Margaret to enable her to take into her pay a body of ten thousand German foot and three thousand horse, on which she could rely in case of extremity. He further wrote letters with his own

<sup>42</sup> "N'abhorrissant riens tant que la voye de rigeur." Ibid., ubi supra.

<sup>43</sup> "Y assí vos no lo consentais, ni yo lo consentiré tan poco." Correspondance de Philippe II., tom. i. p. 439.

<sup>44</sup> "Pero no conviene que esto se entienda allá, ni que vos teneis esta órden mia, sino es para lo de agora, pero que la esperais para adelante, no desesperando ellos para entonces dello." Ibid., ubi supra.

hand to the governors of the provinces and the principal cities, calling on them to support the regent in her efforts to enforce the laws and maintain order throughout the country.<sup>45</sup>

Such were the concessions granted by Philip, at the eleventh hour, to his subjects of the Netherlands!—concessions wrung from him by hard necessity; doled out, as it were, like the scanty charity of the miser,—too scanty and too late to serve the object for which it is intended. But slight as these concessions were, and crippled by conditions which rendered them nearly nugatory, it will hardly be believed that he was not even sincere in making them! This is proved by a revelation lately made of a curious document in the Archives of Simancas.

While the ink was scarcely dry on the despatches to Margaret, Philip summoned a notary into his presence, and before the duke of Alva and two other persons, jurists, solemnly protested that the authority he had given to the regent in respect to a general pardon was not of his own free will. “He therefore did not feel bound by it, but reserved to himself the right to punish the guilty, and especially the authors and abettors of sedition in the Low Countries.”<sup>46</sup>—We feel ourselves at once transported into the depths of the Middle Ages. This feeling will not be changed

<sup>45</sup> Correspondance de Marguerite d'Autriche, pp. 106. 114.

<sup>46</sup> “Comme il ne l'a pas fait librement, ni spontanément, il n'entend être lié par cette autorisation, mais au contraire il se réserve de punir les coupables, et principalement ceux qui ont été les auteurs

et fauteurs des séditions.” Correspondance de Philippe II., tom. i. p. 443.

One would have been glad to see the original text of this protest, which is in Latin, instead of M. Gachard's abstract.

when we learn the rest of the story of this admirable piece of kingcraft.

The chair of St. Peter, at this time, was occupied by Pius the Fifth, a pope who had assumed the same name as his predecessor, and who displayed a spirit of fierce, indeed frantic intolerance, surpassing even that of Paul the Fourth. At the accession of the new pope there were three Italian scholars, inhabitants of Milan, Venice, and Tuscany, eminent for their piety, who had done great service to the cause of letters in Italy, but who were suspected of too liberal opinions in matters of faith. Pius the Fifth demanded that these scholars should all be delivered into his hands. The three states had the meanness to comply. The unfortunate men were delivered up to the Holy Office, condemned, and burned at the stake. This was one of the first acts of the new pontificate. It proclaimed to Christendom that Pius the Fifth was the uncompromising foe of heresy, the pope of the Inquisition. Every subsequent act of his reign served to confirm his claim to this distinction.

Yet, as far as the interests of Catholicism were concerned, a character like that of Pius the Fifth must be allowed to have suited the times. During the latter part of the fifteenth century and the beginning of the sixteenth, the throne had been filled by a succession of pontiffs notorious for their religious indifference, and their carelessness, too often profligacy, of life. This, as is well known, was one of the prominent causes of the Reformation. A reaction followed. It was necessary to save the Church. A race of men succeeded, of ascetic temper, remarkable

for their austere virtues, but without a touch of sympathy for the joys or sorrows of their species, and wholly devoted to the great work of regenerating the fallen Church. As the influence of the former popes had opened a career to the Reformation, the influence of these latter popes tended materially to check it; and long before the close of the sixteenth century the boundary line was defined, which it has never since been allowed to pass.

Pius, as may be imagined, beheld with deep anxiety the spread of the new religion in the Low Countries. He wrote to the duchess of Parma, exhorting her to resist to the utmost, and professing his readiness to supply her, if need were, with both men and money. To Philip he also wrote, conjuring him not to falter in the good cause, and to allow no harm to the Catholic faith, but to march against his rebellious vassals at the head of his army, and wash out the stain of heresy in the blood of the heretic.<sup>47</sup>

<sup>47</sup> Strada, *De Bello Belgico*, tom. i. p. 236.

Among those who urged the king to violent measures, no one was so importunate as Fray Lorenzo de Villacancio, an Augustin monk, who distinguished himself by the zeal and intrepidity with which he ventured into the strongholds of the Reformers, and openly denounced their doctrines. Philip, acquainted with the uncompromising temper of the man, and his devotion to the Catholic Church, employed him both as an agent and an adviser in regard to the affairs of the Low Countries, where Fray Lorenzo was staying in the earlier period of the troubles. Many of the friar's letters to the king are still preserved in Simancas, and astonish one by the boldness of their

criticisms on the conduct of the ministers, and even of the monarch himself, whom Lorenzo openly accuses of a timid policy towards the Reformers.

In a memorial on the state of the country, prepared, at Philip's suggestion, in the beginning of 1566, Fray Lorenzo urges the necessity of the most rigorous measures towards the Protestants in the Netherlands. "Since your majesty holds the sword which God has given to you, with the divine power over our lives, let it be drawn from the scabbard, and plunged in the blood of the heretics, if you do not wish that the blood of Jesus Christ, shed by these barbarians, and the blood of the innocent Catholics whom they have oppressed, should

The king now felt it incumbent on him to explain to the holy father his late proceedings. This he did through Requesens, his ambassador at the papal court. The minister was to inform his holiness that Philip would not have moved in this matter without his advice, had there been time for it. But perhaps it was better as it was; for the abolition of the Inquisition in the Low Countries could not take effect, after all, unless sanctioned by the pope, by whose authority it had been established. This, however, was *to be said in confidence*.<sup>48</sup> As to the edicts, Pius might be assured that his majesty would never approve of any scheme which favored the guilty by diminishing in any degree the penalties of their crimes. This also *was to be considered as secret*.<sup>49</sup> Lastly, his holiness

cry aloud to Heaven for vengeance on the sacred head of your majesty! . . . The holy king David showed no pity for the enemies of God. He slew them, sparing neither man nor woman. Moses and his brother, in a single day, destroyed three thousand of the children of Israel. An angel, in one night, put to death more than sixty thousand enemies of the Lord. Your majesty is a king, like David; like Moses, a captain of the people of Jehovah; an angel of the Lord,—for so the Scriptures style the kings and captains of his people;—and these heretics are the enemies of the living God!" And in the same strain of fiery and fanatical eloquence he continues to invoke the vengeance of Philip on the heads of his unfortunate subjects in the Netherlands.

That the ravings of this hard-hearted bigot were not distasteful to Philip may be inferred from the fact that he ordered a copy of his memorial to be placed in the hands

of Alva, on his departure for the Low Countries. It appears that he had some thoughts of sending Fray Lorenzo to join the duke there,—a project which received little encouragement from the latter, who probably did not care to have so meddlesome a person as this frantic friar to watch his proceedings.

An interesting notice of this remarkable man is to be found in Gachard, *Correspondance de Philippe II.*, tom. ii., Rapport, pp. xvi.—l.

<sup>48</sup> "Y por la priesa que dieron en esto, no ubo tiempo de consultarlo á Su Santidad, como fuera justo, y quiza avra sido así mejor, pues no vale nada, sino quitandola Su Santidad que es que la pone; pero en esto conviene que aya el secreto que puede considerar." *Correspondance de Philippe II.*, tom. i. p. 445.

<sup>49</sup> "Y en esto conviene el mismo secreto que en lo de arriba."—*Ibid.*, ubi supra.

need not be scandalized by the grant of a general pardon, since it referred only to what concerned the king personally, where he had a right to grant it. In fine, the pope might rest assured that the king would consent to nothing that could prejudice the service of God or the interests of religion. He deprecated force, as that would involve the ruin of the country. Still, he would march in person, without regard to his own peril, and employ force, though it should cost the ruin of the provinces, but he would bring his vassals to submission. For he would sooner lose a hundred lives, and every rood of empire, than reign a lord over heretics.<sup>50</sup>

Thus all the concessions of Philip, not merely his promises of grace, but those of abolishing the Inquisition and mitigating the edicts, were to go for nothing,—mere words, to amuse the people until some effectual means could be decided on. The king must be allowed, for once at least, to have spoken with candor. There are few persons who would not have shrunk from acknowledging to their own hearts that they were acting on so deliberate a system of perfidy as Philip thus confided in his correspondence with another. Indeed, he seems to have regarded the pope in the light of his confessor, to whom he was to unburden his bosom as frankly as if he had been in the confessional. The shrift was not likely to bring down a heavy penance from one who doubtless

These injunctions of secrecy are interpolations in the handwriting of the "prudent" monarch himself.

<sup>50</sup> "Perderé todos mis estados, y

cien vidas que tuviese, porque yo no pienso ni quiero ser señor de hereges." *Ibid.*, p. 446.

held to the orthodox maxim of "No faith to be kept with heretics."

The result of these royal concessions was what might have been expected. Crippled as they were by conditions, they were regarded in the Low Countries with distrust, not to say contempt. In fact, the point at which Philip had so slowly and painfully arrived had been long since passed in the onward march of the revolution. The men of the Netherlands now talked much more of recompense than of pardon. By a curious coincidence, the thirty-first of July, the day on which the king wrote his last despatches from Segovia, was precisely the date of those which Margaret sent to him from Brussels, giving the particulars of the recent troubles, of the meeting at St. Trond, the demand for a guaranty, and for an immediate summons of the legislature.

But the fountain of royal grace had been completely drained by the late efforts. Philip's reply at this time was prompt and to the point. As to the guaranty, he said, that was superfluous when he had granted a general pardon. For the states-general, there was no need to alter his decision now, since he was so soon to be present in the country.<sup>51</sup>

This visit of the king to the Low Countries, respecting which so much was said and so little was done, seems to have furnished some amusement to the wits of the court. The prince of Asturias, Don Carlos,

<sup>51</sup> "Et, au regard de la convocation des dictz Estats généraulx, comme je vous ay escript mon intention, je ne treuve qu'il y a matière pour la changer ne qu'il conviengne

aucunement qu'elle se face en mon absence, mesmes comme je suis si prest de mon parlement." Correspondance de Marguerite d'Autriche, p. 165.

scribbled one day on the cover of a blank book, as its title, "The Great and Admirable Voyages of King Philip;" and within, for the contents, he wrote, "From Madrid to the Pardo, from the Pardo to the Escorial, from the Escorial to Aranjuez," &c., &c.<sup>52</sup> This jest of the graceless son had an edge to it. We are not told how far it was relished by his royal father.

<sup>52</sup> Brantôme, Œuvres, tom. iii. p. 321.



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## CHAPTER XII.

## THE ICONOCLASTS.

Cathedral of Antwerp sacked.—Sacriligious Outrages.—Alarm at Brussels.—Churches granted to Reformers.—Margaret repents her Concessions.—Feeling at Madrid.—Sagacity of Orange.—His Religious Opinions.

1566.

WHILE Philip was thus tardily coming to concessions which even then were not sincere, an important crisis had arrived in the affairs of the Netherlands. In the earlier stages of the troubles, all orders, the nobles, the commons, even the regent, had united in the desire to obtain the removal of certain abuses, especially the Inquisition and the edicts. But this movement, in which the Catholic joined with the Protestant, had far less reference to the interests of religion than to the personal rights of the individual. Under the protection thus afforded, however, the Reformation struck deep root in the soil. It flourished still more under the favor shown to it by the confederates, who, as we have seen, did not scruple to guaranty security of religious worship to some of the sectaries who demanded it.

But the element which contributed most to the success of the new religion was the public preachings.

These in the Netherlands were what the Jacobin clubs were in France, or the secret societies in Germany and Italy,—an obvious means for bringing together such as were pledged to a common hostility to existing institutions, and thus affording them an opportunity for consulting on their grievances, and for concerting the best means of redress. The direct object of these meetings, it is true, was to listen to the teachings of the minister. But that functionary, far from confining himself to spiritual exercises, usually wandered to more exciting themes, as the corruptions of the Church and the condition of the land. He rarely failed to descant on the forlorn circumstances of himself and his flock, condemned thus stealthily to herd together like a band of outlaws, with ropes, as it were, about their necks, and to seek out some solitary spot in which to glorify the Lord, while their enemies, in all the pride of a dominant religion, could offer up their devotions openly and without fear, in magnificent temples. The preacher inveighed bitterly against the richly beneficed clergy of the rival Church, whose lives of pampered ease too often furnished an indifferent commentary on the doctrines they inculcated. His wrath was kindled by the pompous ceremonial of the Church of Rome, so dazzling and attractive to its votaries, but which the Reformer sourly contrasted with the naked simplicity of the Protestant service. Of all abominations, however, the greatest in his eyes was the worship of images, which he compared to the idolatry that in ancient times had so often brought down the vengeance of Jehovah on the nations of Palestine; and he called on his hearers, not merely

to remove idolatry from their hearts, but the idols from their sight.<sup>1</sup> It was not wonderful that, thus stimulated by their spiritual leaders, the people should be prepared for scenes similar to those enacted by the Reformers in France and in Scotland ; or that Margaret, aware of the popular feeling, should have predicted such an outbreak. At length it came, and on a scale and with a degree of violence not surpassed either by the Huguenots or the disciples of Knox.

On the fourteenth of August, the day before the festival of the Assumption of the Virgin, a mob, some three hundred in number, armed with clubs, axes, and other implements of destruction, broke into the churches around St. Omer, in the province of Flanders, overturned the images, defaced the ornaments, and in a short time demolished whatever had any value or beauty in the buildings. Growing bolder from the impunity which attended their movements, they next proceeded to Ypres, and had the audacity to break into the cathedral, and deal with it in the same ruthless manner. Strengthened by the accession of other miscreants from the various towns, they proceeded along the banks of the Lys, and fell upon the churches of Menin, Comines, and other places on its borders. The excitement now spread over the country. Everywhere the populace was in arms. Churches, chapels, and convents were involved in indiscriminate ruin. The storm, after sweeping over Flanders, and desolating the flourishing cities of

<sup>1</sup> "Accendunt animos Ministri, fugienda non animo modò, sed et corpore idola: eradicari, extirpari tantam summi Dei contumeliam oportere affirmant." Vander Haer, *De Initiiis Tumultuum*, p. 236.

Valenciennes and Tournay, descended on Brabant. Antwerp, the great commercial capital of the country, was its first mark.<sup>2</sup>

The usual population of the town happened to be swelled at this time by an influx of strangers from the neighboring country, who had come up to celebrate the great festival of the Assumption of the Virgin. Fortunately, the prince of Orange was in the place, and by his presence prevented any molestation to the procession, except what arose from the occasional groans and hisses of the more zealous spectators among the Protestants. The priests, however, on their return, had the discretion to deposit the image in the chapel, instead of the conspicuous station usually assigned to it in the cathedral, to receive there during the coming week the adoration of the faithful.

On the following day, unluckily, the prince was recalled to Brussels. In the evening some boys, who had found their way into the church, called out to the Virgin, demanding "why little Mary had gone so early to her nest, and whether she were afraid to show her face in public."<sup>3</sup> This was followed by one of the party mounting into the pulpit, and there mimicking the tones and gestures of the Catholic preacher. An honest waterman who was present, a zealous son of the Church, scandalized by this insult to his religion,

<sup>2</sup> Strada, *De Bello Belgico*, tom. i. pp. 250—252.—Vander Haer, *De Initiis Tumultuum*, p. 232. et seq.—Hopper, *Recueil et Mémoires*, p. 96.—*Correspondance de Marguerite d'Autriche*, pp. 183. 185.

<sup>3</sup> "Si Mariette avait peur, qu'elle se retirât sitôt en son nid." *Correspondance de Guillaume le Taciturne*, tom. ii., Préface, p. lii.

sprang into the pulpit, and endeavored to dislodge the usurper. The lad resisted. His comrades came to his rescue; and a struggle ensued, which ended in both the parties being expelled from the building by the officers.<sup>4</sup> This scandalous proceeding, it may be thought, should have put the magistrates of the city on their guard, and warned them to take some measures of defence for the cathedral. But the admonition was not heeded.

On the following day a considerable number of the reformed party entered the building, and were allowed to continue there after vespers, when the rest of the congregation had withdrawn. Left in possession, their first act was to break forth into one of the Psalms of David. The sound of their own voices seemed to rouse them to fury. Before the chant had died away, they rushed forward as by a common impulse, broke open the doors of the chapel, and dragged forth the image of the Virgin. Some called on her to cry, "*Vivent les Gueux!*" while others tore off her embroidered robes, and rolled the dumb idol in the dust, amidst the shouts of the spectators.

This was the signal for havoc. The rioters dispersed in all directions on the work of destruction. Nothing escaped their rage. High above the great altar was an image of the Saviour, curiously carved in wood, and placed between the effigies of the two thieves crucified with him. The mob contrived to get a rope round the neck of the statue of Christ, and dragged it to the ground. They then fell upon it

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., ubi supra.

with hatchets and hammers, and it was soon broken into a hundred fragments. The two thieves, it was remarked, were spared, as if to preside over the work of rapine below.

Their fury now turned against the other statues, which were quickly overthrown from their pedestals. The paintings that lined the walls of the cathedral were cut into shreds. Many of these were the choicest specimens of Flemish art, even then, in its dawn, giving promise of the glorious day which was to shed a lustre over the land.

But the pride of the cathedral, and of Antwerp, was the great organ, renowned throughout the Netherlands, not more for its dimensions than its perfect workmanship. With their ladders the rioters scaled the lofty fabric, and with their implements soon converted it, like all else they laid their hands on, into a heap of rubbish.

The ruin was now universal. Nothing beautiful, nothing holy, was spared. The altars—and there were no less than seventy in the vast edifice—were overthrown one after another; their richly embroidered coverings rudely rent away; their gold and silver vessels appropriated by the plunderers. The sacramental bread was trodden under foot; the wine was quaffed by the miscreants, in golden chalices, to the health of one another, or of the Gueux; and the holy oil was profanely used to anoint their shoes and sandals. The sculptured tracery on the walls, the costly offerings that enriched the shrines, the screens of gilded bronze, the delicately carved wood-work of the pulpit, the marble and alabaster ornaments, all went

down under the fierce blows of the iconoclasts. The pavement was strewed with the ruined splendors of a church, which in size and magnificence was perhaps second only to St. Peter's among the churches of Christendom.

As the light of day faded, the assailants supplied its place with such light as they could obtain from the candles which they snatched from the altars. It was midnight before the work of destruction was completed. Thus toiling in darkness, feebly dispelled by tapers the rays of which could scarcely penetrate the vaulted distances of the cathedral, it is a curious circumstance—if true—that no one was injured by the heavy masses of timber, stone, and metal that were everywhere falling around them.<sup>5</sup> The whole number engaged in this work is said not to have exceeded a hundred men, women, and boys, — women of the lowest description, dressed in men's attire.

When their task was completed, they sallied forth in a body from the doors of the cathedral, some singing the Psalms of David, others roaring out the fanatical war-cry of "*Vivent les Gueux!*" Flushed with success, and joined on the way by stragglers like themselves, they burst open the doors of one church after another; and by the time morning broke, the principal temples in the city had been

<sup>5</sup> "Nullus ex eo numero aut casu afflictus, aut ruinâ oppressus decidentium ac transvolantium fragmentorum, aut occurso collisive festinantium cum fabrilibus armis levissimè sauciatus sit." Strada, *De Bello Belgico*, tom. i. p. 257.

"No light argument," adds the historian, "that with God's permission the work was done under the immediate direction of the demons of Hell!"

dealt with in the same ruthless manner as the cathedral.<sup>6</sup>

No attempt all this time was made to stop these proceedings, on the part of magistrates or citizens. As they beheld from their windows the bodies of armed men hurrying to and fro by the gleam of their torches, and listened to the sounds of violence in the distance, they seem to have been struck with a panic. The Catholics remained within doors, fearing a general rising of the Protestants. The Protestants feared to move abroad, lest they should be confounded with the rioters. Some imagined their own turn might come next, and appeared in arms at the entrances of their houses, prepared to defend them against the enemy.

When gorged with the plunder of the city, the insurgents poured out at the gates, and fell with the same violence on the churches, convents, and other religious edifices in the suburbs. For three days these dismal scenes continued, without resistance on the part of the inhabitants. Amidst the ruin in the cathedral, the mob had alone spared the royal arms and the escutcheons of the knights of the Golden Fleece, emblazoned on the walls. Calling this to mind, they now returned into the city to complete the work. But some of the knights, who were at Antwerp, collected a handful of their followers, and, with a few of the citizens, forced their way into the cathedral, arrested ten or twelve of the rioters, and

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., pp. 255-258.—Vander Haer, *De Initiis Tumultuum*, p. 237. et seq.—Brandt, *Reformation in the Low Countries*, vol. i.

p. 193.—*Correspondance de Guillaume le Taciturne*, tom. ii., Préface, pp. liii., liv.



easily dispersed the remainder; while a gallows erected on an eminence admonished the offenders of the fate that awaited them. The facility with which the disorders were repressed by a few resolute men naturally suggests the inference, that many of the citizens had too much sympathy with the authors of the outrages to care to check them, still less to bring the culprits to punishment. An orthodox chronicler of the time vents his indignation against a people who were so much more ready to stand by their hearths than by their altars.<sup>7</sup>

The fate of Antwerp had its effect on the country. The flames of fanaticism, burning fiercer than ever, quickly spread over the northern, as they had done over the western provinces. In Holland, Utrecht, Friesland, — everywhere, in short, with a few exceptions on the southern borders, — mobs rose against the churches. In some places, as Rotterdam, Dort, Haarlem, the magistrates were wary enough to avert the storm by delivering up the images, or at least by removing them from the buildings.<sup>8</sup> It was rare that any attempt was made at resistance. Yet on one or two occasions this so far succeeded that a handful of troops sufficed to rout the iconoclasts. At Anchin, four hundred of the rabble were left dead on the field. But the soldiers had no relish for their duty, and on other occasions, when called on to perform it, refused to bear arms against their

<sup>7</sup> "Pro focis pugnatur interdum acrius quàm pro aris." Strada, De Bello Belgico, tom. i. p. 260.

<sup>8</sup> Brandt, Reformation in the Low Countries, vol. i. p. 201.

countrymen.<sup>9</sup> The leaven of heresy was too widely spread among the people.

Thus the work of plunder and devastation went on vigorously throughout the land. Cathedral and chapel, monastery and nunnery, religious houses of every description, even hospitals, were delivered up to the tender mercies of the Reformers. The monks fled, leaving behind them treasures of manuscripts and well-stored cellars, which latter the invaders soon emptied of their contents, while they consigned the former to the flames. The terrified nuns, escaping half naked, at dead of night, from their convents, were too happy to find a retreat among their friends and kinsmen in the city.<sup>10</sup> Neither monk nor nun ventured to go abroad in the conventional garb. Priests might be sometimes seen hurrying away with some relic or sacred treasure under their robes, which they were eager to save from the spoilers. In the general sack not even the abode of the dead was respected; and the sepulchres of the counts of Flanders were violated, and laid open to the public gaze!<sup>11</sup>

<sup>9</sup> But the Almighty, to quote the words of a contemporary, jealous of his own honor, took signal vengeance afterwards on all those towns and villages whose inhabitants had stood tamely by, and seen the profanation of his temples.—“Dios que es justo y zelador de su honra por caminos y formas incomprehensibles, lo ha vengado despues cruelmente, por que todos esos lugares donde esas cosas han acontecido han sido tomados, saqueados, despojados y arruinados por guerra, pillage, peste y incomodidades, en

que, asi los males y culpados, como los buenos por su sufrimiento y connivencia, han conocido y confesado que Dios ha sido corrido contra ellos.” Renom de Francia, Alborotos de Flandes, MS.

<sup>10</sup> Strada, De Bello Belgico, tom. i. p. 259.

<sup>11</sup> “En tous ces monastères et cloistres, ils abattent toutes sépultures des comtes et comtesses de Flandres et aultres.” Correspondance de Marguerite d’Autriche, p. 183.

The deeds of violence perpetrated by the iconoclasts were accompanied by such indignities as might express their contempt for the ancient faith. They snatched the wafer, says an eyewitness, from the altar, and put it into the mouth of a parrot. Some huddled the images of the saints together, and set them on fire, or covered them with bits of armor, and, shouting "*Vivent les Gueux!*" tilted rudely against them. Some put on the vestments stolen from the churches, and ran about the streets with them in mockery. Some basted the books with butter, that they might burn the more briskly.<sup>12</sup> By the scholar, this last enormity will not be held light among their transgressions. It answered their purpose, to judge by the number of volumes that were consumed. Among the rest, the great library of Vicogne, one of the noblest collections in the Netherlands, perished in the flames kindled by these fanatics.<sup>13</sup>

The amount of injury inflicted during this dismal period it is not possible to estimate. Four hundred churches were sacked by the insurgents in Flanders alone.<sup>14</sup> The damage to the cathedral of Antwerp, including its precious contents, was said to amount to not less than four hundred thousand ducats!<sup>15</sup>

<sup>12</sup> "Hic psittaco sacrosanctum Domini corpus porrigerent: Hic ex ordine collocatis imaginibus ignem subijcerent, cadentibus insultarent: Hic statuis arma induerent, in armatos depugnarent, deiectos, Vivant Geusij clamare imperarent, ut ad scopum sic ad Christi imaginem iaculaturi collimarent, libros bibliothecarum butiro inunctos in

ignem conijcerent, sacris vestibus summo ludibrio per vicos palam vterentur." Vander Haer, *De Initiis Tumultuum*, p. 238.

<sup>13</sup> Hopper, *Recueil et Mémorial*, p. 98.

<sup>14</sup> *Correspondance de Marguerite d'Autriche*, p. 182.

<sup>15</sup> Strada, *De Bello Belgico*, tom. i. p. 260.

The loss occasioned by the plunder of gold and silver plate might be computed. The structures so cruelly defaced might be repaired by the skill of the architect. But who can estimate the irreparable loss occasioned by the destruction of manuscripts, statuary, and paintings? It is a melancholy fact, that the earliest efforts of the Reformers were everywhere directed against those monuments of genius which had been created and cherished by the generous patronage of Catholicism. But if the first step of the Reformation was on the ruins of art, it cannot be denied that a compensation has been found in the good which it has done by breaking the fetters of the intellect, and opening a free range in those domains of science to which all access had been hitherto denied.

The wide extent of the devastation was not more remarkable than the time in which it was accomplished. The whole work occupied less than a fortnight. It seemed as if the destroying angel had passed over the land, and at a blow had consigned its noblest edifices to ruin! The method and discipline, if I may so say, in the movements of the iconoclasts, were as extraordinary as their celerity. They would seem to have been directed by some other hands than those which met the vulgar eye. The quantity of gold and silver plate purloined from the churches and convents was immense. Though doubtless sometimes appropriated by individuals, it seems not unfrequently to have been gathered in a heap, and delivered to the minister, who, either of himself, or by direction of the consistory, caused it to be melted

down, and distributed among the most needy of the sectaries.<sup>16</sup> We may sympathize with the indignation of a Catholic writer of the time, who exclaims, that in this way the poor churchmen were made to pay for the scourges with which they had been beaten.<sup>17</sup>

The tidings of the outbreak fell heavily on the ears of the court of Brussels, where the regent, notwithstanding her prediction of the event, was not any the better prepared for it. She at once called her counsellors together and demanded their aid in defending the religion of the country against its enemies. But the prince of Orange and his friends discouraged a resort to violent measures, as little likely to prevail in the present temper of the people. "First," said Egmont, "let us provide for the security of the state. It will be time enough then to think of religion." "No," said Margaret, warmly; "the service of God demands our first care; for the ruin of religion would be a greater evil than the loss of the country."<sup>18</sup> "Those who have anything to lose in it," replied the count, somewhat coolly, "will probably be of a different opinion,"<sup>19</sup> — an answer that greatly displeased the duchess.

<sup>16</sup> "Y de lo que venia del saco de la plateria y cosas sagradas de la yglesia (que algunos ministros y los del consistorio juntavan en una) distribuyendo á los fieles reformados algunos frutos de su reformation, para contentar á los hambrientos." Renom de Francia, Alborotos de Flandes, MS.

<sup>17</sup> "Haciendoles pagar el precio de los azotes con que fueron azotados." Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> "Il répondit que la première

chose à faire était de conserver l'État; que, ensuite on s'occuperait des choses de la religion. Elle répliqua, non sans humeur, qu'il lui paraissait plus nécessaire de pouvoir d'abord à ce qu'exigeait le service de Dieu, parce que la ruine de la religion serait un plus grand mal, que la perte du pays." Correspondance de Philippe II., tom. i. p. 449.

<sup>19</sup> "Il répartit que tous ceux qui avaient quelque chose à perdre,

Rumors now came thick on one another of the outrages committed by the image-breakers. Fears were entertained that their next move would be on the capital itself. Hitherto the presence of the regent had preserved Brussels, notwithstanding some transient demonstrations among the people, from the spirit of reform which had convulsed the rest of the country. No public meetings had been held either in the city or the suburbs; for Margaret had declared she would hang up, not only the preacher, but all those who attended him.<sup>20</sup> The menace had its effect. Thus keeping aloof from the general movement of the time, the capital was looked on with an evil eye by the surrounding country; and reports were rife, that the iconoclasts were preparing to march in such force on the place, as should enable them to deal with it as they had done with Antwerp and the other cities of Brabant.

The question now arose as to the course to be pursued in the present exigency. The prince of Orange and his friends earnestly advised that Margaret should secure the aid of the confederates by the concessions they had so strenuously demanded; in the next place, that she should conciliate the Protestants by consenting to their religious meetings. To the former she made no objection. But the latter she peremptorily refused. "It would be the ruin of our holy religion," she said. It was in vain they urged, that two hundred thousand sectaries were in arms; that they were already in possession of the churches; that,

ne l'entendaient pas de cette manière." *Ibid.*, p. 450.

<sup>20</sup> Vide ante, p. 30.

if she persisted in her refusal, they would soon be in Brussels, and massacre every priest and Roman Catholic before her eyes!<sup>21</sup> Notwithstanding this glowing picture of the horrors in store for her, Margaret remained inflexible. But her agitation was excessive: she felt herself alone in her extremity. The party of Granvelle she had long since abandoned. The party of Orange seemed now ready to abandon her. "I am pressed by enemies within and without," she wrote to Philip; "there is no one on whom I can rely for counsel or for aid."<sup>22</sup> Distrust and anxiety brought on a fever, and for several days and nights she lay tossing about, suffering equally from distress of body and anguish of spirit.<sup>23</sup>

Thus sorely perplexed, Margaret felt also the most serious apprehensions for her personal safety. With the slight means of defence at her command, Brussels seemed no longer a safe residence, and she finally came to the resolution to extricate herself from the danger and difficulties of her situation by a precipitate flight. After a brief consultation with Barlament, Arschoot, and others of the party opposed to the prince of Orange, and hitherto little in her confidence, she determined to abandon the capital, and seek a refuge in Mons,—a strong town in Hainault,

<sup>21</sup> "Et me disoient . . . . que les sectaires vouloient venir tuer, en ma présence, tous les prestres, gens d'église et catholicques." Correspondance de Marguerite d'Autriche, p. 188.

<sup>22</sup> "La duchesse se trouve sans conseil ni assistance, pressée par l'ennemi au dedans et au dehors." Correspondance de Philippe II., tom. i. p. 455.

<sup>23</sup> "Nonobstant toutes ces raisons et remonstrances, par plusieurs et divers jours, je n'y ay voulu entendre, donnant par plusieurs fois soupirs et signe de douleur et angoisse de cœur, jusques à là que, par aucuns jours, la fiebvre m'a détenue, et ay passé plusieurs nuits sans repos." Correspondance de Marguerite d'Autriche, p. 194.



belonging to the duke of Arschot, which, from its sturdy attachment to the Romish faith, had little to fear from the fanatics.

Having completed her preparations with the greatest secrecy, on the day fixed for her flight Margaret called her council together to communicate her design. It met with the most decided opposition, not merely from the lords with whom she had hitherto acted, but from the President Viglius. They all united in endeavoring to turn her from a measure which would plainly intimate such a want of confidence on the part of the duchess as must dishonor them in the eyes of the world. The preparations for Margaret's flight had not been conducted so secretly but that some rumor of them had taken wind; and the magistrates of the city now waited on her in a body, and besought her not to leave them, defenceless as they were, to the mercy of their enemies.

The prince was heard to say, that, if the regent thus abandoned the government, it would be necessary to call the states-general together at once, to take measures for the protection of the country.<sup>24</sup> And Egmont declared that, if she fled to Mons, he would muster forty thousand men, and besiege Mons in person.<sup>25</sup> The threat was not a vain one, for no man in the country could have gathered such a force under his banner more easily than Egmont. The question seems to have been finally settled by the magistrates causing the gates of the town to be se-

<sup>24</sup> Correspondance de Philippe II., tom. i. p. 454.

<sup>25</sup> "Egmont a tenu le même

langage, en ajoutant qu'on lèverait 40,000 hommes, pour aller assiéger Mons." Ibid., ubi supra.



cured, and a strong guard placed over them, with orders to allow no passage either to the duchess or her followers. — Thus a prisoner in her own capital, Margaret conformed to necessity, and, with the best grace she could, consented to relinquish her scheme of departure.<sup>26</sup>

The question now recurred as to the course to be pursued; and the more she pondered on the embarrassments of her position, the more she became satisfied that no means of extricating herself remained but that proposed by the nobles. Yet, in thus yielding to necessity, she did so protesting that she was acting under compulsion.<sup>27</sup> On the twenty-third of August, Margaret executed an instrument, by which she engaged that no harm should come to the members of the league for anything hitherto done by them. She further authorized the lords to announce to the confederates her consent to the religious meetings of the Reformed, in places where they had been hitherto held, until his majesty and the states-general should otherwise determine. It was on the condition, however, that they should go there unarmed, and nowhere offer disturbance to the Catholics.

On the twenty-fifth of the month the confederate nobles signed an agreement on their part, and solemnly swore that they would aid the regent to the utmost in suppressing the disorders of the country,

<sup>26</sup> Correspondance de Marguerite d'Autriche, p. 196. — Strada, De Bello Belgico, tom. i. p. 266. — Vita Viglii, p. 48. — Hopper, Recueil et Mémorial, p. 99.

<sup>27</sup> At Margaret's command, a detailed account of the circum-

stances under which these concessions were extorted from her was drawn up by the secretary Berty. This document is given by Gauchard, Correspondance de Philippe II. tom. ii., Appendix, p. 588.

and in bringing their authors to justice; agreeing, moreover, that, so long as the regent should be true to the compact, the league should be considered as null and void.<sup>28</sup>

The feelings of Margaret, in making the concessions required of her, may be gathered from the perusal of her private correspondence with her brother. No act in her public life ever caused her so deep a mortification; and she never forgave the authors of it. "It was forced upon me," she writes to Philip; "but, happily, you will not be bound by it." And she beseeches him to come at once, in such strength as would enable him to conquer the country for himself, or to give her the means of doing so.<sup>29</sup>—Margaret, in early life, had been placed in the hands of Ignatius Loyola. More than one passage in her history proves that the lessons of the Jesuit had not been thrown away.

During these discussions the panic had been such, that it was thought advisable to strengthen the garrison under command of Count Mansfeldt, and keep the greater part of the citizens under arms day and night. When this arrangement was concluded, the great lords dispersed on their mission to restore order in their several governments. The prince went first to Antwerp, where, as we have seen, he held the office of burgrave. He made strict investigation into the

<sup>28</sup> The particulars of the agreement are given by Meteren, *Hist. des Pays-Bas*, fol. 45. See also Brandt, *Reformation in the Low Countries*, vol. i. p. 204.—*Correspondance de Guillaume le Taciturne*, tom. ii. pp. 455. 459.—

*Correspondance de Philippe II.*, tom. i. p. cxliv.

<sup>29</sup> "Elle le supplie d'y venir promptement, à main armée, afin de le conquérir de nouveau." *Correspondance de Philippe II.*, tom. i. p. 453.

causes of the late tumult, hung three of the ringleaders, and banished three others. He found it, however, no easy matter to come to terms with the sectaries, who had possession of all the churches, from which they had driven the Catholics. After long negotiation, it was arranged that they should be allowed to hold six, and should resign the rest to the ancient possessors. The arrangement gave general satisfaction, and the principal citizens and merchants congratulated William on having rescued them from the evils of anarchy.

Not so the regent. She knew well that the example of Antwerp would become a precedent for the rest of the country. She denounced the compact, as compromising the interests of Catholicism, and openly accused the prince of having transcended his powers, and betrayed the trust reposed in him. Finally, she wrote, commanding him at once to revoke his concessions.

William, in answer, explained to her the grounds on which they had been made, and their absolute necessity, in order to save the city from anarchy. It is a strong argument in his favor, that the Protestants, who already claimed the prince as one of their own sect, accused him, in this instance, of sacrificing their cause to that of their enemies; and caricatures of him were made, representing him with open hands and a double face.<sup>30</sup> William, while thus explaining his conduct, did not conceal his indignation at the charges brought against him by the regent, and renewed his request for leave to resign his offices, since he no longer

<sup>30</sup> Raumer, *Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, vol. ii. p. 177.

enjoyed her confidence. But whatever disgust she may have felt at his present conduct, William's services were too important to Margaret in this crisis to allow her to dispense with them ; and she made haste to write to him in a conciliatory tone, explaining away as far as possible what had been offensive in her former letters. Yet from this hour the consciousness of mutual distrust raised a barrier between the parties never to be overcome.<sup>31</sup>

William next proceeded to his governments of Utrecht and Holland, which, by a similar course of measures to that pursued at Antwerp, he soon restored to order. While in Utrecht, he presented to the states of the province a memorial, in which he briefly reviewed the condition of the country. He urged the necessity of religious toleration, as demanded by the spirit of the age, and as particularly necessary in a country like that, the resort of so many foreigners, and inhabited by sects of such various denominations. He concluded by recommending them to lay a petition to that effect before the throne,—not, probably, from any belief that such a petition would be heeded by the monarch, but from the effect it would have in strengthening the principles of religious freedom in his countrymen. William's memorial is altogether a remarkable paper for the time, and in the wise and liberal tenor of its arguments strikingly contrasts with the intolerant spirit of the court of Madrid.<sup>32</sup>

<sup>31</sup> Correspondance de Guillaume le Taciturne, tom. ii. pp. 220. 223. 231. 233.; Préface, pp. lxii.-lxiv.

<sup>32</sup> The document is given entire

by Groen, Archives de la Maison d'Orange-Nassau, tom. ii. p. 429. et seq.

The regent proved correct in her prediction that the example of Antwerp would be made a precedent for the country. William's friends, the Counts Hoorne and Hoogstraten, employed the same means for conciliating the sectaries in their own governments. It was otherwise with Egmont. He was too staunch a Catholic at heart to approve of such concessions. He carried matters, therefore, with a high hand in his provinces of Flanders and Artois, where his personal authority was unbounded. He made a severe scrutiny into the causes of the late tumult, and dealt with its authors so sternly, as to provoke a general complaint among the reformed party, some of whom, indeed, became so far alarmed for their own safety, that they left the provinces and went beyond sea.

Order now seemed to be reëstablished in the land, through the efforts of the nobles, aided by the confederates, who seem to have faithfully executed their part of the compact with the regent. The Protestants took possession of the churches assigned to them, or busied themselves with raising others on the ground before reserved for their meetings. All joined in the good work; the men laboring at the building, the women giving their jewels and ornaments to defray the cost of the materials. A calm succeeded,—a temporary lull after the hurricane; and Lutheran and Calvinist again indulged in the pleasing illusion, that, however distasteful it might be to the government, they were at length secure of the blessings of religious toleration.

During the occurrence of these events a great change had taken place in the relations of parties.

The Catholic members of the league, who had proposed nothing beyond the reform of certain glaring abuses, and, least of all, anything prejudicial to their own religion, were startled as they saw the inevitable result of the course they were pursuing. Several of them, as we have seen, had left the league before the outbreak of the iconoclasts; and after that event, but very few remained in it. The confederates, on the other hand, lost ground with the people, who looked with distrust on their late arrangement with the regent, in which they had so well provided for their own security. The confidence of the people was not restored by the ready aid which their old allies seemed willing to afford the great nobles in bringing to justice the authors of the recent disorders.<sup>33</sup> Thus deserted by many of its own members, distrusted by the Reformers, and detested by the regent, the league ceased from that period to exert any considerable influence on the affairs of the country.

A change equally important had taken place in the politics of the court. The main object with Margaret, from the first, had been to secure the public tranquillity. To effect this she had more than once so far deferred to the judgment of William and his friends,

<sup>33</sup> Tiepolo, the Venetian minister at the court of Castile at this time, in his report made on his return, expressly acquits the Flemish nobles of what had been often imputed to them, having a hand in these troubles. Their desire for reform only extended to certain crying abuses; but, in the words of his metaphor, the stream which they would have turned to the irrigation of the ground soon swelled

to a terrible inundation.—“*Contra l'opinion de' principali della lega, che volevano indur timore et non tanto danno . . . . Dico che questo fu perchè essi non hebbero mai intentione di ribellarsi dal suo sig<sup>re</sup> ma solamente con questi mezzi di timore impedir che non si introducesse in quei stati il tribunal dell' Inquisitione.*” *Relatione di M. A. Tiepolo, 1567, MS.*

as to pursue a policy not the most welcome to herself. But it had never been her thought to extend that policy to the point of religious toleration. So far from it, she declared that, even though the king should admit two religions in the state, she would rather be torn in pieces than consent to it.<sup>34</sup> It was not till the coalition of the nobles, that her eyes were opened to the path she was treading. The subsequent outrages of the iconoclasts made her comprehend she was on the verge of a precipice. The concessions wrung from her, at that time, by Orange and his friends, filled up the measure of her indignation. A great gulf now opened between her and the party by whom she had been so long directed. Yet where could she turn for support? One course only remained; and it was with a bitter feeling that she felt constrained to throw herself into the arms of the very party which she had almost estranged from her counsels. In her extremity she sent for the President Viglius, on whose head she had poured out so many anathemas in her correspondence with Philip, — whom she had not hesitated to charge with the grossest peculation.

Margaret sent for the old councillor, and, with tears in her eyes, demanded his advice in the present exigency. The president naturally expressed his surprise at this mark of confidence from one who had so carefully excluded him from her counsels for the last two years. Margaret, after some acknow-

<sup>34</sup> "En supposant que le Roi voulût admettre deux religions (ce qu'elle ne pouvait croire), elle ne voulait pas, elle, être l'exécutrice

d'une semblable détermination; qu'elle se laisserait plutôt mettre en pièces." Correspondance de Philippe II., tom. i. p. 453.



ledgment of her mistake, intimated a hope that this would be no impediment to his giving her the counsel she now so much needed. Viglius answered by inquiring whether she were prepared faithfully to carry out what she knew to be the will of the king. On Margaret's replying in the affirmative, he recommended that she should put the same question to each member of her cabinet. "Their answers," said the old statesman, "will show you whom you are to trust." The question—the touchstone of loyalty—was accordingly put; and the minister, who relates the anecdote himself, tells us that three only, Mansfeldt, Barlaimont, and Arschot, were prepared to stand by the regent in carrying out the policy of the crown. From that hour the regent's confidence was transferred from the party with which she had hitherto acted, to their rivals.<sup>35</sup>

It is amusing to trace the change of Margaret's sentiments in her correspondence of this period with her brother. "Orange and Hoorne prove themselves, by word and by deed, enemies of God and the king."<sup>36</sup> Of Egmont she speaks no better. "With all his protestations of loyalty," she fears he is only plotting mischief to the state. "He has openly joined the *Gueux*, and his eldest daughter is reported to be a Huguenot."<sup>37</sup> Her great concern is for the safety of Viglius, "almost paralyzed by his fears, as the people actually threaten to tear him in pieces."<sup>38</sup> The fac-

<sup>35</sup> The report of this curious dialogue, somewhat more extended than in these pages, is to be found in the *Vita Viglii*, p. 47.

<sup>36</sup> "En paroles et en faits, ils se

sont déclarés contre Dieu et contre le Roi." Correspondance de Philippe II., tom. i. p. 453.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, ubi supra.

<sup>38</sup> "Le président, qu'on menace



tious lords conduct affairs according to their own pleasure in the council; and it is understood they are negotiating at the present moment to bring about a coalition between the Protestants of Germany, France, and England, hoping in the end to drive the house of Austria from the throne, to shake off the yoke of Spain from the Netherlands, and divide the provinces among themselves and their friends!<sup>39</sup> Margaret's credulity seems to have been in proportion to her hatred, and her hatred in proportion to her former friendship. So it was in her quarrel with Granvelle, and she now dealt the same measure to the men who had succeeded that minister in her confidence.

The prince of Orange cared little for the regent's estrangement. He had long felt that his own path lay wide asunder from that of the government, and, as we have seen, had more than once asked leave to resign his offices, and withdraw into private life. Hoorne viewed the matter with equal indifference. He had also asked leave to retire, complaining that his services had been poorly requited by the government. He was a man of a bold, impatient temper. In a letter to Philip he told him that it was not the regent, but his majesty, of whom he complained, for compelling him to undergo the annoyance of dancing attendance at the court of Brussels!<sup>40</sup> He further

de tous côtés d'assommer et de mettre en pièces, est devenu d'une timidité incroyable." Ibid., p. 460.

Viglius, in his "Life," confirms this account of the dangers with which he was threatened by the people, but takes much more credit to himself for presence of mind

than the duchess seems willing to allow. Vita Viglii, p. 48.

<sup>39</sup> Correspondance de Philippe II., tom. i. pp. 255, 260.

<sup>40</sup> "Disant n'avoir aucun d'elle, mais bien de Vostre Majesté, laquelle n'avoit esté content me laisser en ma maison, mais m'avoit

added, that he had not discussed his conduct with the duchess, as it was not his way to treat of affairs of honor with ladies!<sup>41</sup> There was certainly no want of plain-dealing in this communication with majesty.

Count Egmont took the coolness of the regent in a very different manner. It touched his honor, perhaps his vanity, to be thus excluded from her confidence. He felt it the more keenly as he was so loyal at heart, and strongly attached to the Romish faith. On the other hand, his generous nature was deeply sensible to the wrongs of his countrymen. Thus drawn in opposite directions, he took the middle course,—by no means the safest in politics. Under these opposite influences he remained in a state of dangerous irresolution. His sympathy with the cause of the confederates lost him the confidence of the government. His loyalty to the government excluded him from the councils of the confederates. And thus, though perhaps the most popular man in the Netherlands, there was no one who possessed less real influence in public affairs.<sup>42</sup>

The tidings of the tumults in the Netherlands, which travelled with the usual expedition of evil

commandé me trouver à Bruxelles vers Son Altesse, ou avoie receu tant de facheries." *Supplément à Strada*, tom. ii. p. 505.

<sup>41</sup> "Ne me samblant debvoir traicter affaires de honneur avecq Dames." *Ibid.*, ubi supra.

<sup>42</sup> "They tell me," writes Morillon to Granvelle, "it is quite incredible how old and gray Egmont has become. He does not

venture to sleep at night without his sword and pistols by his bedside!" (*Archives de la Maison d'Orange-Nassau*, *Supplément*, p. 36.) But there was no pretence that at this time Egmont's life was in danger. Morillon, in his eagerness to cater for the cardinal's appetite for gossip, did not always stick at the improbable.

news, caused as great consternation at the court of Castile as it had done at that of Brussels. Philip, on receiving his despatches, burst forth, it is said, into the most violent fit of anger, and, tearing his beard, he exclaimed, "It shall cost them dear; by the soul of my father I swear it, it shall cost them dear!"<sup>43</sup> The anecdote, often repeated, rests on the authority of Granville's correspondent, Morillon. If it be true, it affords a solitary exception to the habitual self-command—displayed in circumstances quite as trying—of the "prudent" monarch. The account given by Hopper, who was with the court at the time, is the more probable of the two. According to that minister, the king, when he received the tidings, lay ill of a tertian fever at Segovia. As letter after letter came to him with particulars of the tumult, he maintained his usual serenity, exhibiting no sign of passion or vexation. Though enfeebled by his malady, he allowed himself no repose, but gave unremitting attention to business.<sup>44</sup> He read all the despatches; made careful notes of their contents, sending such information as he deemed best to his council, for their consideration; and, as his health mended, occasionally attended in person the discussions of that body.

<sup>43</sup> "Il leur en coûtera cher (s'écria-t-il en se tirant la barbe), il leur en coûtera cher; j'en jure par l'âme de mon père." Gachard, *Analectes Beligiques*, p. 254.

<sup>44</sup> "De tout cela (disje) ne se perdit un seul moment en ce temps, non obstant la dicte maladie de Sa Maj<sup>te</sup>, la quelle se monstra semblablement selon son bon naturel, en

tous ces negoces et actions tousjours tant modeste, et temperée et constante en iceulx affaires, quelques extremes qu'ilz fussent, que jamais l'on n'a veu en icelle signal, ou de passion contre les personnes d'une part, ou de relasche en ses negoces de l'autre." Hopper, *Recueil et Mémorial*, p. 104.

One can feel but little doubt as to the light in which the proceedings in the Netherlands were regarded by the royal council of Castile. Yet it did not throw the whole, or even the chief blame, on the iconoclasts. They were regarded as mere tools in the hands of the sectaries. The sectaries, on their part, were, it was said, moved by the confederates, on whom they leaned for protection. The confederates, in their turn, made common cause with the great lords, to whom many of them were bound by the closest ties of friendship and of blood. By this ingenious chain of reasoning, all were made responsible for the acts of violence; but the chief responsibility lay on the heads of the great nobles, on whom all in the last resort depended. It was against them that the public indignation should be directed, not against the meaner offenders, over whom alone the sword of justice had been hitherto suspended. But the king should dissemble his sentiments until he was in condition to call these great vassals to account for their misdeeds. All joined in beseeching Philip to defer no longer his visit to Flanders; and most of them recommended that he should go in such force as to look down opposition, and crush the rebellion in its birth.

Such was the counsel of Alva, in conformity with that which he had always given on the subject. But although all concurred in urging the king to expedite his departure, some of the councillors followed the prince of Eboli in advising Philip that, instead of this warlike panoply, he should go in peaceable guise, accompanied only by such a retinue as befitted the

royal dignity. Each of the great rivals recommended the measures most congenial with his own temper, the direction of which would no doubt be intrusted to the man who recommended them. It is not strange that the more violent course should have found favor with the majority.<sup>45</sup>

Philip's own decision he kept, as usual, locked in his own bosom. He wrote indeed to his sister, warning her not to allow the meeting of the legislature, and announcing his speedy coming,—all as usual; and he added, that, in repressing the disorders of the country, he should use no other means than those of gentleness and kindness, under the sanction of the states.<sup>46</sup> These gentle professions weighed little with those who, like the prince of Orange, had surer means of arriving at the king's intent than what were afforded by the royal correspondence. Montigny, the Flemish envoy, was still in Madrid, held there, sorely against his will, in a sort of honorable captivity by Philip.

<sup>45</sup> At this period stops the "Recueil et Mémorial des Troubles des Pays-Bas" of Joachim Hopper, which covers a hundred quarto pages of the second volume (part second) of Hoyneck van Papendrecht's "Analecta Belgica." Hopper was a jurist, a man of learning and integrity. In 1566 he was called to Madrid, raised to the post of keeper of the seals for the affairs of the Netherlands, and made a member of the council of state. He never seems to have enjoyed the confidence of Philip in anything like the degree which Granvelle and some other ministers could boast; for Hopper was a Fleming. Yet his situation in the cabinet made him acquainted with the tone of sentiment as well

as the general policy of the court; while, as a native of Flanders, he could comprehend, better than a Spaniard, the bearing this policy would have on his countrymen. His work, therefore, is of great importance as far as it goes. It is difficult to say why it should have stopped *in mediis*, for Hopper remained still in office, and died at Madrid ten years after the period to which he brings his narrative. He may have been discouraged by the remarks of Viglius, who intimates, in a letter to his friend, that the chronicler should wait to allow time to disclose the secret springs of action. See the *Epistolæ ad Hopperum*, p. 419.

<sup>46</sup> *Correspondance de Marguerite d'Autriche*, p. 206.

In a letter to his brother, Count Hoorne, he wrote :  
 “ Nothing can be in worse odor than our affairs at  
 the court of Castile. The great lords, in particular,  
 are considered as the source of all the mischief. Vio-  
 lent counsels are altogether in the ascendant, and the  
 storm may burst on you sooner than you think.  
 Nothing remains but to fly from it like a prudent  
 man, or to face it like a brave one !” <sup>47</sup>

William had other sources of intelligence, the secret  
 agents whom he kept in pay at Madrid. From them  
 he learned, not only what was passing at the court,  
 but in the very cabinet of the monarch ; and extracts,  
 sometimes full copies, of the correspondence of Philip  
 and Margaret, were transmitted to the prince. Thus  
 the secrets which the most jealous prince in Europe  
 supposed to be locked in his own breast were often in  
 possession of his enemies ; and William, as we are  
 told, declared that there was no words of Philip’s,  
 public or private, but was reported to his ears !<sup>48</sup>

This secret intelligence, on which the prince ex-  
 pended large sums of money, was not confined to  
 Madrid. He maintained a similar system of espionage  
 in Paris, where the court of Castile was busy with its  
 intrigues for the extermination of heresy. Those who  
 look on these trickish proceedings as unworthy of the  
 character of the Prince of Orange and the position

<sup>47</sup> “ Questo è il nuvolo che minaccia ora i nostri paesi ; e n’ uscirà la tempesta forse prima che non si pensa. Chi la prevede ne dà l’avviso ; e chi n’ è avvisato, o con intrepidezza l’incontri, o con avvedimento la sfugga.” Bentivoglio, Guerra di Fiandra, p. 118.

<sup>48</sup> “ Nullum prodire è Regis ore verbum seu privatè seu publicè, quin ad ejus aures in Belgium fideliter afferatur.” Strada, De Bello Belgico, tom. i. p. 281.

which he held, should consider that it was in accordance with the spirit of the age. It was but turning Philip's own arts against himself, and using the only means by which William could hope to penetrate the dark and unscrupulous policy of a cabinet whose chief aim, as he thought, was to subvert the liberties of his country.

It was at this time that his agents in France intercepted a letter from Alava, the Spanish minister at the French court. It was addressed to the duchess of Parma. Among other things, the writer says it is well understood at Madrid, that the great nobles are at the bottom of the troubles of Flanders. The king is levying a strong force, with which he will soon visit the country, and call the three lords to a heavy reckoning. In the mean time the duchess must be on her guard not by any change in her deportment to betray her consciousness of this intent.<sup>49</sup>

Thus admonished from various quarters, the prince felt that it was no longer safe for him to remain in his present position; and that, in the words of Montigny, he must be prepared to fight or to fly. He resolved to take counsel with some of those friends who were similarly situated with himself. In a communication made to Egmont in order to persuade him to a conference, William speaks of Philip's military preparations as equally to be dreaded by Catholic and Protestant; for under the pretext of religion, Philip had no other object in view than to enslave the nation.

<sup>49</sup> An abstract of the letter is given by Gachard, *Correspondance de Philippe II.*, tom. i. p. 485.



"This has been always feared by us," he adds;<sup>50</sup> "and I cannot stay to witness the ruin of my country."

The parties met at Dendermonde on the third of October. Besides the two friends and Count Hoorne, there were William's brother, Louis, and a few other persons of consideration. Little is actually known of the proceedings at this conference, notwithstanding the efforts of more than one officious chronicler to enlighten us. Their contradictory accounts, like so many cross lights on his path, serve only to perplex the eye of the student. It seems probable, however, that the nobles generally, including the prince, considered the time had arrived for active measures; and that any armed intrusion on the part of Philip into the Netherlands should be resisted by force. But Egmont, with all his causes of discontent, was too loyal at heart not to shrink from the attitude of rebellion. He had a larger stake than most of the company, in a numerous family of children, who, in case of a disastrous revolution, would be thrown helpless on the world. The benignity with which he had been received by Philip on his mission to Spain, and which subsequent slights had not effaced from his memory, made him confide, most unhappily, in the favorable dispositions of the monarch. From whatever motives, the count refused to become a party to any scheme of resistance; and as his popularity with the troops made his coöperation of the last import-

<sup>50</sup> "Sa Ma<sup>té</sup> et ceulx du Conseil seront bien aise, que sur le prétext de la religion ils pourront parvenir à leur prétendu, de mestre le pais, nous aultres, et nous enfans en la

plus misérable servitude qu'on n'auroit jamais veu, et come on ast tousjours craint cela plus que chose que soit." Archives de la Maison d'Orange-Nassau, tom. ii. p. 324.



ance, the conference broke up without coming to a determination.<sup>51</sup>

Egmont at once repaired to Brussels, whither he had been summoned by the regent to attend the council of state. Orange and Hoorne received, each, a similar summons, to which neither of them paid any regard. Before taking his seat at the board, Egmont showed the duchess Alava's letter, upbraiding her, at the same time, with her perfidious conduct towards the nobles. Margaret, who seems to have given way to temper or to tears, as the exigency demanded, broke forth into a rage, declaring it "an impudent forgery and the greatest piece of villany in the world!"<sup>52</sup> The same sentiment she repeats in a letter addressed soon after to her brother, in which she asserts her belief that no such letter as that imputed to Alava had ever been written by him. How far the duchess was honest in her declaration it is impossible at this day to determine. Egmont, after passing to other matters, concludes with a remark which shows, plainly enough, his own opinion of her

<sup>51</sup> Egmont's deposition at his trial confirms the account given in the text—that propositions for resistance, though made at the meeting, were rejected. Hoorne, in his "Justification," refers the failure to Egmont. Neither one nor the other throws light on the course of discussion. Bentivoglio, in his account of the interview, shows no such reserve; and he gives two long and elaborate speeches from Orange and Egmont, in as good set phrase as if they had been expressly reported by the parties themselves

for publication. The Italian historian affects a degree of familiarity with the proceedings of this secret conclave by no means calculated to secure our confidence. Guerra di Fiandra, pp. 123-128.

<sup>52</sup> "Siesse qu'elle jure que s'et la plus grande vilagnerie du monde . . . . et que s'et un vray pasquil fameulx et qui doit ettre forgé pardechà, et beaucoup de chozes semblables." Archives de la Maison d'Orange-Nassau, tom. ii. p. 400.

sincerity. "In fine, she is a woman educated in Rome. There is no faith to be given to her."<sup>53</sup>

In her communication above noticed Margaret took occasion to complain to Philip of his carelessness in regard to her letters. The contents of them, she said, were known in Flanders almost as soon as at Madrid; and not only copies, but the original autographs, were circulating in Brussels. She concludes by begging her brother, if he cannot keep her letters safe, to burn them.<sup>54</sup>

The King, in answer, expresses his surprise at her complaints, assuring Margaret that it is impossible any one can have seen her letters, which are safely locked up, with the key in his own pocket.<sup>55</sup> It is amusing to see Philip's incredulity in regard to the practice of those arts on himself which he had so often practised on others. His sister, however, seems to have relied henceforth more on her own precautions than on his, as we find her communications from this time frequently shrouded in cipher.

Rumors of Philip's warlike preparations were now rife in the Netherlands; and the Protestants began to take counsel as to the best means of providing for their own defence. One plan suggested was to send

<sup>53</sup> "En fin s'et une femme nourie en Rome, il n'y at que ajouter foy." *Ibid.*, p. 401.

Yet Egmont, on his trial, affirmed that he regarded the letter as spurious! (*Correspondance de Marguerite d'Autriche*, p. 327.) One who finds it impossible that the prince of Orange could lend himself to such a piece of duplicity, may perhaps be staggered when he calls to mind his curious correspondence with the elector and with

King Philip in relation to Anne of Saxony, before his marriage with that princess. Yet Margaret, as Egmont hints, was of the Italian school; and Strada, her historian, dismisses the question with a doubt,—"in medio ego quidem relinquo." A doubt from Strada is a decision against Margaret.

<sup>54</sup> *Correspondance de Philippe II.*, tom. i. p. 474.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 491.

thirty thousand Calvinistic tracts to Seville for distribution among the Spaniards.<sup>56</sup> This would raise a good crop of heresy, and give the king work to do in his own dominions. It would, in short, be carrying the war into the enemy's country. The plan, it must be owned, had the merit of novelty.

In Holland the nobles and merchants mutually bound themselves to stand by one another in asserting the right of freedom of conscience.<sup>57</sup> Levies went forward briskly in Germany, under the direction of Count Louis of Nassau. It was attempted, moreover, to interest the Protestant princes of that country so far in the fate of their brethren in the Netherlands as to induce them to use their good offices with Philip to dissuade him from violent measures. The emperor had already offered privately his own mediation to the king, to bring about, if possible, a better understanding with his Flemish subjects.<sup>58</sup> The offer made in so friendly a spirit, though warmly commended by some of the council, seems to have found no favor in the eyes of their master.<sup>59</sup>

The princes of Germany who had embraced the Reformation were Lutherans. They had almost as little sympathy with the Calvinists as with the Catholics. Men of liberal minds in the Netherlands, like William and his brother, would gladly have seen the two great Protestant parties which divided their country united on some common basis. They would have had them, in short, in a true Christian spirit,

<sup>56</sup> Strada, De Bello Belgico, tom. i. p. 282.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid., ubi supra.

<sup>58</sup> Hopper, Recueil et Mémorial, p. 109.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid., p. 113.

seek out the points on which they could agree rather than those on which they differed,—points of difference which, in William's estimation, were after all of minor importance. He was desirous that the Calvinists should adopt a confession of faith accommodated in some degree to the "Confession of Augsburg,"—a step which would greatly promote their interests with the princes of Germany.<sup>60</sup>

But the Calvinists were altogether the dominant party in the Low Countries. They were thoroughly organized, and held their consistories, composed of a senate and a sort of lower house, in many of the great towns, all subordinate to the great consistory at Antwerp. They formed, in short, what the historian well calls an independent Protestant republic.<sup>61</sup> Strong in their power, sturdy in their principles, they refused to bend in any degree to circumstances, or to make any concession, or any compromise with the weaker party. The German princes, disgusted with this conduct, showed no disposition to take any active measures in their behalf, and, although they made some efforts in favour of the Lutherans, left their Calvinistic brethren in the Netherlands to their fate.

It was generally understood, at this time, that the prince of Orange had embraced Lutheran opinions. His wife's uncle, the landgrave of Hesse, pressed him publicly to avow his belief. To this the prince objected, that he should thus become the open enemy of

<sup>60</sup> Archives de la Maison d'Orange-Nassau, tom. ii. p. 391.

<sup>61</sup> "Præterea consistoria, id est senatus ac cœtus, multis in urbibus, sicuti jam Antverpiæ cæperant, instituerunt: creatis Magistratibus,

Senatoribusque, quorum consiliis (sed antea cum Antverpianâ curiâ, quam esse principem voluere, communicatis) universa hæreticorum Respub. temperaretur." Strada, De Bello Belgico, tom. i. p. 283.

the Catholics, and probably lose his influence with the Calvinists, already too well disposed to acts of violence.<sup>62</sup> Yet not long after we find William inquiring of the landgrave if it would not be well to advise the king, in terms as little offensive as possible, of his change of religion, asking the royal permission at the same time, to conform his worship to it.<sup>63</sup>

William's father had been a Lutheran, and in that faith had lived and died. In that faith he had educated his son. When only eleven years old, the latter, as we have seen, was received into the imperial household. The plastic mind of boyhood readily took its impressions from those around, and without much difficulty, or indeed examination, William conformed to the creed fashionable at the court of Castile. In this faith—if so it should be called—the prince remained during the lifetime of the emperor. Then came the troubles of the Netherlands; and William's mind yielded to other influences. He saw the workings of Catholicism under a terrible aspect. He beheld his countrymen dragged from their firesides, driven into exile, thrown into dungeons, burned at the stake; and all this for no other cause than dissent from the dogmas of the Romish Church. His soul sickened at these enormities, and his indignation kindled at this invasion of the inalienable right of private judgment. Thus deeply interested for the oppressed Protestants, it was natural that William should feel a sympathy for their cause. His wife too was of the Lutheran persuasion. So was his mother,

<sup>62</sup> Archives de la Maison d'Orange-Nassau, tom. ii. pp. 455, 456.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid., p. 496.

still surviving. So were his brothers and sisters, and indeed all those nearest akin to him. Under these influences, public and domestic, it was not strange, that he should have been led to review the grounds of his own belief; that he should have gradually turned to the faith of his parents,—the faith in which he had been nurtured in childhood.<sup>64</sup> At what precise period the change in his opinions took place we are not informed. But his letter to the landgrave of Hesse, in November, 1566, affords, so far as I am aware, the earliest evidence that exists, under his own hand, that he had embraced the doctrines of the Reformation.

<sup>64</sup> I quote almost the words of William in his famous Apology, which suggests the same explanation of his conduct that I have given in the text. — “Car puis que dés le berceau j’y avois esté nourry, Monsieur mon Pere y avoit vescu, y estoit mort, ayant chassé de ses

Seigneuries les abus de l’Eglise, qui est-ce qui trouvera estrange si cette doctrine estoit tellement engravée en mon cœur, et y avoit jetté telles racines, qu’en son temps elle est venuë à apporter ses fruits.” Dumont, Corps Diplomatique, tom. v. part. i. p. 392.

